

How to Stop Being a Friend of the World Pt. 3

Draw Near To God

James 4 :7-10

James 4:7–10 (NKJV)

⁷ Therefore submit 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 Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and *your* joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

Introduction

The date was July 23, 1933. In January of the same year, Hitler had been installed as chancellor of Germany. A young man who was not duped by der Fuhrer's intentions, gave a radio address in which he warned that when a people idolize a leader, "then the image of the leader will gradually become the image of the 'misleader.' Thus the leader makes an idol of himself and mocks God." Before these last sentences were broadcast, Bonhoeffer's microphone

had been mysteriously switched off. Bonhoeffer kept reminding anyone who would listen that the church has only one altar before which it must kneel and that is the altar of the Almighty.

Bonhoeffer warned that if the church should ever substitute one Lord for another, if the cross of Christ was replaced by any other cross, the gospel would be betrayed and the church judged. Bonhoeffer saw clearly what we in America have not yet grasped: that for us as Christians, the conflict is really between humanism and Christianity; or alternative religions and Christianity. On one side is a deteriorating culture and on the other side of the divide is the cross of Christ with its message of hope and redemption.

Lutzer, Erwin W.. When a Nation Forgets God (pp. 136-137). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.

The world system with all its allurements and seductive ideologies has had its claws deep within the church for sometime. The church was seduced decades ago and now for the most part we are seeing a church, a people of God that are parrots of the world. There is little difference in their conduct and their thinking. When you introduce a Biblical worldview to some, they recoil

in disbelief. You name any issue of morality, any philosophy, and ecumenical ideology or methodology and I grant you, you can find many professing christians that are firmly planted in the godless belief of the world.

We didn't get here overnight. The church has cast her God away and followed idols.

We are coming quickly upon a time of intense persecution of the church in America. It will not look like the persecution of centuries past... it will be different. We will not be burned at the stake. We will be canceled in the marketplace. We will suffer financially. More and more we will be isolated from the culture called insensitive bigots full of hate speech. We will be painted as those who are destroying this country and will become the enemies of the state.

If there ever was a time for the church to awaken out of her sleep and be called back to God and repentance, it is now. There's no time for slumbering and no time for sleep but to be called to draw near to God and he will draw near, to repent and leave our affections for the world to pursue with our whole heart, Christ.

Review

James 4:1–6 (NKJV)

Where do wars and fights *come* from among you? Do *they* not *come* from your *desires for* pleasure that war in your members? ² You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures. ⁴ Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. ⁵ Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, “The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously”?

⁶ But He gives more grace. Therefore He says:

*“God resists the proud,
But gives grace to the humble.”*

This is why it reads like this,

Since God Resist the Proud, the self centered,
hedonist

v7 Therefore submit 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 Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and *your* joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

This is not a text to be isolated but to be understood in the context of believers that need to be called back from the attraction of the world. To repent of there worldliness. To stop being seduced by the doctrines of demons. To stop listening to the sirens of this world system. To submit to God, his Word, his Lordship. To resist the devil now and forever. To become Biblically minded, Word saturated filled with the Holy Spirit and Prayer.

James 4:7–10 (NKJV)

⁷ **Therefore** submit (A.Pass Imperative) to God.

1. submit (A.Pass Imperative) to God.

The ten aorist imperatives in these verses constitute an urgent call to repentance to correct their

blameworthy position before God. These imperatives, like curt military commands, demand incisive action. They reflect the seriousness with which James viewed their double-mindedness.

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 236). BMH Books.

1. Submit
2. Resist
3. Draw near
4. Cleanse
5. Purify
6. Lament
7. Mourn.
8. Weep.
9. Turn your laughter to sorrow.
10. Humble yourselves.

ὑποτάσσομαι; ὑποταγή, ἦς ἴ; ὑπέικω: to submit to the orders or directives of someone—‘to obey, to submit to, obedience, submission.’

