

James 4:7-10 Part One

Introduction #1: These verses contain ten commands, which form a clear picture of salvation. A lot of commentators assume these verses apply to Christians, and there is some truth in that, but the context is James speaking to those who are religious but lost. Those in the church, who look and act the part, but inwardly are lost. This is the greatest threat to the church's purity today are those who act and look the part, but aren't true believers. Much of this assumption has come from weak preaching, feel good theology and a lack of true biblical teaching from the pulpit. James makes a plea here for those to repent.

Introduction #2: James purpose through the epistle is for Christians to test their faith. This isn't an uncommon theme in Scripture, cf. Matthew 13:24-30. James' final plea is found in James 5:19-20 "My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins."

Introduction #3: We have significant warnings in Scripture concerning this, cf James 3:13-15; 4:4; Isaiah 55:6 "Seek the Lord while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near." Matthew 11:28-29 "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." Matthew 16:24-26 "Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? "

The test of genuine faith continues in our text today.

POINT #1 - SUBMISSION

The word submit is primarily a military term. It means to "rank under" and the passive form of the word indicates the submission is voluntary. It is used of Jesus in Luke 2:51 "And He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and He continued in subjection to them; and His mother treasured all *these* things in her heart." Paul uses the word to indicate a Christians responsibility to government, Romans 13:1 "Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God." The word is used as a wife's responsibility to her husband, Ephesians 5:21-24 "Wives, *be subject* to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself *being* the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives *ought to be* to their husbands in everything." There's the submission to employers, 1 Peter 2:18 "Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable." Obviously, the slave and master words are hideous to us today given what we know them to mean in American history, but this text isn't speaking of evil mastery or slavery but those who work for others.

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Application to us: a believer willingly submits to the authority of God. An unbeliever does not, he does things his way and a way that seems right to himself, Proverbs 14:12 *“There is a way which seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.”* There is simply no thing as trusting Christ as Savior and not submitting to Him. Matthew 10:39 *“He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.”* Luke 14:27 *“Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.”* A believer was once under submission to Satan, now is under submission to Christ. If you aren’t submitting to the holiness and words of God, then you aren’t a believer.

POINT #2 - RESISTANCE

By definition to submit to God, your new Lord, is to resist the devil. Resist translates the word *anthisetmi*, which literally means, *“To stand against or to oppose.”* There is no middle ground or neutrality. This is made clear in our text, cf. James 4:4. To submit and stand with the Lord is to oppose everything you did before Christ, cf. Ephesians 2:1-3.

Devil means “slanderer, accuser.” Anyone who does not belong to Christ is a child of Satan, John 8:44 *“You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies”* 1 John 3:8 *“the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.”*

Application to us: Salvation brings a change of masters, a change of allegiance, and a change of family. The believers life is a turning from the devil and serving him to being slave to righteousness and of God, cf. Romans 6:16-22. Satan cannot force a Christian to sin. You are no longer a part of that family. This is the essence of submission. Submit to God and His ways and righteousness and the devil will flee. This is why we have Ephesians 6:10-17.

POINT #3 - FELLOWSHIP

Salvation provided fellowship with the Father. Psalms 42:2 *“As a deer pants for the water brooks, So my soul pants for You, O God.”* One primary function of OT priests was to come near the Lord and concentrate themselves. Exodus 19:22 *“Also let the priests who come near the Lord consecrate themselves, or else the Lord will break out against them.”* Drawing near to God is the OT equivalent for one who sincerely approaches God in penitence and humility. The promise of the Psalm in 145:18 *“The Lord is near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth.”*

The promises of seeking God found in 1 Chronicles 28:9 *“As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a whole heart and a willing mind; for the Lord searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but*

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if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever.” Jeremiah 29:13 “You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.” The redeemed heart longs for communion with God. Psalms 27:8 “When you said, seek My face, my heart said to You, Your Face O Lord I will seek.” Psalms 63:1-2 “O God, You are my God; I shall seek You earnestly; My soul thirsts for You, my flesh yearns for You, In a dry and weary land where there is no water. Thus I have seen You in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory.”

These are three important truths that show signs of redemption. Submission to the Lord and His word. Resisting the temptations of the devil and following the Lord. Seeking fellowship with God and His word.