

Sunday Celebration (February 14, 2010)
"God's Response & Our Response to Idolatry"

Personal Idols (Pt. 5)

INTRO

"The whole movement of James' thought... is to reveal that public problems have private causes (the self-pleasing heart). As we seek now, with James, to move forward from this point, we find that his first thought is to put the entire problem into a different context. ...his concern is not that we have played false with each other but that we have played false with God. ...Our problem is in fact a spiritual one: how to get right with God and how to stay right with Him." J.A. Motyer, "The Message of James", p. 145-146

- Have You Brought This Assessment to Your Various Relational Conflicts?

God's Response

Jam 4:6-10

v. 6 ... "He gives more grace"

***"more/greater" Than WHAT? Than the Adulteress
Desire/Passion of the Heart that has caused us to befriend the
world's promises and displace God!***

THIS IS A FAMILIAR THEME:

... When Abraham was worshipping IDOLS in Ur God Gave a GREATER GRACE to Win His Heart!

... When Jacob was SCHEMING His Way Through Life for His OWN GAIN ...
God Gave a Greater Grace

*"Jacob, the man stumbling from one family conflict to another, demonstrates quite a different virtue. He shows us the triumph of grace over all obstacles. Jacob, with all of his sinning, scheming, and plotting, is the perfect model of how God's undeserved favor can succeed even with the most unpromising material."
Iain Duguid, "Living in the Grip of Relentless Grace", p. 6*

... When we were Passionately Committed to Ourselves ... God Gave a Greater Grace!

Eph 2:1-7

.... **Jam 4:6 isn't teaching anything new!!**

"This verse means there will always be enough grace regardless of our situation or need—always. ... 'For daily need there is daily grace; for sudden need, sudden grace; for overwhelming need, overwhelming grace,' says John Blanchard." Kent Hughes, "James", p. 178

How Does One Tell Whether You Have Sufficient Grace? ...

2Cor 12:7-10 ... In the midst of weakness ... Grace Was Sufficient!

v. 6 ... "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

"But, in keeping with his strong emphasis on exhortation throughout the letter, James does not let this word of grace stand by itself for long. God's grace demands response: the response of humility." Douglas Moo, "The Letter of James", PNTC, p. 191

"But grace in God has a correlative in man. James, having pointed to God's sufficiency points on to our responsibility. In verses 7-10 there are no less than 10 commands to obey. James does not see the indwelling Spirit (v. 5) as a means of instant and effortless sanctification—rather, the Holy One may dwell within even while we pursue the pathway of sinful self-seeking. In the same way he does not see the inexhaustible supply of grace as sweeping us along to an effortless holiness. He knows of no such easy victory. The benefits of grace and more grace are ours along the road of obedience and more obedience." J.A. Motyer, "The Message of James", p. 151

Our Response

v. 7 ... Submit yourselves to God

"To submit to God means to place ourselves under his lordship, and therefore to commit ourselves to obey him in all things." Douglas Moo, "The Letter of James", PNTC, p. 192

... Also, v. 8 ("Draw near to God")

"The first element in the conflict is this central battle to live near God, the battle for regularity and discipline in Bible reading, prayer, private and public worship, feasting at the Lord's Table, devoting ourselves to Christian fellowship, cultivating every appointed avenue whereby we can draw near to him. Fellowship with God—and its consequent blessing of his fellowship with us—does not 'just happen'; we cannot drift into it any more than we drift into holiness. It is our first obedience." J.A. Motyer, "The Message of James", p. 152

"Logic might suggest that we must clean up our lives and then draw near to God. James' logic is otherwise, for it is when we know the reality of his presence and come under its holy influence that we are at last in a position to face the demands of holiness, and find ourselves motivated by the desire to be like our God." J.A. Motyer, "The Message of James", p. 153

v. 7 ... Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you

Both of These Things are DOABLE!!.... Overcoming Idolatry is DOABLE! – Not Easy, but DOABLE!!

"When we resist the devil's purposes, he will, James promises, flee from you. ... 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", PNTC, p. 193

"FLEEING IDOLATRY"

- 1 Cor 6:12, 17-18** "All things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be enslaved by anything. ... **17** But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. **18** Flee from sexual immorality.
- 1 Cor 10:13-14** No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. **14** Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.
- 1 Tim 6:10-11** For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. **11** But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness.
- 2 Tim 2:21-22** if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work. **22** So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.