- 1. submit (A.Pass Imperative) to God.**
- 2. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.**

8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.

their worldliness has resulted in a distance separating them from God

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 237). BMH Books.

So in his call for repentance, He commands a drawing near to God.

The aorist imperative calls for a decisive, complete return on their part. This does not mean that the initiative for restored relations lies with man, but the imperative is a call to man's will to respond to the divine call.

Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.

Although, all this is true regarding the only way we can draw near to God in Worship, I don't believe that it is primarily worship that he has in mind, but more specifically a very important element of worship..... Repentance.

James says,

Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.

There is a reconciliation occurring here. We go to him, He comes to us. We return to him from the world, so He comes to us.

We being a prodigal son, out wallowing in mire of world, come to our senses and return to the Father and the Father comes out to meet us. (Luke 15:20),

This is a drawing near in the sense of repentance.

[Isaiah 55:7](#) (NKJV)

⁷ Let the wicked forsake his way,
 And the unrighteous man his thoughts;
 Let him return to the Lord,
 And He will have mercy on him;
 And to our God,
 For He will abundantly pardon.

[Zechariah 1:3](#) (NKJV)

³ Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts: “Return to Me,” says the Lord of hosts, “and I will return to you,” says the Lord of hosts.

This is perhaps one of the most amazing statements in all of the Bible.

Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.

It's a promise. IF you draw near to God, He will draw near to you.

Yet it should be a sobering and Fearful commandment!

Why?

Because He is God and you are a Sinner.

or

He is a Holy righteous God and you are a transgressor.

This is why he says in the next phrase,

“Cleanse *your* hands, *you* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded.”

It is a fearful thing to draw near a Holy God. In our text there is are 2 over arching absolutes that must take place in our Return to God from the World

v. 7 Submission and Resistance.

Don't Resist God, Resist the Devil

Don't Submit to the Devil, rather Submit to God.

Then James tells us how to do this.

1. Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you.

i.e return to God and He will return to you.

Your fellowship and communion with God will be restored

How do I do that?

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

____ i.e. Actively, willfully, decisively stop participation in world system. stop reading, listening, pursuing the world view of the corrupt system.

How do I do that?

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

____ i.e. Recognize the serious nature of the sin of loving the world system, weep and grieve over this because you now know it is wrong.

How do I do that?

4. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

____ i.e stop believing and thinking you are source of truth and happiness. Stop acting like you are your own god and that you are the sovereign of your universe. Recognize you are the creature who should submit to GOD.

How to I do that.

Resist the Devils temptation of PRIDE and Self centered universe of Hedonism and Submit to God.

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

personal cleansing (v. 8*b*). Their worldliness has left them polluted; personal cleaning is needed. This demand for cleansing is stated in the form of a poetic parallelism: “Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.” As Moo notes, “Blunt vividness is given the two clauses in the Greek by the lack of any articles or possessive pronouns.”

Cleanse hands, sinners, purify hearts double-minded

Only the pure in hand and heart can enter into communion with God in His holiness

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 238). BMH Books.

Cleanse your hands 53.28

καθαρίζω^b; καθαρότης, ητος *f*; καθαρισμός, οῦ *m*: to cleanse from ritual contamination or impurity—‘to cleanse, to purify, purification.’

Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In [Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains](#) (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 534). United Bible Societies.

The injunction “wash your hands” employs the language of ceremonial cleansing for the priestly approach to God (Ex. 30:19–21; Lev. 16:4),

Exodus 30:19–21 (NKJV)

¹⁹ for Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet in water from it. ²⁰ When they go into the tabernacle of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn an offering made by fire to the Lord, they shall wash with water, lest they die.

²¹ So they shall wash their hands and their feet, lest they die. And it shall be a statute forever to them—to him and his descendants throughout their generations.”

Leviticus 16:4 (NKJV)

⁴ He shall put the holy linen tunic and the linen trousers on his body; he shall be girded with a linen sash, and with the linen turban he shall be attired. These *are* holy garments. Therefore he shall wash his body in water, and put them on.

but it is now employed with a moral connotation to denote a definite cleansing from the defilement of sin (2 Cor. 7:1).

