



# Grace Life Church

of Dallas

The doctrines of grace, the life of the Spirit, to the glory of God

Sermon Take Home-August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2011-James 4:8-10 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you

## *V8 Draw near to God*

What an astonishing statement this is-So often we have read this (or text like it) and skimmed right past it without meditating on the depth of such a statement. This is a command from James.

*Draw near*-To come near to                      To come near to who? To God

This is the enormity of the statement. James is commanding men to come near to God. Consider for a moment who James is calling us to draw near to:

- Draw near to the God in Revelations 4:6-8 from whose throne flashes of lighting come
- Draw near to the God in Revelations 4:9-11 before Whom the 24 elders bow saying "Worthy are you Lord & God"
- Draw near to the God who measures the heavens by His span (Isaiah 40:12)
- Draw near to the God who eyes are so pure they cannot look upon or approve evil (Hab 1:13)
- Draw near to the God whose face is against those who do evil, to cut off the memory of them from earth (Ps 34:16)
- Draw near to the God who consumed Aaron's sons for strange incense He did not command (Lev 10:3)
- Draw near to the God who is infinitely holy, righteous, just, powerful

James tells us that if we draw near to God, "He will draw near to you"

Meditate on Hebrews 10:19-22 and Ephesians 3:11b-12 and answer "On what basis can we and must we draw near?"

How often have you (a genuine believer, who has sinned) sought to merit your way back to God through good works? Or how often do you try keeping some code or system of righteousness, so you feel better and then feel worthy to come back to God to restore fellowship? Do we see the arrogance in this? This isn't the gospel. James, in those moments commands us to "Draw near to God" and then promises us "And He will draw near to you". God resists the proud (those who try to come back into fellowship & intimacy with God through works). This is a battle of faith, to believe God accepts you despite your imperfections, in Christ. Trying to earn my way back to God is a joyless, death spiral. Believe the gospel, and preach it to yourself. Draw near to God through Christ, and He will draw near to you. It is when you know yourself right with God (b/c of Christ) that you are encouraged, strengthened and empowered to go fight sin!

After drawing near to God and Him drawing near to you, does James then say "*v8 Cleanse your hands you sinners, & purify your hearts, you double-minded.*"

God is not only concerned with our actions but our hearts/motives.

Know yourself forgiven in Christ, and then put to death your sins.

*V9 Be wretched and mourn & weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning, & your joy to gloom.*

The genuine believer should and does hate their sin. (Ezek 36:31/Ps 119:104). There should be a mourning & weeping over our sin. This is Godly sorrow! But we don't stay here. How does James end his thought here in v10?

*V10 Humble yourselves before the Lord and He will exalt you*