

COME NEAR TO GOD

JAMES 4:5-10

How did you see God working in your life this week? (Romans 1:11, 12)

BACKGROUND: This lesson centers on seeing yourself as God sees you. To overcome your sinfulness and draw near to God, your Lord gives you grace and, if needed, a “greater grace.”

HUMBLE YOURSELF. Pride is “a feeling that you respect yourself and deserve to be respected by other people; a feeling that you are more important and better than other people.” Merriam Webster’s Dictionary. With self-humbling you come to God in your utter smallness and His utter greatness. Satan’s “primary purpose is to separate God and man. Whatever power Satan may have, the Christian can be absolutely certain that he has been given the ability to overcome that power.” Douglas Moo, The Letter of James, p. 193. In humility you come to God. In pride, you stay with Satan. (**James 4:6, 7, fn 4:4-6, fn 4:7, Proverbs 16:18, fn 16:18, Isaiah 55:6, 7, fn 55:6, Ephesians 6:10-13, fn 6:12**) *Of all the people you encounter, which are you better than? How should you approach Jesus in prayer?*

JUDGE YOURSELF. The sweet sorrow of repentance humbly draws you to Jesus and releases the painful burdens of a heavy heart which are caused by sin. The blood of Christ conquered all sin at the cross. Sin has its limit, but abundant grace is endless. (**James 4:8, 9, fn 4:7-10, II Corinthians 7:9, 10, fn 7:10, I John 1:5-10, fn 1:8-10, Romans 5:20, fn 5:20, Hebrews 4:12, fn 4:12**) *How do you know you can draw near to God?*

AGAIN, HUMBLE YOURSELF to be lifted up and experience God’s grace, His power. This means “to recognize our own spiritual poverty, to acknowledge consequently our desperate need for God’s help, and to submit to his commanding will for our lives...we gain spiritual vitality and victory not through our own strength or effort but through giving ourselves completely to the Lord.” Douglas Moo, The Letter of James, p. 196. (**James 4:10, fn 4:10, Luke 18:8-14, fn 18:11-14, Proverbs 3:34, I Peter 5:5-9, fn 5:6**) *How could prayer time with your Lord and the Bible be exhilarating?*

Check up—How is your relationship with your neighbor, your spouse, and your Lord? Do your actions show that you are being led by the Holy Spirit?