2 Corinthians 7:1 (NKJV)

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

This figurative usage appears in the Old Testament (Ps. 24:4; Isa. 1:15–16)

Psalms 24:4 (NKJV)

⁴ He who has clean hands and a pure heart,
Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol,
Nor sworn deceitfully.

Isaiah 1:15–16 (NKJV)

¹⁵ When you spread out your hands,
I will hide My eyes from you;
Even though you make many prayers,
I will not hear.
Your hands are full of blood.

¹⁶ “Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean;

Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes.

Cease to do evil,

. As the instruments of ethical conduct, their “hands” are symbolic of their defiling deeds. The aorist active imperative presents this as their personal duty. They must act to cleanse their hands by withdrawing them from every evil deed and from reaching after the world’s contaminating pleasures. Perhaps James is thinking of the Jewish custom of praying with uplifted hands (Pss. 28:2; 134:2; 1 Tim. 2:8).

1 Timothy 2:8 (NKJV)

⁸ I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting;

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 238). BMH Books.

Warning to guard against.

Letting this cleansing become purely external. This was the trap of the pharisees of Jesus day

Matthew 15:1–9 (NKJV)

15 Then the scribes and Pharisees who were from Jerusalem came to Jesus, saying, ² “Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread.”

³ He answered and said to them, “**Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition?** ⁴ For God commanded, saying, ‘*Honor your father and your mother*’; and, ‘*He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.*’ ⁵ But you say, ‘Whoever says to his father or mother, “Whatever profit you might have received from me *is a gift to God*”—⁶ then he need not honor his father or mother.’ Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition. ⁷ Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying:

⁸ *‘These people draw near to Me with their mouth,
And honor Me with their lips,
But their heart is far from Me.
⁹ And in vain they worship Me,
Teaching as doctrines the commandments of
men.’ ”*

Wash had nothing to do with physical hygiene but referred to ceremonial rinsing. The purpose was to remove the ritual defilement caused by having touched something unclean, such as a dead body or

a Gentile. Some of the rabbis even taught that a certain demon named Shibtah attached itself to people's hands while they slept and that, if he were not ceremonially washed away, he would actually enter the body through the food handled by defiled hands.

The value of ceremonial rinsing was held so high that one rabbi insisted that "whosoever has his abode in the land of Israel and eats his common food with rinsed hands may rest assured that he shall obtain eternal life." Another rabbi taught that it would be better to walk four miles out of the way to get water than to eat with unwashed hands. A certain rabbi who was imprisoned and given a small ration of water used it to wash his hands before eating rather than to drink, claiming he would rather die than transgress the tradition.

God had instituted certain prescribed ceremonial washings as part of the covenant given through Moses, but those were never more than outward symbols or pictures of spiritual truths. The Old Testament nowhere holds them up as having any merit, value, or blessing in themselves.

Water jars were kept ready to be used before every meal. The minimum amount of water to be used was a quarter of a log, enough to fill one and a half egg shells. The water was first poured on both

hands, held with the fingers pointed upward; and it must run down the arm as far as the wrist and drop off from the wrist, for the water was now itself unclean, having touched the unclean hands. And if it ran down the fingers again it would render them unclean. The process was repeated with hands held in the downward direction, the fingers pointing down. And finally each hand was cleansed by being rubbed with the fist of the other. A strict Jew would do this before every meal and between every course in every meal. (For a fuller discussion read Alfred Edersheim's *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, vol. 2, pp. 10–13.)

Throughout history, man-made religion has attached great significance and benefit to ceremonies and ritualistic acts. Commenting on this universal tendency of man, Charles Spurgeon is reported to have facetiously asked his congregation, “If there were no Sunday morning service at eleven, how many of you would be Christians?”

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1985). [Matthew](#) (Vol. 2, p. 453). Moody Press.

