

Epistle of James IX Ten Commandment to Overcome Worldliness #1

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Think about the things that we have covered, very basic and critical things. We go back to little more than a year and we went through a series *the Truth of the Passover*. Now we are finding that that is so absolutely critical within the Church of God. There are so many people now moving to accept a 15th Passover for the Old Testament. Some will say that as long as you keep the 14th in the New Testament in the New Testament, then you're okay. Well, if the Old Testament were truly the 15th then we could say yes, we would be okay. However, you have a problem. The problem is that 'a little leaven leavens the whole lump.' Once the toe is in the door, what naturally follows? *The other four toes!* Then the foot and soon the leg and then pretty soon the whole body.

So, in analyzing what we've covered, we've covered some of the most basic things in great detail, which are very important for us to know and understand, because they all have to do with keeping us in contact with God and Jesus Christ, because of the covenant of God, which becomes very important. Why is the Passover important? Jesus said, '*Unless you eat My flesh and drink My blood you have no life in you.*'

Satan is clever enough to understand that he's not going to run into any congregation that is firmly convicted of God and say, 'Hey, everybody, let's go to church on Sunday.' He'd be railroaded out the door. So, he puts a little doubt and he says, 'How do you know the Passover is on the 14th? Can you prove it? So, we went through and proved it was on the 14th, because it's so important that if you take it on the wrong day or in the wrong way, then you are not taking it worthily and you are 'eating and drinking damnation unto yourself.' Then you put yourself under the judgment of God rather than under the grace of God.

The Passover must be attacked, undermined and eroded! That's what's happening everywhere. The whole Church of God is being assaulted with the 15th Passover. Not just a doctrinal problem, but assaulted. The Church of God Seventh-Day don't even care anymore whether it's the 14th or 15th. They're embroiled in the problem of fighting against Sunday-keepers. Think about a problem! How weak and dull and dead that they have become, that they now have a Sunday-keeping movement within the Church of God Seventh-Day. That is something!

What was one of the next major things that

we covered? *Pentecost!* Remember that? We went through a detailed, excruciatingly detailed, and I brought you copies of the calendar and showed you how to count it 6-10 times; showed you how the Pharisees the counted it; showed you how it should be counted properly according to the Scriptures, so you would know and understand it. Why is that very important as a central doctrine for Christianity? *The Holy Spirit, yes!* If you don't have the Spirit of Christ you're none of His!

Do you see how central these things are? Not that we said that we're going to be on the cutting edge of Bible study; *no!* We were fighting all of these things and we have found out, looking back on it, that the whole Church of God—many different congregations, many different groups—are being assaulted with these very things right now.

What was the next one we studied? *Atonement!* There were people saying you no longer have to fast on Atonement. ***All of those things are assaulting the Truth!*** Since you can't get people to throw Truth away wholesale, you get them to nibble it away.

What was another thing that we covered last year *The three days and three nights!* Is that not important? *Yes!* Isn't it amazing that we don't have to go back and say, 'Here's how to count: one, two, three!' What's that book, *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten?* Why is that important? *It's a sign!* *I will be in the heart of the earth as Jonah was in the belly of the giant fish.* God created it just for Jonah. He had his internal fish compartment that was dark, dank—not like the Pinocchio cartoon where he gets in there and strikes a match. I'm sure Jonah did not have any matches. So, how did Jonah know he was in there three days and three nights? *God had to tell him!*

What was another thing that we covered? *Who is Jesus?* We finished that coming right up to the Feast of Unleavened Bread. All of those things are very important because it shows what Satan is doing.

What else did we study? *Satan's Ten Most Believable Lies!* If you have the book and series, go back and get it. I think that I need to send those out to people just coming out of some of these circumstances that they have been in. There are some people who have been so beat up by churches and church ministers and people within the Church

and with their own sins combined together, that some of them are ready to give up on God.

Fortunately, we can be thankful—I hate to use the term ‘fortunately’ because that means *just by the slight of chance*. So, I will use the term ‘fortunately’ from the point of view that I don’t want to say that *we* deliberately did all of that so now we can help people. No, we did it because we were being assaulted by it and we needed to find the Truth of God and now we have it and we can help other people with it, which is a very important thing to do. Having gone through all of the things that we have gone through as a church and the people of God, we have ended up being in very difficult circumstances, and we have ended up, in too many cases, that we have allowed too much sin in our lives that we should not do, *because we were measuring ourselves by the wrong standard*. And that wrong standard was: What is the other Christian I know doing?

