

C. *Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom.*

Moo: *Many people in our day, both outside the church and within it, are marked by a superficial joy and brittle laughter. They live the hedonist philosophy, 'eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die', that ignores the terrifying reality of God's judgment. But even the committed Christian can slip into a casual attitude towards sin, perhaps presuming too much on God's forgiving and merciful nature. It is to all such people that James issues his plea for a radical, thoroughgoing repentance. Only such repentance can produce true Christian joy – the joy that overflows from the consciousness of sins forgiven.*

D. We will not be left down! (10)

LIVE THE STORY

The Gospel is intended to be learned and lived in community. The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- Read James 4:6-10. What are some things you notice about the text? How it begins and ends? What else stands out?
- Explain why the text answers these questions: How do we humble ourselves? How do we cure this roaming heart? How do we stop letting the heart always pursue what it wants?
- What does it mean to say that we resist the devil by profession and prayer? Can you use scripture to demonstrate this?
- In what sense are submitting to God and resisting the devil two sides of the same coin?
- Why does submitting to God require us to accept His word as the truth and to doubt our own desires and thoughts?
- Why do cleansing our hands and purifying our heart require the High Priestly ministry of Jesus?
- Describe what James 4:9 tells us in regard to reforming our hearts... changing the way we think about sin.

Faith that Turns Your World Right Side Up (Part 12)

Receiving God's Reconciling Grace for Sin

Jerry Cisar — July 31, 2016

Text: James 4:6b-10

Introduction: Reconciling Our Infidelity with God (4:6)

I. Submit Yourselves to God (4:7-8a)

A. Submit Yourselves to God

Cornelius Plantinga Jr.: *“What is troubling is that the advocates of humility and submissiveness have often had a personal stake in the popularity of these virtues and have therefore made adopting them look like the project of a special-interest group.”*

i. This means *to put yourself under the control of God!*

G.K. Chesterton: *“A man was meant to be doubtful about himself, but undoubting about the truth; this has been exactly reversed.”*

ii. Biblical humility begins by doubting ourselves, and staking everything on the truth of something as “wholly other than us” as possible—God.

B. Resist the devil.

i. Submitting to God and resisting the devil are two sides of the same coin. (Luke 4:1-13)

- ii. We resist by Profession and Prayer. (Matthew 6:13)

McCartney: *It is the devil who fosters jealousy and ambition,... and brews a broth of discord and contention and murderous envy to sap the church's vitality and undermine its integrity. The appropriate response to the demonic urge is to not give in to it.*

C. *Come near to God and he will come near to you.*

- i. *Coming near to God, drawing near to God*, is an expression of submitting ourselves to God.

Humility is found as we submit ourselves by drawing near to God in prayer, in worship, and by meditating on His commands.

- ii. Isaiah 55:1-9
 - a) *“Seek ye the Lord, and when ye find him, call upon him; and when **he shall draw nigh to you**, let the ungodly leave his ways, and the transgressor his counsels: and let him return to the Lord, and he shall find mercy; for he shall abundantly pardon your sins.”* (Isaiah 55:6-7 LXE)
 - b) We will find mercy when God draws near to us... we will find pardon for our sins.

II. Reforming Your Hearts (4:8b-10)

A. Why clean our hands and purify our hearts?

- i. Sin Pollutes

➤ Psalm 24:3-4

- ii. The Day of Atonement.

a) Leviticus 16:29-34

b) There is no purifying our hearts apart from priestly ministry—the priestly ministry of Jesus.

- iii. Hands and hearts speaks of the whole of us.

➤ 2 Corinthians 7:1

B. *Grieve, mourn, and wail.*

- i. *Grieve: to express sorrow or remorse for sin; to lower ourselves.*

- ii. *Mourn: a change from delighting in sin to grieving over it.*

a) Isaiah 61:2-3

b) 1 Corinthians 5:1-2

- iii. *Wail*

a) Revelation 18:9

➤ That weeping is at the great sense of loss they feel as they see their hopes wiped away.

b) Believers are called to weep over their sin... weep over the great sense of loss they have over how their idolatry has grieved their Husband, the Lord.

- iv. James is calling us to return to God.

a) Joel 2:12-13

b) James is calling for the heart to be reformed in how it views sin.