Matt 15 :3

³ He answered and said to them, “Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? ⁴ For God commanded, saying,

‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.’

⁵ But you say, ‘Whoever says to his father or mother, “Whatever profit you might have received from me *is* a gift *to God*”—⁶ then he need not honor his father or mother.’ Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition. ⁷ Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying:

⁸ *‘These people draw near to Me with their mouth,
And honor Me with their lips,
But their heart is far from Me.*

⁹ *And in vain they worship Me,
Teaching as doctrines the commandments of
men.’ ”*

Throughout history, man-made religion has attached great significance and benefit to ceremonies and ritualistic acts. Commenting on this universal tendency of man, Charles Spurgeon is reported to have facetiously asked his congregation, “If there were no Sunday morning service at eleven, how many of you would be Christians?” MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1985). [Matthew](#) (Vol. 2, p. 453). Moody Press.

There is a great temptation to make the external the only criteria of purity. It is the seed bed of legalism.

It is very easy to fall into this trap.

To gauge the holiness of a person by a list of do's and don'ts.

Especially when it comes to the world.

I have personally seen the disaster that can occur in a Christian family when it is very legalistic and artificial laws are created that have no basis in Scripture. Children have been frustrated in a bad way by the multiple fences that surround them.

On the other hand, I have also seen the devastating results of license too. Or a determination to live in your Christian liberty, to the point that you open doors for evil in your home and family.

What is true of today, is that you and your family are facing challenges that were not faced by families 20 years ago. But you need to know that the evil you and your family will eventually come in contact with in some form or fashion is not new to the world or the Christian church. The difference is access and proliferation. It is easy to get and everywhere.

But be encouraged. You can lead a life of holiness and purity in this ungodly age. You can honor the Lord with your life and mind in this evil age.

God has planted His Spirit within you to enable you to obey and to repent.

But in a more practical way let me address this for a moment and give you some things to think about.

Regarding legalism

What is it.?

1. Legalism is believing that salvation can be earned by obedience.

2. Believing that one can obey the Bible through his own will and power for the purpose of gaining a greater measure of God's approval and favor.

3. Legalism elevates man-made rules above the Scripture.

This third form of legalism elevates man-made rules, especially prohibitions, to the same level of authority as God-given commands and the belief that following these rules will aid you in your spiritual growth. This often extends to strict adherence to non-essential doctrinal positions as well as unconventional interpretations of certain passages of Scriptures. It is also the most common form of legalism that I encounter in my counselees.

It is sometimes helpful to categorize this form of legalism into two manifestations, namely doctrinal legalism, and applied legalism. *Doctrinal legalism* is an elitist attitude toward those who don't cross every theological "t" and dot every theological "i" as precisely as they should.

And *applied legalism* requires the individual and others to

conform to human precepts and teachings ([Colossians 2:16-23](#)).

So, what does it take to dislodge and displace legalism? The short answer is, only a deep-rooted understanding of the Gospel of the grace of God. It is the gospel alone that exposes our total depravity and complete inability to be made right with our Holy God ([Romans 3:9-23](#)). It is on the basis of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ that God declares us righteous.

As Kevin DeYoung aptly sums up the relationship between law and faith, “Our obedience must be grounded in the gospel. Sanctification is empowered by faith in the promises of God. We need to be reminded of our justification often and throughout our Christian lives. Our pursuit of personal righteousness will not go anywhere without a conviction that we are already reckoned positionally righteous in Christ.”⁵ May we constantly look to Christ and rest in His finished work as our righteousness!

So who do I avoid Legalism

1. Be careful not to make everything about the external. The heart is the issue.

Proverbs 4:20–27 (NKJV)

²⁰ My son, give attention to my words;

Incline your ear to my sayings.

²¹ Do not let them depart from your eyes;

Keep them in the midst of your heart;

²² For they *are* life to those who find them,

And health to all their flesh.

²³ Keep your heart with all diligence,

For out of it *spring* the issues of life.

