

## THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

### Theme: "The Testing of Your Faith"

Lesson: 28

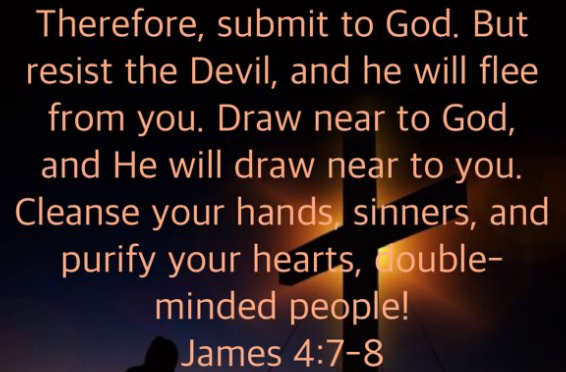
Text: 4:7-10

Date: 10-8-23

Trinity Lutheran Church

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Therefore, submit to God. But resist the Devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, sinners, and purify your hearts, double-minded people!  
James 4:7-8

### TEXT AND STUDY NOTES

(7) Submit yourselves therefore to **God**. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

(8) Draw near **to God**, and **he will draw near** to you.

Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

(9) Be wretched and mourn and weep.

Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.

(10) Humble yourselves **before the Lord**, and **he will** exalt you.

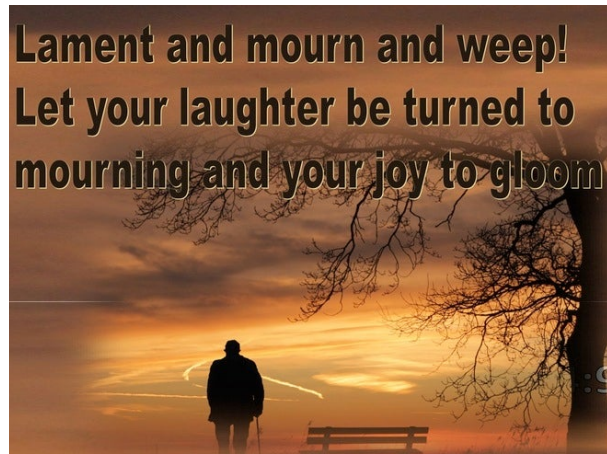
**(Ex 30:17-21; Dt 4:7; Job 5:11;**

**Ps 24:3-4; 51:17; 73:28; 119:113,169,170; Is 1:16; 57:14-16;**

**Jer 4:14; Mic 1:8,9; 2:4; Joel 1:5,12; Zech 1:3; Mal 3:7;**

**Mt 5:4; Lk 1:52; 6:25; 15:20 18:14;**

**Eph 4:27; 6:11-18; Heb 7:19; 1 Pet 5:6-9)**



**Lament and mourn and weep!  
Let your laughter be turned to  
mourning and your joy to gloom**

Following James' condemnation of his readers is a specific Christology, offering a solution to the dilemma of sin that threatens them with damnation. “Humble yourselves before the Lord and He will exalt you (*tapeinōthēte enōpion kuriou, kai hupsōsei humas*)” reflects these words of Jesus: “He who is greatest among you shall be your servant; whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted” (Matt. 23:11-12). These words carry with them a specific Christology. Here is a clear case of a general reference most appropriately used of Christ, though later it is applicable to all Christians. As Christ humbled Himself to be exalted by God, so Christians sharing in His humility will also be exalted in Him. The same literary method is used in the Beatitudes and is traceable in James. The same words for “humbled” and “exalted” are used in James and Matthew, and thus a dependence in some sense or a common source for them seems probable. In Matt. 23:11-12 Jesus is referring to Himself, as He is also in Matt. 20:26. He is both servant and slave, and in that capacity He offers up His life in death as the atonement (Matt. 20:26-28). Paul in his great hymn to Christ uses the same terminology in describing Christ's humiliating Himself and His subsequent exaltation by God (Phil. 2:8-10).<sup>8</sup>

The concept of humiliation is introduced into this pericope by quoting Prov. 3:34, where the Greek word for humble in the Septuagint is *tapeinos*, a term Jesus applied to Himself in a very special way in Matt. 11:29: “Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me; for I am gentle and *lowly* in heart.” Humility for its own sake is for James no virtue; it has value only as the believer shares in Christ's humiliation, which is reliance on God.<sup>9</sup> This means release from sin and Satan.

In Phil. 2:5-11 Paul preserves the great hymn to Christ which may have originated in the Jerusalem church, headed by James. This hymn blends the great themes of Christ's humility and exaltation by God into the Christian life. James has done no less than Paul with “Humble yourselves before the Lord and He will exalt you.”

Both Paul and James seem to develop their themes from Jesus' words in Matthew 20 and 23. Paul may have been influenced by James in developing his discussion of Christ's humility as well as other central themes such as justification by faith. Paul makes a point of having seen James, the Lord's brother, in Jerusalem (Gal. 1:19), and he counted him as a reliable witness of the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:7). In the twofold division of witnesses to the resurrection, Paul places James at the head of the second list and himself at the bottom (1 Cor. 15:7-8). All of this points to Paul's reliance on James in some sense.

**LIFE APPLICATION – Note all the imperatives:**

Submit - Resist

Draw Near - Cleanse - Purify

Be Wretched - Mourn - Weep

Laughter - Mourning- Joy – Gloom - Humble