

Submit to God

Key Verse: *“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”*
—James 4:7

Selected Scripture:
James 4:1-10

James commences by describing the reasons strife exists among believers. James asserts that the spirit of carnality connected with a yearning for fleshly gratification does not bring satisfaction but inner turmoil. Additionally, it is important to realize that God grants his children the things which they need in response to prayers that comport with his will, as opposed to petitions made to fulfill sinful desires. Instead of seeking earthly prosperity or luxuries, the Scriptures furnish guidelines as to prayers which are appropriate.—James 4:1-3; Matt. 6:5-13

Addressing the spirit of worldliness and pride, James continues: “Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.”—James 4:4-6

Our Key Verse underscores the necessity for submission to the will of God as a manifestation of our humility. By our obedience to him we will receive the necessary grace to resist the wiles of Satan, who is continually bent upon our destruction as New Creatures.

The ultimate example of submission was manifested by our Lord, who was obedient to his Heavenly Father by humbling himself even to the point of dying on the cross. (Phil. 2:5-8, *Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott*) Christ's attitude was in stark contrast with that of Lucifer, who desired to be equal to Jehovah by establishing a rival dominion. As a result of this rebellion, he was cast out of the heavenly realm.—Isa. 14:12-15; Luke 10:18

The Scriptures contain many admonitions which reveal God's displeasure with the manifestation of pride in our hearts. Personal self-examination will assist us in determining whether we are afflicted with this tendency. None of us, however, is authorized to make judgments concerning the heart attitude of another. The acquisition of wealth, ambition to possess many talents, or a hypercritical attitude towards others may give evidence of pride if we are not careful. We can combat or prevent such a tendency by striving always to glorify God, recognizing our own relative insignificance. Whatever we possess, acknowledgment should be given to the Heavenly Father as the source of all our blessings. "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"—I Cor.4:7

The desire to be recognized by others, to be well thought of, to have wealth, influence or to be held in esteem are characteristics that are part and parcel of our fallen nature and must be striven against if we are to be successful in submitting to God. May we ever keep in mind, and strive to emulate, the Master's example of humility and obedient submission to the Father's will. Thus, may we walk as he walked and at the end of our course receive the commendation of "well done, thou good and faithful servant: ... enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."—Matt. 25:21 ■