

JAMES

WEEK 4

Sarah Stanley (November 20-21, 2021)

JAMES 4

Every time we open our mouths Christian truth and community is on the line.

TALK ABOUT IT

1. If given the chance to go back in time to change anything you wanted, would you take it? Why or why not?
2. What do we learn about God when He invites us into a way of living that is different than the way the world lives?
3. How would you describe the condition of your heart in one word and what do you need to ask God for right now?

LOOK TO THE WORD

Read James 4.

- What stood out? (e.g. themes, verses, recurring thoughts, images)
- What questions stand out?
- What is one key verse?

You adulterers! Don't you realize that friendship with the world makes you an enemy of God? James 4:4

- What does it mean to be an adulterer or adulteress for James?
- What characterizes "friendship with the world"?
- Why does friendship with the world make you an enemy to God?

So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; ...

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purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world. James 4:6-7

- What Biblical examples help you understand what it means to “humble yourselves before God”?
- If “resist” means “stand against”, what is James calling God’s people to do as they take action and move close to God?
- Why is it important to “purify your hearts” as you come before God?

Let there be tears for what you have done. Let there be sorrow and deep grief. Let there be sadness instead of laughter, and gloom instead of joy. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up in honor. James 4:7-10

- Why is lament, sorrow and grief important to someone following Jesus?
- What is the connection between lament/sorrow/grief/sadness, humility and God lifting you up in honor?
- What does it mean that God will “lift you up in honor”?

LOOK INWARD

Sarah said, “When we’re driven to pursue only the things that benefit us, make us look good, feel good, and lose sight of the God [this is] where we find ourselves trying to live in the “both/and”.

- When have you experienced times in your life where you really want “both/and”?
- What are ways that people can lose sight of God, even with the best intentions?
- Why does the world appeal to us so much: with things that benefit us and make us feel good?

You don’t have what you want because you don’t ask God for it. And even when you ask, you don’t get it because your motives are all wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure. James 4:2-3

- What is your prayer life like? Describe it in a few words.
- What type of things do you ask God for in prayer?
 - Can you clearly describe your motives?
- What is the connection between James’ call to humility and prayer?

THE BOOK OF

JAMES

The purpose of prayer is to align our will with His, and in partnership with Him, to ask Him to accomplish His will on this earth.” - David Guzik

When we truly embrace this Christ-like humility that James is talking about, we’re able to enter into a process of transformation.

- Sarah went on to mention mourning and weeping over sin as we experience God’s grace. What does Christ-like humility look like in someone’s life?
- What does it look like in your life?
- In humble prayer, how are you asking God to transform your life?

LOOK OUTWARD

What is causing quarrels and fights among you? James 4:1

Sarah pointed out “it’s not even that they’re fighting with unbelievers, it’s inside the church that’s a mess.”

- How can “friendship with the world”, wrong motives or lack of humility impact our relationships in the Church?
- How about outside the Church?

Sarah said, “That’s humility. That is others first. Not for anyone to see, not to pump up the ego or gain followers. Simply, to serve. Seeing a need, and meeting it...”

- When was a time that you saw someone serve not for anyone to see?
- Right now, who has a need you can meet?

What is humility?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Others first & generous - Recognize & Submit to God’s authority - Letting go of pride - Taking a vested interest in others | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Embracing that you are loved simply for who you are & not what you do - Showing up and being present in the mess, not curating your image |
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SO WHAT?

Jesus came so that we might have life and have it to the full and when we humble ourselves before God we become a part of what He is doing.

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BREATH PRAYER

God, help me humble myself and align with Your ways.

WEEKLY PRACTICE

Serving

With such great need in the our province and world right now, it may be easy to see a need but hard to know how to respond.

This week, take time to pray and ask God to reveal to you how you have been uniquely gifted to meet a need. Whether it has to do with your neighbours, your town, the state of emergency in BC or a global need, take an opportunity to serve.

NEVER STOP PRAYING

- Praise God for His promises and the hope it gives us
- Praise God for the baptisms we shared in this weekend
- Pray for those who were baptized that they would know God's protection as they take their next steps
- Pray for the state of emergency in British Columbia
- Pray those without homes as the winter season is upon us
- Pray for our process of capital renewal and restoration
- Pray for those in our congregation and neighbourhoods that are lonely and feeling isolated