Which is why the book of James was written, so that *we do not compare ourselves among ourselves!* As Paul said, ‘If we compare ourselves among ourselves we’re not wise.’ So, lots of times we have come—and that’s why James 4 is so important—to the point that we have allowed sin or the world or the wrong standard of judgment—by looking at other Christians—instead of looking into the ‘perfect law of liberty’ to show us what we need to do.

Therefore, we justify our behavior then on our interpretation of the Bible, which may not necessarily be correct. That’s why James 4 is so important. This is to help us understand what is being taught in a way whereby we capture the power of God’s Word and we also understand what it means for us.

Let’s review just a little bit. We can think of these verses in several different ways. They apply in many different ways.

James 4:1-4—pertains to the 6th commandment: ‘*You shall do no murder.*’

- vs 4-5—pertains to the 7th commandment: ‘*You shall not commit adultery.*’
- James 4:1:1: “*What is the cause of quarrels and fightings among you?....*”

We can apply this:

- individually
- maritally
- congregationally—inter-church relationship between one congregation and another
- ministerially—between ministers

Anyway you want to apply it, this applies, and James is writing to Christian believers.

“...*Is it not mainly from your own lusts that are warring within your members?*” (v 1). If this is happening, then there is nice ammunition and cannon fodder—both—for Satan to work with.

Verse 2: “*You lust [desire], and have not...*” You want this, you want that, you want the other thing. You may not necessarily get it in this life. You can’t have everything in this life the way that you want it—whether it be a job, a marriage, an income, where you live, where you work—you may not be able to control all of these things, and you may want something else.

What the old saying? *The grass is greener on the other side*, until you get over there and find out it was painted, or it’s all mowed weeds. Once we lived out on ‘*Lover’s Lane*’ and they never could keep that street sign up because it became a souvenir for everyone. We had a lot of weeds out there in the front yard and out in the pasture—we had two-and-a-half acres. Anyway, when I would mow it, it would look great. I always tell Delores, ‘*Mowed weeds look good.*’ She says, ‘*Yeah, as long as they’re green.*’

So when you’re *lusting* and looking on the other side of the fence and think that what you have on your side of the fence—because you’re used to it then—is old, worn out and difficult and you don’t want it. So, you look at something on the other side of the fence and you think you want this. A new car, a new home, a new wife, a new job—whatever. *Lusting, and you have not!* Then when you get it it’s not what you think!

How many have sent off these Reader’s Digest contests: you are on the list to win \$10-million. We’ve all done it. How many have won that? *Nobody!* Then when you get the stupid book, it’s not what you thought it was. Or you get the thing that’s advertised on TV. Listen to Rush Limbaugh if you can, he’s got this spoof ad: We were closed yesterday and we will be closed tomorrow, we’re open right now and we have a 60 second sale going on and now there’s only 55 seconds left. Hurry up! Too much of what happens in our lives ends up that way.

“...*you kill...*” (v 2). You can kill people in many ways. You don’t have to stick a knife in them. I just heard that in Berkley they found in one of the halls—the nice liberal college over there—a co-ed stabbed to death. *You kill!* We don’t go out and kill people by knife, but we kill people by tongue, by fights.

“...and are jealous, and are not able to obtain; you fight and quarrel, but still you do not have, because you do not ask. *Then* you ask... [‘Oh yes, Lord, I need to pray.’] ...and you do not

receive, because you ask with evil motives, that you may consume *it* on your own lusts” (vs 2-3).

I know a fellow who went out just to see how many cars he could buy on credit. He ended up with three. He wasn't making any money, but he had \$150,000 in debts on cars. He had a \$64,000 Corvette—he had to turn the keys into the bank six weeks later. Perfect example.

Verse 4: “*You* adulterers and adulteresses...” There are many ways that that can happen. Spiritually, Rev. 17—‘all drink of the cup of the wine of her fornication.’ This is spiritually applied to all of these little doctrines coming within the Church. These little things to come in and take you away from Christ, to make you take that first step away. Adultery *does not begin* with the act. Adultery *ends* with the act. ***Adultery begins, as Christ said, in the mind from the lust!*** That can be:

- spiritually
- physically
- maritally

I just talked to a man back in the Midwest and the minister back there lined him up to marry this gal who was a homosexual and never told him, and the minister new it.

“...don't you know that the friendship of the world is **enmity** with God?... [same word that is used there about the carnal mind] ...Therefore, whoever desires to be a friend of the world makes himself... [by his own choice] ...an enemy of God. Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, ‘The spirit that dwells in us lusts with envy?’” (vs 4-5). We covered that with *works of the flesh, the law of sin and death dwelling in us*. It is true! However, there's hope:

Verse 6: “But He [God] gives **greater** grace....” Not that we can live in sin, but that we can come out of the world! That we can overcome the lust! Remember what John said, ‘The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life’ that is not of the Father but is of the world.’

