

Jam 4:6-8

BUT HE GIVES MORE GRACE

PRELIMS. James has been showing us the dangers of being friends with the world. Being worldly has nothing to do with dress, or hair-styles, or playing cards, it means having the **attitude** /mind/heart/**spirit** of the world towards **people**/things! Its a **philosophy** of life (eat drink, merry for...) Adopting the **values/ideals** of the world and applying them to life. *Then he goes on to talk of God giving **more grace** to those who already have grace (ie, the **humble**) "*Therefore He says 'God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble'*" [6]. And then adds "*Therefore submit to God...resist the devil...draw near*". If we **obey** these 3 commands/duties we get "**more grace**" [6]!! And God **always** keeps His **promise!**

However, we need to remember that most of God's promises carry **conditions!** Eg "*if My people who are called by My name **will** humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, **then** I will hear from heaven, and will forgive*" [2Chr 7:14] + "*no good thing will He withhold from them*" **if** we "*walk uprightly*" [P84:11] + We will be "*able to quench all the fiery darts*" **if** we take "*the shield of faith*" [Eph 6:16] Your **salvation** and mine is **conditional** to our **believing/receiving/resting** on X! And here, the devil will only flee from us **if** we **resist** him! [7] The Lord will only draw near to us **if** we draw near to Him! [8] The Lord will lift you up" **only** if we humble ourselves! [10] Yes, 'God provides food for the birds, but He does not throw it into the nest'! So **APP** if you and I want these wonderful promises then we have **responsibilities** and **duties** which are conditional to their fulfilment. Lets look...

SUBMIT to GOD

No. 1 - "*submit to God*". James is **not** talking about a **wrestling** match, where submission is a sign of **defeat!** Submission to God is **not weakness!** The root meaning is to **obey!** Not weakness but **strength! Only** strong Xians submit to God! To accept a superior **authority** and to obey willingly is a sign of great strength! Our society does not teach that much – but it is all over God's Word. Can't have order without respect/submission to authority by **some** members!

Obedience is **not inferiority!** The Trinity, Perfect Society - Order/Roles/Submission Jesus Christ is our best **model!** "*I always do those things that please Him*" [J8:29]! Under extreme pressure "*Not My will but Yours be done*"? Did He not **teach** us to pray "*Thy will be done*"? Thruout His **whole** life Jesus **submitted** to His Father's will and **everything** He did was in obedience and submission to His Father! "*As the Father gave Me a commandment, so I do*" [J14:31] + "*Most assuredly I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself but what He sees the Father*" [J5:19] As a 12yr old He went with His parents to Nazareth and "*was subject to them*" [L2:51] **after** being in the company of **Drs of Theology** in the Temple! **APP** Coming from University many students feel they are **above** others!

Because He was submissive to God, **because** He was obedient to God, He received the Spirit - **above measure!** X received **power** to perform miracles **not** from His **Divinity** – but as a result of His **faith/dependence** on the Holy Spirit. How was He able to cast out devils? "*I cast out demons by the Spirit of God*" [M12:28] Peter says He "*went about doing good and healing*" **not** because He was Divine, but because God **anointed** Him

“with the Holy **Spirit** & with power”[Ac10:38] Jesus defeated the temptations of Satan because He was “**led** by the Spirit...to be tempted” [M/L4:1] + “He returned in the power of the **Spirit** to Galilee” [L4:14] As the 2nd Adam He **would** not use power that the 1st Adam did not have, thus refused to turn stone into bread! He drew power from the **same source** that Unfallen Adam could (and did) draw from! X did **not** ‘switch’ from one mode to another, from human mode to Divine mode, whenever things got difficult! **APP** That’s **good news**, for it means **you/I** can **also** have a great measure of the Spirit by our submitting to God and serving God!! **You/I** as believers have **access** to the **same source of power** that Jesus had – God! If **you/I** have the same **priorities** as Jesus had, who knows what **we** could do!!

RESIST the DEVIL

“**Resist** the devil”[7b] You don’t have to pick a fight with the devil, he picks it with you “**he goes about as a roaring lion seeking...**” ! He is **always** on the offensive/attack! Word here is same as “**take the whole armour of God...stand therefore**” ! ! Times when we do not go forward but we do **not** go back either – you just **stand** “**Watch, stand fast, be brave, be strong**” [1C16:13] + “**Put on the whole armour of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil...and having done all, to stand**”[Eph 6:11] **Braveheart** film scene! Scotland’s battle lines were set in array. England showered arrows – piled them up. Scotland just put up shields, all around them!! The English arrows were **spent**! Scotland **stood fast**! Resisted! Resist does **not mean** run away! It’s the devil that does the running! Let devil see **you** can **stand** against him. To stand against the devil is **not** a **passive** activity – it is an **active** stand!