²⁴ Put away from you a deceitful mouth,

And put perverse lips far from you.

²⁵ Let your eyes look straight ahead,

And your eyelids look right before you.

²⁶ Ponder the path of your feet,

And let all your ways be established.

²⁷ Do not turn to the right or the left;

Remove your foot from evil.

Proverbs 23:19–22 (NKJV)

¹⁹ Hear, my son, and be wise;

And guide your heart in the way.

²⁰ Do not mix with winebibbers,

Or with gluttonous eaters of meat;

²¹ For the drunkard and the glutton will come to

poverty,

And drowsiness will clothe *a man* with rags.

²² Listen to your father who begot you,

And do not despise your mother when she is old.

Deuteronomy 4:9 (NKJV)

⁹ Only take heed to yourself, and diligently keep yourself, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. And teach them to your children and your grandchildren, Matthew 15:10–11 (NKJV)

¹⁰ When He had called the multitude to *Himself*, He said to them, “Hear and understand: ¹¹ Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man.”

Matthew 15:15–20 (NKJV)

¹⁵ Then Peter answered and said to Him, “Explain this parable to us.”

¹⁶ So Jesus said, “Are you also still without understanding? ¹⁷ Do you not yet understand that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and is eliminated? ¹⁸ But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. ¹⁹ For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. ²⁰ These are *the things* which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man.”

How do you get to the heart of the matter which is the heart of man.

1. Understand that by heart, we are talking about the seat of thinking. What you think, how you think, your worldview through which you screen everything.
2. So to get to the heart is to get to the mind.

The Devil has known this from the beginning. When he ask Eve, has God really said you shall not eat from every tree of the Garden. In other words Eve, think about this. Why would God keep this pleasure of this one tree from you. He got to her thinking by appealing to the fleshly desire.

This is why Peter says

1 Peter 5:9 (NKJV)

⁹ Resist him, steadfast in the faith, (what you believe) knowing (specific knowledge) that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

Why Paul says

Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV)

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice,

holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Ephesians 4:22–23 (NKJV)

²² that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, ²³ and be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

Colossians 3:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ and have put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,

2 Corinthians 10:4–5 (NKJV)

⁴ For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,

So ground yourself and your children in a Biblical Worldview. With your children you only have a few

years to do this. Look at everything through the grid of Biblical sufficiency and accuracy.

For both you and your children,

1. Know what you believe and why you believe it Biblically
2. Know why a certain view of morality is right and why you believe it is right Biblically.
3. Take every opportunity to destroy the evolutionary world view that will be pushed on you and your children.
4. Surround yourself and your family with good Bible Teachers and Preachers.
5. Avoid worldly influences that are contrary to your Biblical worldview and let your children know why.
6. Make the church and its ministry central and a non-negotiable. If your children have to ask you if we are going to church Sunday. You need to rethink where you are.

Also if you are in a church that is watered down and comprised, Get out, don't sacrifice your personal sanctification and your children's spiritual future on the altar of spiritual lethargy. Life is too short and eternity is too long to risk it.

So who do I avoid Legalism

1. Be careful not to make everything about the external. The heart is the issue.

2. Make sure that the laws and rules and principles you follow are well grounded in Scripture either by clear commandment or principle.

3. When you draw lines for purity in your family and life make sure you no biblically why you do what you do.

4. Beware of Hypocrisy.. the seed of Hypocrisy is legalism.

Make sure that what you are here at church for all the external appearances is what you are at home for your children to see.

The world is screaming at your children to come over to their side. Hypocrisy and legalism will push them out the door.