“...He gives greater grace...” so that we can come out of it! I'll tell you one thing, the more you really understand the grace of God, the more you see the severity of sin for what it really is.

“...This is the reason it says, ‘God sets Himself against *the* proud, but He gives grace to *the* humble’” (v 6). This tells us an awful lot.

What I want to do so that we can study this in a complete package, and then we'll go back and study this section.

Verses 6-the first part of 11 gives the ‘ten

commandments’ on ***how to recover yourself from sin and pride!*** This becomes very important.

Verse 6: “But He **gives** greater grace. This is the reason it says, ‘God sets Himself against *the* proud, but He **gives** grace to *the* humble’”—currently, active, constantly, ongoing

The Ten Commandment to Overcome Worldliness:

These are all *imperative* in the Greek—a command!

1. “Therefore, **submit yourselves to God**...” (v 7).
2. “...**Resist the devil** and he will flee from you” (v 7).

Since the Church has been assaulted everywhere by so many of these doctrines, that becomes important

3. “**Draw near to God**, and He will draw near to you...” (v 8).
4. “...**Cleanse your hands**, you sinners...” (v 8).
5. “...and **purify your hearts**, you double-minded!” (v 8).
6. “**Be grieved and mourn and weep**...” (v 9).
7. “...let your **laughter be turned into grieving**...” (v 9).
8. “...and **your joy into mourning**” (v 9).
9. “**Humble yourselves** before the Lord and He will exalt you” (v 10)
10. “Brethren, **do not talk against one another**...” (v 11).

“...The one who talks against a brother, and judges his brother, is speaking against *the* Law, and is judging the law. But if you judge *the* Law, you are not a doer of *the* law; rather, *you are* a judge. *But* there is *only* one Lawgiver, Who has power to save and to destroy. Who are you that you presume to judge another?” (vs 11-12).

This can apply to any situation, v 16: “But now you boast in your own arrogance. All such boasting is evil. Therefore, *if* anyone knows to do good and does not do *it*, to him it is sin” (vs 16-17).

That all ties in together. You find this in the Word of God always, brethren: God exposes sin for what sin is. Then what does He do? ***He provides a way out!*** As we have seen, one of the problems that we have in this Church is that ***there is too much of the world in the Church!*** The first reaction is going to be: ***But not in me!*** and ***Not in my church!***

Let's look at a couple of other Scriptures here as a background and setting before we get into these ‘ten commandments’ on how to come out of the world or how to get the world out of you—we could apply it both ways. Here's what happens when you are so far into the world. Because a person appears ‘religious’ does not mean that he is not in

the world. Being in the world is a matter of **how you view your life in relationship to God more than where you are as a physical position**. We can all have different ideas from the world. Here's what happens:

Hebrews 3:12: "Beware, brethren, lest perhaps there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in apostatizing from *the* living God." What Satan wants us to do is *take that first step*, whatever it may be.

Verse 13: "Rather, be encouraging one another each day..." We need to. Someone comes up and says, 'Brother or Sister, maybe you need to re-examine what you think you're going to do here, because I think you're headed for a fall.' *No, I'm not headed for a fall. I feel so good since I decided to do this.* 'Well, you don't know.'

"...while it is called 'today' ... [that you may find that way out that God has provided] ...so that none of you become hardened by *the* deceitfulness of sin" (v 13).

We're going to see in a minute what that 'deceitfulness of sin' can do. And it can, because ***deceitfulness is the trickery of lust!*** What is that the human heart is? ***Deceitful above all things (Jer. 17:9)!*** {note the books: *The Lies We Believe In* and *Satan's Most Believable Lies* and the sermon series } He's assaulting us, brethren! He wants to get us—individually and collectively—anyway he can! He's got the world.

- Don't you agree he's got the world?
- Who then is he interested in? What then is interested in?
- *He's interested in changing the Word of God just enough so that you miss the mark!*
- *He's interested to allure to your lust just enough to get you to take that first step!*

Then he's there to want you to take the second step, and the third step, and the fourth step; and then pretty soon the *deceitfulness of sin* BAM! ***gottcha!***

Then you have to do like David did, Psa. 51, after the death of the baby. Remember that? He had to humble himself. So, it's the *deceitfulness of sin!*

Verse 14: "For we are companions of Christ, ***if...*** [conditional] ...we truly hold the confidence *that we had* at the beginning steadfast until the end." Steadfast all this week! Steadfast all this month! It's kind of like insurance: this insurance salesman was selling insurance and someone said, 'Well, I don't know if I can pay that high a price on that premium.' The salesman says, 'I have the perfect insurance plan for you. It costs 50% less than this—would you be interested in that?' ***Yes!*** 'This insurance plan is

called *The 29-Day Coverage*. You tell me which 29 days you want to be covered, because on the 30th & 31st day we won't cover you.

