



FIRST BAPTIST
CHURCH
FAIR OAKS RANCH

Day 34: God Opposes the Proud

James 4:6–10 *“God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” Submit yourselves therefore to God... Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you. (ESV)*

DEVOTIONAL

If reverence begins with seeing God’s holiness, it continues with the posture that sight produces humility. James states this principle with a straightforward announcement: “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” The proud are not merely unhelped by God; they are opposed by Him. Pride sets a person on a collision course with the Almighty.

The word “opposes” is the Greek *antitasso*, a military term meaning to line up in battle against, to array oneself as an army opposing a foe. It’s a sobering picture: when we lift ourselves up in pride, we are not just being ineffective in our Christ witness; we are also positioning ourselves against the very God we claim to serve. The result is that He positions Himself against us.

To the humble, the same God who resists the proud draws near with grace, freely poured out. Everything turns on which posture we take. Charles Spurgeon warned his hearers that pride is the sin that most easily deceives us, often dressing itself in religious clothing and hiding even within our acts of devotion. Truly the last sin to die in any of us is that of pride.

This is why pride is so deadly to holiness and fear of the Lord, and why James places it at the center of reverence. Pride is the root from which nearly every other sin grows. It was pride that caused Satan to fall and pride that ruined the first man. Pride is uniquely resistant to healing, because it is the one sin that convinces us we not actually sick. A proud heart cannot repent, because it cannot admit it is wrong. Often it cannot even see its own error until its abusive wake leaves a trail of destruction. So before God can make us holy, He must first bring us to humility.

James's remedy is a beautiful paradox: "Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you." The way up is down. In the kingdom of God, we do not climb to greatness; we kneel to it. The person who stops defending, excusing, and exalting himself, and instead bows low before God in honest humility, is the very person God delights to elevate. So take the lower place today. Bow before the holiness of God, drop your defenses, and receive the grace He reserves for the humble.

TAKE AWAY

Pride is the one sin that convinces you that you don't need healing, while putting you on a collision course with God. The way up is down: humble yourself and let God lift you.

PRAYER PROMPT

Ask the Lord to search out any pride hiding in your heart, and to give you the humility that receives His grace.