

## **Exaltation and Divine Resistance**

*God resists the proud but exalts the humble*

### **Introduction: Priming the pump for tonight's discussion.**

- Let's begin with our own observations. What is one thing that stood out to you from the message that you would share with the group? Was there a moment where God spoke to you personally through His Word?

### **Exploration: Questions to guide our group discussion.**

- Perhaps the one big takeaway from our focal text this week was, If we want to be used by God, then we've got to be humble in His sight...and it has to be real. Let's discuss from our notes and observations some of the differences between real and false humility. Does the Bible have anything further to say about this?
- James taught us that his original audience had made an idol of seeking pleasure. The Greek work here is hedone, from where we get the English word hedonistic. Literally, getting to the next pleasure point was their number one life aim and purpose. What are some ways that Christians create idols today that compete with Jesus, and how can we keep our own pleasures and desires in check? What does idolatry look like in the modern church?
- All of the infighting in James' churches came from their personal dissatisfaction and jealousy when they didn't get what they wanted. How have you seen this play out among modern day believers and what advice would James give to us, and to New Testament churches, in today's words?
- James wrote that a Christian cannot be friends with the world and friends with God at the same time. He said that we would have to choose. What do you think James meant by this, and what additional principles from the Bible support your conclusions?

### **Additional Scriptures for Deeper Study:**

- Colossians 3:12-17
- 2 Corinthians 5:14-17
- Matthew 20:25-28

### **Application: How can I apply this to my life this week?**

*Focal Text: James 4:1-17*

- In what ways did James' confrontation of the believers in his original audience speak to you personally? Did you feel affirmed or confronted? What would Jesus have you to do personally to make sure that He is number one in your heart?
- Were there examples of a lack of humility from your own life that the Spirit brought to mind as we studied this text? If so, how would God have you to apply the lessons of humility in each of those circumstances?