It's just like being *steadfast*. You don't be steadfast for 29 days and on the 30th and 31st day you go out and do whatever you want, and now you're under the *grace of God* again on the 1st day of the month. ***NO! You're steadfast unto the end!*** Remember the parable of he who sets his hand to the plow and looks back is not worthy.

Now, let's see what the *deceitfulness of sin* does! Believe me, this is in full operation and up and running well, and hard and fast, because of the deceitfulness of sin, and I suppose that we've all heard the message to the Laodiceans enough times that we all know it by heart. But I tell you one thing, it so fits this age in which we are living. God gives a witness:

Revelation 3:14: "And to the angel of the Church of *the* Laodiceans, write: These things says the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginner of the creation of God. I know your works... [we all have works] ...that you are neither cold nor hot; I would *that* you be *either* cold or hot.... [you're comfortable] ...So then, because you are lukewarm, and *are* neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth. For you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'; and you do not understand that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (vs 14-17).

Does this not happen with the *deceitfulness of sin*? Have not I, have not you gone along and done things and think: How could this be? *When you really come to yourself!* But as you're in it and you're going along, you do what? *You justify it!* What becomes the greatest problem in this whole thing?

Verse 17: "For you say..." In other words, it gets into an attitude of talking back to God. It gets into an attitude of telling God exactly what you're going to do. There isn't anybody going to tell God what to do, because God ***is God!*** ***He's going to tell us what to do!*** That's how the *deceitfulness of sin* comes along.

Then God comes along and says, 'I'm going to give you a proposition here, I'm going to give you a way out—though you're blind, naked, miserable and poor spiritually—I'm going to give you a way out.' With every condemnation of sin that there is in the Bible, ***God gives a way out!*** That's why it says, 'there is more grace.'

Verse 18: "I counsel you to buy from Me gold purified by fire..." I see this so much. There are

so many people out there, brethren, that have come in contact with the Church of God—Worldwide, International, or whatever other congregation that there is—that have been so much like those 10 virgins (Matt. 25). Where at the last minute, when they need to get their priorities turned around, what do they say? ‘Oh, I never new that. Give it to me.’ *We can’t!*

Just like I had to tell someone about the Passover thing. I’m not trying to avoid it, but I can’t tell you in a short conversation on the telephone a very technical, detailed thing, which takes many pages of writing, just wait till you get it. Sooner or later it’s going to come to the point that people say, ‘I’m running out.’ And the truth is, I cannot give you what I have; you cannot give me what you have. In other words, if it’s God’s Spirit it has to come from God. God is saying, ‘I’m going to give you a chance here.’

Verse 18: “I counsel you to buy from Me gold purified by fire...” *Gold is the highest form of righteousness* (1-Cor. 3). He’s going to say, ‘I’m going to give you a chance for the highest form of righteousness, but:

- it’s going to come in fire
- it’s going to come in trial
- it’s going to come against your human nature and your ways

“...so that you may be rich; and white garments... [which pictures the *perfect righteousness* of God] ...so that you may be clothed and the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed...” (v 18).

Have you ever had it where you’re really not in a clothed condition to meet someone and there’s a knock on the door? Would you run to the door in your unclothed condition and say, ‘Hello, what do you want?’—standing there in your ‘birthday suit’ or whatever? *No, you wouldn’t!* You would scurry and hurry and run, you’d throw on a bathrobe, pull on some trousers, put a dress on, or whatever it is, and then you would run to the door and say, ‘I’m sorry I had to make you wait so long, may I help you?’

Well, spiritually it is the same thing. The Word of God is *sharp and powerful and sharper than a two-edged sword and cuts to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit and the joints and marrow* and is a *discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart!* So therefore, on the way out, he says, ‘I’m going to give it to you so that you may have that *righteousness of gold*, though you’re sloppy, poor, blind and naked, I’m going to give you a way.

“...and to anoint your eyes with eye salve, so that you may see.... [not only see God, but see

yourself] ...As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me. To the one who overcomes will I give *authority* to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and sat down with My Father in His throne” (vs 18-21).

