

New Life Habits: Humility
James 3:13-4:12; 5:1-6
Week of October 4

As you enter into prayer now, take a moment to settle your mind. Put aside your concerns and what needs to get done today, or what didn't get done today. Take a slow, deep breath. Center yourself in His Peace. He is the Alpha and Omega. The Beginning and End. You are found in Him.
Be Still.

Lord, open my heart and mind to hear and understand Your Word. I invite your Spirit to speak to me as I meditate on your Word.

Last week in the third chapter of James, our focus was on taming the tongue. This week's scripture is packed with great directives, which is just how James rolls! But we're going to focus on Chapter 4, verses 7-10.

⁷ Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹ Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

Pause and Pray.

Jesus, I am here because I want to experience You. As I meditate on this passage, draw to mind those things that You would have me become more aware of. Center my heart and mind on Yourself. Use your Word to draw my heart to You. Amen.

REFLECT.

James begins with the verb 'submit' and ends with the verb 'humble.' Submitting is an action that is sometimes not easy to do in our very independent culture. I have my own goals, my own way of doing things. I can sing with Frank Sinatra, "I did it my way!" But as a follower of Christ, I say I believe that He is better at running my life than I am. Do my actions reflect that belief? I now take a few moments to reflect on the last week. Where have I lived like I trust His ways? (Pause)

Where have I not lived like I trust You, Lord? (Pause)

God in these areas where I am struggling to trust you, I ask for your forgiveness. (Pause)

I ask that You remind me of a time when you were faithful to me in a very personal way. (Pause)

Lord, bring these memories of your faithfulness to me this week. When I struggle to move in faith, remind me of your faithfulness to me. You never let go of me, God. Ground me in that reality, that you are always faithful, that you are incapable of being anything else.

Lord, one of the ways that I can actively resist the devil is to draw near to you. There are many ways to draw near to you. I can meditate, study, spend time with other believers, focus on your creation, serve, sing, pray. The more time I give you each day, the less time the devil has to distract me! I ask You now to speak to my heart. Is there a practice that I need to start or devote more time to? (Pause)

PAUSE, PRAY AND ASK.

Speak to me about how to get started in this practice, Lord, and give me the desire. Give me a hunger for You. You are the bread of life, you are the Living Water. Make me hunger and thirst for You. Amen. (Pause)

I also bring before you today anything in my life that I am grieving. Areas that bring me great sadness. Maybe it's a personal failure, or a relationship that needs healing. Maybe it's a loved one that disappoints me regularly. Maybe it's a health situation that I have no control over, or a loved one that is gone. God, I rejoice that you can handle all of my grief, and I share it with you now. (Pause)

Thank you for being the kind of God that can handle all of my mess Lord Jesus. Thank you that you have loved me with an everlasting love. Thank you that you can hold me through the difficult seasons, and that despite the fact that people will always disappoint me, and that I will also disappoint, that you never do.

You are the Great I AM.

You are Jehovah Rapha. The God that heals.

You are Beer la hai Roi, the God who sees me.

You are Jehovah Shammah, the Lord who is there.

YIELD.

I return now to the text:

⁷ Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹ Grieve, mourn and wail.

Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

As I yield to your will in my life this week, I ask you to bring to mind any sin that I need to be purified of. Are there ways that I am double-minded? Believing one thing, yet living another way? Speak to me heart. (Pause)

Show me how to make it right, Lord. (PAUSE)

I want to live this life of humility, Lord. It is when I am found in You, and walking most closely with You, that I am most like the me that I was created to be. That is where true peace is found. I want to live in that peace. Give me more and more Lord. Make me more like You. Amen.

CLOSE IN PRAYER.

Lord,
I want to be a living sacrifice
But the problem with living sacrifices is that sometimes they crawl off the altar.
Lord keep my heart submitted to You instead.
Give me a heart of humility
That seeks you first
That conforms to Your will
Renew my mind
That I would bless and not curse
That I would not repay anyone evil for evil, but instead, to repay evil with good.
May evil be overcome with good
Make it so in me, Lord Jesus, Amen.

(adapted from Romans 12)