“It is thought by some that it would perhaps be better to have no distinct church at all. If the world will not come up to the church, let the church go down to the world; that seems to be the theory. Let the Israelites dwell with the Canaanites, and become one

happy family. Such a blending does not appear to have been anticipated by our Lord in the chapter which was read just now: I mean the fifteenth of John. Read verses eighteen and nineteen: “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.” Did he ever say—“Try to make an alliance with the world, and in all things be conformed to its ways”? Nothing could have been further from our Lord’s mind. Oh, that we could see more of holy separation; more dissent from ungodliness, more nonconformity to the world! This is “the dissidence of Dissent” that I care for, far more than I do for party names and the political strife which is engendered by them. Let us, however, take heed that our separateness from the world is of the same kind as our Lord’s. We are not to adopt a peculiar dress, or a singular mode of speech, or shut ourselves out from society. He did not so; but he was a man of the people, mixing with them for their good. He was seen at a wedding-feast, aiding the festivities: he even ate bread in a Pharisee’s house, among captious enemies. He neither wore phylacteries, nor enlarged the borders of his garments,

nor sought a secluded cell, nor exhibited any eccentricity of manner. He was separate from sinners only because he was holy and harmless, and they were not.

MacArthur, John. *Ashamed of the Gospel* (3rd Edition) (pp. 263-264). Crossway. Kindle Edition.

⁸ Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *you sinners*; and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded.

The sharp address “you sinners” (*hamartōloi*) seems to be used deliberately to pierce the readers’ conscience.

Although commonly used of the unsaved, the parallel with “double-minded” makes clear that James is applying the term to Christians. They are manifestly guilty of sin in failing to maintain God’s standard for His saints. In his use of the term here, James clearly indicates that their return to close communion with God demands a change in their worldly conduct.

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 238). BMH Books.

and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded.

“Purify your hearts” again employs familiar Jewish ceremonial language (cf. John 11:55), but here... it has a moral meaning, calling for inner purification.

1 Peter 1:22 (NKJV)

²² Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,

1 John 3:3 (NKJV)

³ And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Psalms 51:6–10 (NKJV)

⁶ Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts,
And in the hidden *part* You will make me to know wisdom.

⁷ Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Matthew 23:25 (NKJV)

²⁵ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence.

The term basically denotes a removal of that which disqualifies one for acceptable worship, resulting in a condition of purity and chastity. The “heart” again denotes their whole inner life (cf. 1:26; 3:14). As those who foster friendship with the world and are guilty of spiritual adultery, they need an inner purification, renewing total dedication to God. A similar purity of hand and heart is called for in Psalm 24:4 for those approaching God.

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 238). BMH Books.

⁸ Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *you sinners*; and purify *your* hearts, ***you double-minded***.

____ “You double-minded,” literally “two-souled” (cf. 1:8), reproves them sharply for their divided affections: hankering for the world while trying to hold to God. They are guilty of trying to serve two masters (Matt. 6:24). God demands undivided affection as well as undefiled conduct.

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, pp. 238–239). BMH Books.

God expects absolute Loyalty. There is not middle ground or grey area. You are with for him or against him, you are either a friend or enemy. There is no such thing as a casual acquaintance with God.

Matthew 6:24 (NKJV)

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.

Kurios (**masters**) is often translated lord, and refers to a slave owner. The idea is not simply that of an employer, of which a person may have several at the same time and work for each of them satisfactorily. Many people today hold two or more jobs. If they work the number of hours they are supposed to and perform their work as expected, they have fulfilled their obligation to their employers, no matter how many they may have. The idea is of **masters** of slaves.

But by definition, a slave owner has total control of the slave. For a slave there is no such thing as partial or part-time obligation to his master. He owes full-time service to a full-time master. He is owned and totally controlled by and obligated to his master. He has nothing left for anyone else. To give anything

to anyone else would make his master less than master. It is not simply difficult, but absolutely impossible, to **serve two masters** and fully or faithfully be the obedient slave of each.

Over and over the New Testament speaks of Christ as Lord and Master and of Christians as His bondslaves. Paul tells us that before we were saved we were enslaved to sin, which was our master. But when we trusted in Christ, we became slaves of God and of righteousness (Rom. 6:16–22).