It’s amazing, brethren, how the Bible just all fits together:

- the same mind
- the same words
- the same thought
- the same spirit

This is why He’s giving *greater* grace. Is that not gracious of God to do what we just read in Rev. 3? *Yes, it is! Very gracious of God!*

And this is the reason James says, James 4:6: “...‘God sets Himself **against** the proud, but He gives grace to the humble.’” The *King James* says ‘resist the proud.’ That is as in combat; that’s what the Greek means. Who is the father of the proud? *Satan the devil!* How does pride enter in? *By us telling God what we will and will not do in relationship to His Word.* Classic example: Sunday! {note: Rom. 8:7—the proud with enmity}.

Let’s see how this pride fights back against God. When someone is confronted with some correction, which comes from God, what is the natural reaction if they don’t want to receive it? Stephen said to all those religious leaders and their pompous ceremonies, and all of their religious garb, right at the Sanhedrin, brethren. Where did the Sanhedrin meet? *The Sanhedrin met in the court of the men of Israel, right at the temple!*

This is where this was. After giving a summary of the plan of God, Stephen says:

Acts 7:51: “O stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You do always resist... [fight against] ...the Holy Spirit; as your fathers *did*, so also *do* you. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute?....” (vs 51-52).

Why? *Because they didn’t like what they said!* Remember the incidents of Jeremiah? of Amos? of Ezekiel? of Isaiah? *They didn’t like what God said!*

“...And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, of Whom you have become the betrayers and murderers; who received the law by *the* disposition of angels, but have not kept *it*” (vs 52-53). What happened when they heard this? *They ran on him!*

Verse 54: “And when they heard these things, they were cut to their hearts...” Rather than repent, what did they do? *In pride ‘we must defend ourselves.’* What did they do? *Right in the palms of Satan the devil:*

“...and they gnashed their teeth at him [bit him]” (v 54).

Verse 58: “And cast *him* out of the city and stoned *him*....”

Now, that’s an ultra extreme! I don’t expect to be gnashed when I’m done with this sermon; I know that. But it’s good that we get the full understanding of what we have here.

2-Timothy 3:8: “Now just as Jannes and Jambres... [the pagan religious leaders in the court of Pharaoh] ...stood against Moses, in the same manner also these are *brazenly* standing against the Truth...” Here’s what happens when there comes too much world, too much pride. What happens when you resist the Truth long enough?

(go to the next track)

Verse 8: “...*they are* men of depraved minds, reprobate in respect to the faith. But they will proceed no further, because their folly will become clearly evident to everyone, just as theirs also was” (vs 8-9).

That’s the ultimate of where resisting God and being proud against God comes to. When we pull ourselves up by our own great spiritual ‘bootstraps’ then we’re confronted with this problem.

Romans 9:19: “Will you then reply to me, ‘Why does He yet find fault? For who has opposed His purpose?’” He’s talking about Pharaoh. God raised Pharaoh up and Pharaoh hardened his heart. God hardened Pharaoh’s heart and Pharaoh hardened his heart.

Verse 20: “Yes, indeed, O man, who are you to answer against God?...” That’s the way some people are. ‘I’ll give you my answer’ and quote Scripture back, just like Satan did to Christ. In the final analysis, can any of us reply against God? *NO!* The only thing we can say is, ‘O God, forgive me! O God, Your grace is what we need.’

- we’re not going to go up and tell God how to interpret the Bible
- we’re not going to go up and tell God what doctrine is
- we’re not going to go up and tell God who He can and cannot save

All of those things are in here.

“...Shall the thing that is formed say to the

one who formed *it*, ‘Why did you make me this way?’” (v 20). There are just certain circumstance we may find in life that that’s the way that it is.

Today in the ‘women’s movement’ so many women say, ‘You know, why am I a woman? I’ll tell you what I’ll do, I’ll start a women’s movement. Yes, we will get all the rights of a man, and then we’ll come back and get all the rights of women and we’ll be twice as good as the men.’ I’m exaggerating a little bit here.

We’ve got a couple of little dogs at home, and you’d think dogs are smart. No, they’re not smart. They’re affectionate from the point of view that God is going to teach us even from a dumb animal that they need love. But they are driven by their appetites; that’s how you train them and make friends with them. They are very, very sensitive.... A dog does what a dog does because that’s the way God made it. Another interesting thing about dogs that I saw on one of these Discovery shows. It showed the wild dogs in Africa and they run out and kill and eat. Once they start on a hunt you cannot force them back unless something bigger, stronger and tougher comes along and takes it from them.

Then it showed the difference between that and shepherd dogs. Shepherd dogs will shepherd the sheep by command. You can have three dogs—that’s all it takes—one shepherd and you can control about 4,000 sheep. Domestic dogs do not have the lust to kill, because they have been trained and bred, and they can be controlled. It showed the fantastic things that they can do with them, just by command—they can get them to back up and go into a corral. They can move them clear on the other side of a hill. They can drive them clear up a valley. In New Zealand they have a law that when you sell your sheep ranch, you must sell the sheep and the dogs, because they’re use to each other. It’s really quite amazing what those dogs can do.

