

Grace

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: James 4.

B. Outline: problem (1-5), promise (6a), principle (6b) and the practice (7-17).

II. The problem: self-gratification.

A. This is putting self first.

B. Bitter jealousy wants others down, and selfishness wants us up.

C. We have all been affected by sin. Even the disciples were concerned with who among them was the greatest and the least before Jesus died.

D. The result of sin: conflict.

1. With others.

2. With self.

3. With God.

E. But where sin abounded, grace abounded all the more.

III. The promise: grace.

A. Grace is the unmerited favor of God - undeserved by man.

B. We have a ministry by the mercy of God not because of our merit.

C. God's grace is sufficient.

1. It was sufficient for Paul who carried a cross.

2. Knowing this Paul gloried in his troubles.

3. God's grace is inexhaustible.

D. The greater the trial, the greater the grace.

IV. The principle: God giving grace opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble.

- A. Satan is the chief example. (Isaiah 14)
- B. Pride is the root of all sin and shuts out the supply of grace.
- C. We do not want the God of all the universe opposing us.
- D. Humility opens up the channel of grace.

V. The practice of the principle.

A. Humility towards God.

1. We are to submit ourselves to God and resist the Devil.
2. We are always to begin with God.
3. Let God be God.
4. Humility before God is to acknowledge the truth of our position before Him as creature. We are His servants; He is not ours.
5. The call to submit is an active call to the battle.
6. Whenever you are ready - you set the time - and God will be there.
7. The result: you see God and then you see your sin. We begin with Him, and He graciously reveals to us what we need to deal with.
8. We are to pursue clean hands and forgiveness thoroughly.

B. Humility towards others.

1. This means we cannot judge others.
2. The reason is because we are not God and we do not even live up to our own standards.

C. Humility towards ourselves.

1. We do not know about tomorrow.
2. We ought to believe that things will only happen if God wills whether we say it or not.
3. Someday we will see our last on earth. (John 21)

Application questions

1. What does humility look like as applied to God, others and self? Explain.

2. How does grace relate to humility?

3. In what area do you see yourself needing the greatest humility? How will you make a change in this area? Be specific.
