

Bible Experience

James 4:4-10

You adulterers! Don't you realize that friendship with this world makes you an enemy of God? I say it again, that if your aim is to enjoy this world, you can't be a friend of God. 5 What do you think the Scriptures mean when they say that the Holy Spirit, whom God has placed within us, jealously longs for us to be faithful? 6 He gives us more and more strength to stand against such evil desires. As the Scriptures say,

"God sets himself against the proud,
but he shows favor to the humble."

7 So humble yourselves before God. Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Draw close to God, and God will draw close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, you hypocrites. 9 Let there be tears for the wrong things you have done. Let there be sorrow and deep grief. Let there be sadness instead of laughter, and gloom instead of joy. 10 When you bow down before the Lord and admit your dependence on him, he will lift you up and give you honor. NLT

What you will need:

Your Journal
A black crayon or marker
Several slips of paper
A lighter or matches
A safe place to burn paper

1) Read it

Read the passage to yourself. Notice how much of the passage talks about turning away from sin.

2) Think about it

Many people like to look at verse 7, "So humble yourselves before God. Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you. (NLT)

I don't blame them. Verse 7 is an awesome verse. One problem that I have seen is that a lot of people like to focus on Resisting the Devil and having him flee from us. This is a wonderful thought, but we can't forget about the "humble yourselves before God" part.

God opposes the proud. If we are operating in pride in our life, God will actually set himself against us. If we are full of ourselves, we are no good to God. In order for us to be useful, God needs to humble us.

So the only choice we have is to either humble ourselves before God, or God will have to humble us. Let me tell you from experience that the first one is much better. It saves you a lot of pain and humiliation.

What is the ultimate source of pride? The answer is Ignoring God's commands and living a sinful lifestyle. When we do that, we're telling God that we know better than he does. We're shouting in God's face that we're in charge and He's not.

That's why humbling yourself and drawing close to God is tied to repentance. You can't hold on to sin and humble yourself before God at the same time. It doesn't work.

3) Write it!

Write James 4:7 down 5 times in your journal. Double underline the part about Humbling yourself before God.

4) Say it!

Now say James 4:7 without looking. Congratulations! You have just memorized another scripture verse.

5) Burn it!

Spend some time examining your life. Honestly evaluate how you are doing in all areas of your life.

Now find the slips of paper and the black crayon or marker and write down areas of sin in your life. Be honest. No one else is going to see them.

Find a place that is safe to burn the slips. If you are physically able, kneel down and burn the slips of paper. Ask God to forgive you from that sin as you watch it burn. Ask Him to help you totally burn away that sin in your life just as the fire is destroying the paper.

1 John 1:9 says "But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong. (NLT)

As the slips of paper turn to ashes, accept the forgiveness of God in your life. Just as that piece of paper is no longer there, the guilt and condemnation of your sin is gone! God has totally erased your sin because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross.

6) Write in your Journal

Write your thoughts to God in your journal. Write out a prayer of repentance to God. Humble yourself before Him. Ask Him to help you live a holy life. Praise Him for the forgiveness of your sins. Admit your dependence on Him.