There again, “...Shall the thing that is formed say to the one who formed *it*, ‘Why did you make me this way?’” (v 20).

Dogs don’t have that consciousness. Only human beings are the ones that have that kind of consciousness. It can be expressed in another way: ‘God, why are doing this to me?’ Have you ever been in a situation like that? Well, maybe God isn’t doing it to you! Maybe those things are happening because of what you’re doing, or what I am doing. I’ve had things happen to me that I don’t like. I’ve been in that position, too. That is all part of the *pride!*

James 4:6^[transcriber’s correction]: “...‘God sets Himself against... [in resistance as in a combat or fight] ...*the* proud, **but** He gives grace to *the*

humble.” How does a person become humble? That’s the whole thing.

Commandment #1 and #9:

“**Therefore, submit yourselves to God...**” (v 7). This is how you become humble, because if you subject yourself and your will to God then you’re humbling yourself.

Verse 10: “**Humble yourselves before the Lord...**” That can mean in the side of, but it means *before* the Lord. In other words, don’t do your righteousness before people, but in the sight of God.

Let’s tie these together, because this is the way that we fight *pride*. This is the way we overcome *pride*. Just think what Jesus had to go through to be the most humble man that ever lived. I know it says that of Moses (Num. 11), that Moses was the meekest man of all men on the earth. I understand that, at that time, but he did not surpass Christ; we can be guaranteed that.

Let’s look at the companion Scriptures that we have on this. We will tie **commandment #9—humble yourselves before the Lord**, and **commandment #1, therefore submit yourselves to God**. If *pride* has gotten in the way, then pride is there to lead you away from God. So, you turn back and you subject yourselves to God.

The word *submit* is not quite as abject of an attitude of mind as ‘subject yourselves to God.’ We all submit to the law of some things of the land that we might not necessarily like; we submit to it. We may grumble about it, but we are not *subjecting* ourselves to it in the sense that we wholly, totally agree to it.

1-Peter 5 ties right in with it. It’s amazing! You go through and see that the New Testament is so fantastic and so great. It’s not ‘thus says the Lord’ to the whole world. In a sense it is, but it’s ‘thus says God to each one of us individually and personally through a letter called *an epistle*. That’s why the New Testament is so powerful. It is intended to get us to *willingly*—through the grace of God—*change our behavior* to make it more conform to what Christ’s behavior is like.

1-Peter 5:5: “In the same manner, *you* younger men be subject [submit] to *the* older men; and all *of you* be subject to one another...” It’s the same word—subject or submit—used interchangeably.

“...being **clothed with humility**... [exactly the same situation we’re talking about in James 4] ...because God sets Himself against *the proud*...” (v 5). What is this telling us? *One of the big problems within the Church is pride!*

- Peter wrote of it

- James wrote of it
- Paul wrote of it
- John wrote of it
- the Old Testament is full of it

“...but He gives grace to *the* humble” (v 5). Almost exactly the same wording as in James. That’s how then you receive the grace of God.

Verse 6: “Be humbled therefore under the mighty hand of God so that He may exalt you in *due* time.” In God’s way of things, He’s going to work it out in **HIS time!** In **HIS way!**

Verse 7: “Casting all your cares upon Him, because He cares for you.” We know in John 16:27 that God Himself is loving us.

Verse 8: “Be sober!...” This doesn’t mean to be sober from being drunk; this means be *serious-minded* because of the degree of the situation.

“...Be vigilant!...” (v 8). In both cases we see that Satan the devil is right there. As I said when we began, ***Satan is interested most profoundly in those who have the Spirit of God!*** He’s already got the world, so he wants us!

“...For your adversary *the* devil is prowling about as a roaring lion, seeking anyone he may devour” (v 8). For whatever reason! In this case, it’s not the toe in the door. In this case it’s a lion in your house, *your spiritual house!*

How many have seen this on Discovery Channel or PBS where they show this whole tribe of lions and they follow them day and night for months. They show what the lions do at night. That’s why they sleep all day. The only time I would agree with the title—The Hard Days Night—for a lion that fits. They go out and the stalk and they kill. Have you ever seen a whole tribe of lions fighting over a kill? *It is something!* They are fighting each other: clawing, gnashing, biting. They don’t care about the weak ones. They kick them out. It’s something!

