

James

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James 4:8-10

Vss. 8-10

- James here is calling for people who call themselves Christian to actually **BE** Christian. Repentance is not just for those outside the church. Recall that as Jesus began his ministry in Matthew 4:17, His message was "Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand". And to whom was He giving this call to repent? To the people of Israel, the people of God, all of the people who had been in the synagogue just the Saturday before.
- He begins his call to repentance with a promise: Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. If you genuinely looks for God, you will not be disappointed. You will find Him because not only does God not play Hide and Seek, making it difficult for you to find Him, but you will be sure to find Him because HE is looking for you!
- James reminds us that we need to repent because we are sinners. The word he uses here for "sinners" may be translated as "one who chooses to live I the company of disobedience, living a corrupt life". Such a life will never do for those who dare to call themselves "Christian". James quotes Psalm 24:4, reminding us that God requires His people to come to Him with "clean hands and a pure heart".
- James uses the term "double minded" in 1:8. One of his key points, as we see in the earlier verses of Ch. 4, is to correct people in the church who have one foot in the church and one foot in the world. These are the people who may act one way at church on Sunday and then be completely different on Monday: Heavenly on Sunday, Worldly the rest of the week. No, says James, this will not do. Jesus Himself said that no one can serve two masters. A person cannot serve God and the World/Wealth/Satan at the same time (Matthew 6:24).
- James tells us that once we see our sin, once we see just how double minded we are, once we see just how far from The way of Christ we have wandered, then deep sorrow

is our only response. Just as Peter “wept bitterly” as he staggered away from denying Jesus three times at the house of the high priest, so too should we weep as our sin is nothing less than the same denial. Living in The Way brings joy as we walk in the Light. Wander off and life gets darker and sorrow is the only way back.

- 1) Be miserable: to live when the food is gone and there is no shelter from the storms.
 - 2) Mourn: Turning laughter into mourning...the best image I can think of is the attitude of the German people just before the war and in the early stages of the war. There were wild celebrations of Hitler and the early victories of the German army from 1939 to late 1941. Contrast that with the look of Berlin’s survivors in 1945. The laughter brought from sin had turned to mourning once the sin was seen for what it truly was.
 - 3) Weep: tears of shame and sympathy; shame for our own sin and sympathy for those around us who are righteously broken as well.
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- Then like the Prodigal, the road back is the road of humility. Job 22:29 tells us it is the humble whom God will save, a theme that runs throughout Scripture. Pride is arguably the original sin, and perhaps the most potent. As The Serpent (Satan) is suggesting that eating the forbidden fruit would be OK, the Adversary says that the reason it is forbidden is that if you eat it, then you will be like God (Genesis 3:5). To put ourselves on the throne of God has been the goal of rebellious humanity ever since. This it is only when a person finally sees their true poverty, their spiritual poverty, when they finally see themselves as the poor in spirit can theirs be the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 5:3). Only when we finally admit our weakness can God’s strength make us strong (2 Corinthians 12:9).