

James 4:7-10  
Drawing Near to God - 1

1

Introduction

It is important to put this passage into context with the argument before.

James warns against being a friend of the world.

If one seeks after the things, acceptance, philosophy, and values of this world, it makes them an enemy of God.

James now shifts his argument to how to draw near to God.

2

## Introduction

These four verses contain ten commands. Together they form a call to salvation. James's purpose throughout the epistle is for Christians to test their faith to find out whether it is genuine or false. He wants no one to be deceived. For those who discover that they belong to the world, there is the wonderful offer of salvation.

There is also the charge for believers to put away any remaining vestiges of their former worldly living that continue to tarnish their spiritual lives.

3

## James 4:7-10

Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. <sup>8</sup> Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners: and and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded. <sup>9</sup> Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and *your* joy to gloom. <sup>10</sup> Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

4

## Submission

James 4:7a

Therefore submit to God.

The word “submit” was primarily a military term meaning literally “to rank under.” This verb is used frequently in the New Testament. Luke uses it of Jesus’ submission to His parents when He was a boy (Luke 2:51). Paul uses it to indicate a Christian’s responsibility to human government (Rom. 13:1), a slave to his master (Titus 2:9; cf. 1 Pet. 2:18) and family relationships.

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## Submission

James 4:7a

Therefore submit to God.

No one can be saved without submitting himself to God, willingly coming under His sovereign authority as Lord, to follow His will no matter what. Submitting to God is obeying His Word about Christ and the fullness of the “gospel of God” (Rom. 1:1), as well as submitting to Jesus as Lord and God (Rom. 10:8-10).

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## Submission

James 4:7a

Therefore submit to God.

We need to remember that our sin is directly linked to our submission to God.

In the Garden of Eden, Adam was told what he was and was not to do. He was to tend the Garden (which would have been pleasurable), and he was not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Satan enters and tempts Adam and Eve to submit to him (the Devil), which becomes rebellion to God.

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## Submission

James 4:7a

Therefore submit to God.

There are two points that need to be made here.

1. Our flesh hates to submit to authority. When we are told to do or not do something, we cringe inside.

In reality, we are resisting our authority and submitting to our flesh, our desires, and Satan's kingdom.

We will always submit to something or someone. The question is what will you submit to?

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## Submission

James 4:7a

Therefore submit to God.

2. When a person submits to one thing, they are rejecting the other. To put it a different way, every bondage brings a freedom, and every freedom brings a bondage. The world is seeking freedom from the things of God but become enslaved to their sin. You cannot serve both God and the World. Listen to the words of Jesus.

Matthew 6:24

No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

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## Submission

James 4:7a

Therefore submit to God.

Failure to submit to God is a declaration that one does not believe God is able to take care of them. It declares a lack of faith.

You must come to the understanding that God want the best for your life, and Satan wants what is best for himself. Satan and this world system will lie to you saying they are helping you to achieve your goals and potential. What the world offers does not do any of this. It only enslaves a person in pursuing that which is worthless.

One never comes to a point where they have “enough” of the world. Like an addict enslaved to their addiction, people become addicted to the pleasure and materialism of this world.

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## Submission

James 4:7a

Therefore submit to God.

Satan is not interested in what is best for you, but God is. Jesus loved you so much that He came to this world to die for your sin. He did not die so you can remain in bondage, but to set you free. But you have to make a choice in whom you will serve.

Jesus said, “He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it” (Matt. 10:39), and “And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.” (Luke 14:27).

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## Submission

James 4:7a

Therefore submit to God.

One cannot trust in Jesus as God and Savior and at the same moment reject Him as Lord. Where the believer was once under the lordship of Satan, through saving faith he places himself under the lordship of Jesus Christ. Where he was once the enemy of God and the slave of sin, he is now the loyal subject of his Lord and Master.

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## Resistance

James 4:7b

Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

To submit to God, your new Lord, is to resist the devil, your old lord. “**Resist**” means “to stand against”, “to oppose.” There is no middle ground, no neutrality. As James has just made clear, friendship with the world [Satan’s domain] is hostility toward God. To stand with Christ is to stand against everything sinful and worldly that formerly was appealing, corrupting, and enslaving (Eph. 2:1–3; Heb. 2:14–15).

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## Resistance

James 4:7b

Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

“Devil” means slanderer, or accuser. It is one of the most common titles of Satan in Scripture. Anyone who does not belong to Christ is a child of the devil (John 8:44). The one who belongs to Christ is of Him and is a child of God.

Salvation brings a change of masters, a change of allegiance, and a change of family. The believer’s life is turned from serving the devil to serving God, and from being a slave of sin and of Satan to being a slave of righteousness and of God (Rom. 6:16–22).

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## Resistance

James 4:7b

Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

Just as the devil left Jesus after the temptations in the wilderness (Matt. 4:11), he will also flee from all those who resist him. Here is a pledge that the devil can be defeated, as powerful as he is. Even those held in his power (1 John 5:19) can be triumphant. The Lord Jesus defeated him at His temptation and at the Cross (John 12:31–33) and left him vulnerable.

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## Resistance

James 4:7b

Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

Satan cannot hold a sinner against that sinner's will. He can't even lead a believer into sin without the consent of that believer's will. When confronted and resisted with the truth of the gospel, he flees, releasing his hold as that repentant sinner who believes is delivered from darkness to light. After salvation, he comes again and again through the world system's working on the flesh, but can be defeated repeatedly by the believer who has the "sword of the Spirit" and the rest of the armor (Eph. 6:10–17).

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## Resistance

James 4:7b

Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

The devil attacks in different ways, and it is necessary to know his tactics so one can resist properly.

He can attack your concept of God and self. Learn Scripture to confront his lies with God's truth. You are a child of God, designed with purpose. You are so valuable that God was willing to take on human flesh and die for you. Recognize who you are in Christ!

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## Resistance

James 4:7b

Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

Other times Satan tries to move our focus from the things of God to his world system. The things he promises are true, but they don't last and he never tells you the consequences.

Here you must change your focus. As long as you look at the temptation, the deeper you will be pulled in. Instead, focus on what God has for you, His love, your future, and pray for others to have victory. If necessary, get an accountability partner. Flee the Devil!

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So What ...  
Ask yourself...

How is your relationship with God?

Are you having victory over sin?

Can others tell you are a Christian by how you  
live?

Don't play games with God or sin. Let us each  
commit ourselves to drawing near to God and  
resisting the devil.