Then they’re all down there ‘licking their chops’ and the blood is all over and they’ve been hacking out the bones and the guts and the meat. All the hyenas and jackals are on the side and they’re waiting. In the daytime then all the buzzards come down, and in less than a day all the bones are picked clean. Then some other animal comes along and gets the bones and takes care of those.

Think of this way: That’s what Satan would want to do! He’s, v 8: “...walking about seeking anyone he may devour!” Are we throwing little pieces of meat out there for the ‘lion’ to come and get us? *Need to be careful!*

Verse 9: “Whom resist...” Part of humbling

yourself is *resisting the devil in the faith!* You can't fight him on his terms. You can't outfox him because you think you're smarter.

You have to "...resist, **steadfast in the faith**, knowing *that* the same afflictions are being fulfilled among your brethren who *are in the world*" (v 9). There it is, right there! Is Satan interested in the brethren in the Church? *Yes!* What better way to get them:

- than to cause trouble in their personal life
- than to cause trouble within the Church
- than to let the whole hierarchy and structure of the ministry become so corrupt that you give up on faith

I got this letter from a man who said, 'I don't know where to turn. I don't know who to believe. I don't know who to follow.'

What is the thing that Satan can use to devour me? In many cases, we know! Don't leave the bait on the porch!

It's like these people who go to Yellowstone National Park. They think it's cute, 'I'll feed the bears'—until they lose a hand. The same way with a 'lion'—don't leave your sins out there hanging so far out and leave them unattended to and leave them un-repented of, or worse still, in pride maintain that what you're doing is right when it's not and then you're going to be devoured.

Let me just mention one thing, just as an aside, Matthew 23:2: Christ said, "The scribes and the Pharisees have sat down on Moses' seat *as judges*." That's an interesting statement there. It actually means in the Greek that they have seated themselves down in Moses' seat, because they're certainly not doing as Moses.

Verse 3: "Therefore, every judgment that they tell you to observe, observe and do..." In other words, when it comes out of the Word of God.

Verse 12: "And whoever will exalt himself shall be humbled [abased]; and whoever will humble himself shall be exalted." That ties right back here with James 4. All of this comes in with *subject yourselves to God* and *humble yourselves to God*, because it is very similar and very close.

Isaiah 57:15: "For thus says the high and lofty One Who inhabits eternity; Whose name is Holy; 'I dwell in the high and Holy place, even with the one who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.'"

Isaiah 66:1: "Thus says the LORD, 'The heaven *is* My throne, and the earth *is* My footstool. Where, then, *is* the house that you build for Me?

And where *is* the place of My rest? For all these things My hand has made, and these things came to be,' says the LORD. 'But to this one I will look, to him who is of a poor and contrite spirit and who trembles at My Word'" (vs 1-2).

Phil. 2 becomes very important in understanding the example of humility that Jesus gave for us. So, when we are humbling ourselves to come to God, we're going to see that part of that then is in repentance when we get to the other commandments. Let's look at humility that Jesus gave to us.

Philippians 2:7: "But emptied Himself, *and* was made in *the* likeness of men, *and* took the form of a servant; and being found in *the* manner of man, He humbled Himself, *and* became obedient unto death, even *the* death of *the* cross" (vs 7-8).

That is our example! You consider him who 'endured such contradiction of sinners against himself' (Heb. 12).

Commandment #2

After you humble yourselves to God, James 4:7: "...Resist the devil... [resist him in the faith; fight against him with the Word of God] ...and **he will flee from you**." There are many other Scriptures we can add to this.

John 17:15: "I do not pray that You would take them out of the world, but that You would keep them from the evil one."

Matt. 4 & Luke 4 records the temptation of Jesus in fighting and resisting Satan. Pay particular attention to how Satan quotes Scripture. Matt. 6:12-17—the Lord's prayer. Where that you pray to 'forgive us our sins' on a daily basis, and to 'lead us unto temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.' And you can only do that if you submit yourselves to God and resist the devil! He's not going to come with something obvious. He's going to come with something that seems right.

You're not going to be walking into a bank to cash a check and all of a sudden say, 'Oh boy, I'm going to hold up this bank and kill ten people.' No, Satan can't get you on that, but he may get you on something else.

Eph. 6 shows the enemy. I tell you, just after looking back and reviewing what has happened to the Church of God and all of the assault of doctrine that takes away belief. Some people like to say, 'Doctrine is not important, we need love.' **Both are important!**

Can you drive your car without gas or diesel? *No!* Can we say the car is important but not

the fuel? *That would be insane!* So likewise, to say that doctrine is not important, we need love; but under the guise of love, that's how Satan gets everyone! How about the teenager who falls madly in love and commits fornication? *Love is more important than anything else in the world!* But the doctrine of and the teaching of '*you shall not commit adultery*' is part of love. So, that kind of love is not love, it's *lust* misspelled *love*. That's how Satan gets people, because:

- if it erodes true doctrine, it's going to erode belief
- if you erode belief, you erode faith
- if you erode faith, you do not have the weapons to fight Satan the devil

Ephesians 6:10: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in *the* Lord, and in the might of His strength.... [you can't do it on your own] ...Put on the whole armor of God so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (vs 10-11).