Standing fast has advantages - **enemy** gets **tired**! He gets tired and runs away. Because he does **not** have what Christ has - an **endless fountain** of help! Satan is **not omnipotent**! He is not God! He has the **discouragement** of knowing he is **already** defeated. **You/I** have the **encouragement** of knowing we are **victors** in Christ Jesus! **If** we submit & resist!

When you resist or stand, you are still **alert**. (Story of DSearle on guard duty suggesting ‘instead of marching like an idiot, hide flat on ground and watch’! ‘No, you would fall asleep’!) Guards need to be constantly alert! So do we Xians! “**be vigilant because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour**” [1P5:8] Being vigilant is being there just **to resist**! To **foil** Satan by our mere **presence** – your ‘presence’ alone, being vigilant, can sometimes thwart Satan from his evil intentions! In a sense we ‘**engage**’ Satan, rather than **pretend** he is not there! **APP** Today many people are **confused** about life, so they just ‘close their eyes’ and run away from **reality** having no solution to the problems of life. And they opt for **transcendental meditation** – and **empty** their minds and allow Satan to come in and fill it! Instead of **fixing** our eyes on Jesus & filling our minds with truth! Xians know their enemy!

DRAWING NEAR TO GOD

This is so vital/necessary! We **need** to come! Devil has fooled many **Calvinists**! Many **feel** they can’t come because of **sin**! They say ‘God is holy, I’m unholy, we must not be presumptuous’! But look... “**Draw near...you sinners**”[8] Jesus “**I have not come to**

call the righteous but sinners to repentance” Its sinners that must come **with** their sins! Sin is the very **reason** you should come! **God invites** you sinner!

Never **assume** that because you go to a sound church, pray regularly, read your Bible daily, you are near to God! You can be **‘miles away’** from God at the Lord’s Supper!! To be near to God is **not** to be physically near the ‘elements/symbols! Rather it is to **agree** with God in everything! It is to have His **mind** and to **enjoy** having it and **really wanting** to **please** Him! Thus Paul to Colossians *“fully pleasing Him”* [Col 1:10]. When you draw near Him, you **know** your **hands** are **dirty** with sin! *“Cleanse your hands, you sinners”*, ie Clean up your life! Peter fell down *“Depart from me for I am a sinful man”*! Pilate was ‘near’ Jesus ‘tried’ to cleanse his hands by **washing** them! And it is **necessary** that we wash away these **outward** obvious sins which are a stain to Christ. But the **emphasis** is on *“purify your hearts”* [8c] Pilate needed a new heart! We must come near to God with a pure heart, a heart that has been ‘anointed’ by the Spirit of God

Well, what’s that? It means, a heart that is **single minded** – not double minded – one moment for God, next moment for the world! One week they are religious, next week they are in the world and no word about Jesus! James has already told us that it is the *“double-minded man”* that *“is unstable in all his ways”* [1:8] It is the *“double-minded”* [8] that are called to purify their hearts! You **can’t rely** and **depend** on the double-minded person being there for you! Well, the double-minded person spoken of here, is the person that **God** can’t depend on to be there for **Him** to support His Cause at the time when His Cause on earth needs him/her most!

We must remember, that God/Christ’s Cause is **always represented** by His Church. *“He is the head of the body –the Church”* [Col 1:18]! We don’t have a body-less Christ – the Church is the **‘doing-part’** of the head! We help the Cause only in as much as we help the Church to fulfil the programme **He** has for it! You are never drawing nearer to God that when you are **engaged in service** for Him with a pure and single-minded **heart!** *The Church remember is **not simply** a preaching station. The Church is not simply a lecture hall which feeds the mind only – it a **hospital** where the spiritually ill are **nourished** to health and strength with appropriate **treatment** for the **body**. Jesus’ religion was **practical!** In some way, He **healed** everyone He met. The Church should at least in some way reflect that same image of healing.

May this building is wonderful – may it be a place where **you**, the Body of Christ will bring **healing, help, holiness** to many people! May you all get **more grace** so that this place will be a **Bethel Hospital** where people from the community will ‘draw near’ for healing!