We cannot claim Christ as Lord if our allegiance is to anything or anyone else, including ourselves. And when we know God's will but resist obeying it, we give evidence that our loyalty is other than to Him. We can no more **serve two masters** at the same time than we can walk in two directions at the same time. We will **either ... hate the one and love the other, or ... hold to one and despise the other.**

John Calvin said, "Where riches hold the dominion of the heart, God has lost His authority" (*A Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, vol. 1 [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979], p. 337). Our treasure is either on earth or in heaven, our spiritual life is either full of light or of darkness, and our master is either **God** or **mammon** (possessions, earthly goods).

The orders of those two **masters** are diametrically opposed and cannot coexist. The one commands us to walk by faith and the other demands we walk by sight. The one calls us to be humble and the other to be proud, the one to set our minds on things above and the other to set them on things below. One calls us to love light, the other to love darkness. The one tells us to look toward things unseen and eternal and the other to look at things seen and temporal.

The person whose **master** is Jesus Christ can say that, when he eats or drinks or does anything else, he does “all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31). He can say with David, “I have set the Lord continually before me” (Ps. 16:8), and with Caleb when he was eighty-five years old, “I followed the Lord my God fully” (Josh. 14:8).

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1985). [Matthew](#) (Vol. 1, pp. 414–415). Moody Press.

The story of Israel’s compromise with the Baal Worship is good illustration of the Call of James to the double minded christians, who has his affections in the wrong place.

1 Kings 18:21 (NKJV)

²¹ And Elijah came to all the people, and said, “How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord

is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.” But the people answered him not a word.

1 Kings 18:22–39 (NKJV)

²² Then Elijah said to the people, “I alone am left a prophet of the Lord; but Baal’s prophets *are* four hundred and fifty men. ²³ Therefore let them give us two bulls; and let them choose one bull for themselves, cut it in pieces, and lay *it* on the wood, but put no fire *under it*; and I will prepare the other bull, and lay *it* on the wood, but put no fire *under it*.

²⁴ Then you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord; and the God who answers by fire, He is God.”

So all the people answered and said, “It is well spoken.”

²⁵ Now Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose one bull for yourselves and prepare *it* first, for you *are* many; and call on the name of your god, but put no fire *under it*.”

²⁶ So they took the bull which was given them, and they prepared *it*, and called on the name of Baal from morning even till noon, saying, “O Baal, hear us!” But *there was* no voice; no one answered. Then they leaped about the altar which they had made.

²⁷ And so it was, at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, “Cry aloud, for he *is* a god; either he is

meditating, or he is busy, or he is on a journey, *or* perhaps he is sleeping and must be awakened.”

²⁸ So they cried aloud, and cut themselves, as was their custom, with knives and lances, until the blood gushed out on them. ²⁹ And when midday was past, they prophesied until the *time* of the offering of the *evening* sacrifice. But *there was* no voice; no one answered, no one paid attention.

³⁰ Then Elijah said to all the people, “Come near to me.” So all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord *that was* broken down. ³¹ And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come, saying, “Israel shall be your name.” ³² Then with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord; and he made a trench around the altar large enough to hold two seahs of seed. ³³ And he put the wood in order, cut the bull in pieces, and laid *it* on the wood, and said, “Fill four waterpots with water, and pour *it* on the burnt sacrifice and on the wood.” ³⁴ Then he said, “Do *it* a second time,” and they did *it* a second time; and he said, “Do *it* a third time,” and they did *it* a third time. ³⁵ So the water ran all around the altar; and he also filled the trench with water.

³⁶ And it came to pass, at *the time of* the offering of the *evening* sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, “Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You *are* God in Israel and I *am* Your servant, and *that* I have done all these things at Your word. ³⁷ Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that You *are* the Lord God, and *that* You have turned their hearts back *to You* again.”

³⁸ Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that *was* in the trench. ³⁹ Now when all the people saw *it*, they fell on their faces; and they said, “The Lord, He *is* God! The Lord, He *is* God!”

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

____ 4. ¹⁰ [Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.](#)