He has had millenniums of experience; however, God is eternal. So, if we go by the power of God, we have the power of eternity against the millenniums of experience. And the wiles are clever!

Verse 12: "Because we are not wrestling against flesh and blood, but against principalities *and* against powers, against the world rulers of the darkness of this age, against the spiritual *power* of wickedness in high *places*."

That's why they have worldliness in the Church, like it is in James 4. They became so worldly that they're fighting, arguing, quarrelling, killing, lusting, cheating, stealing and lying! Later on he says that they're 'talking against each other' in such a way that they're judging the law, *judging God!* ***And, brethren, I submit that's the state of most of the Church of God today!*** Unfortunately! Maybe not in this congregation to that degree, but none of us can ever say that we're perfect. *No! No, we won't be until the resurrection!* Keep that in mind; that's why we need to *put on the whole armor of God!* It's not just a physical battle out here that we're fighting.

Verse 13: "Therefore, take up the whole armor of God so that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having worked out all things, to stand."

Then it says what we're to do. I think the greatest weakness that happens to us is that we are in such a busy world that we get too busy to really pray the way that we ought to. I submit *that is the biggest weakness that every one of us can have*, or if we pray too many times and we end up like it is here: *you ask and do not receive* because you just want it for yourself. Too many times! So, what we need to

do is put on the 'whole armor of God'; put on that armor of prayer and put on the armor that's listed here.

Verse 14: "Stand therefore, having your loins girded about with Truth, and wearing the breastplate of righteousness, and having your feet shod with *the* preparation of the Gospel of peace. Besides all *these*, take up the shield of the faith..." (vs 14-16). That's how we resist him; resist him in the faith; fight him in the faith by the Word of Truth.

"...with which you will have the power to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one; and put on the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God; praying at all times with all prayer and supplication in *the* Spirit..." (vs 16-18).

So it has to be all together. That's why when you see a flood, water is going to seek out everything where there's a weakness. That's why levees break. A little trickle, then leads to a burst. What does it say that the devil is going to do speaking of water and floods? Go back to and it says that after the Church has fled, those that are taken to a place of safety, water is cast out of the serpent's mouth as a flood that he might cause her to be carried away with the flood' (Rev. 12:15)

We can take that in principle. We are getting an absolute flood and deluge of false doctrine! We're getting an absolute flood and deluge of problems within the Church, problems within the ministry, problems within our own lives and marriages because of the deluge of the flood that is coming out from Satan. We need to recognize that. That's why James 4 is so fantastic, because it tells us then how to fight these things.

James 4:7—contains the first two commandments of coming out of the world: "Therefore, submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." It doesn't mean he won't be back another day. But he will flee from you.

Commandment #3:

Verse 8: "**Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you....**" This is available to everyone. God has not restricted this to anyone. I would hate to have been Paul. We do not have a concept of paganism, except once in a while we see a movie that fairly well represents it. Paganism where Paul went in Athens was so absolutely incredible! All of those temples, all of the gods, no one knew anything about the true God. Everyone worships Satan.

This series called *Legacy*: What this man does is survey the beginnings of the religions of this world. He starts in Babylon and then he goes to

China, to India, to the Mayans in South America, then the American Indians and back over to the Europeans, and the Europeans are the big bad guys again. However, in his series in India—incredible! The heart and core and sole of the Indian religion is *demonism and Satan worship and phallic worship*. At the center of their innermost shrine that they worship is a *black rock that is a phallic symbol*, which they adorn with spices and incense and flowers and it is the homage that is given. Of course, I need not tell you where that came from.

This is the kind of world that Paul went preaching in. As I saw that, I thought: How would I preach to those people? I mean, here in America we have a comparatively easy chore compared to that. How could I reach these people? Well, Paul had a way that he did, showing that even to those pagans, the way is open.

Acts 17:22: “Then Paul stood in *the center of Mars Hill...* [one of their gods right at the temple] *...and* said, ‘Men, Athenians, I perceive *that* in all things you are very reverent to deities; for *as* I was passing through and observing the objects of your veneration, I also found an altar on which was inscribed, “To an unknown God.”...’” (vs 22-23). In other words, ‘We know every god there is except one, that’s the unknown one.’]

“...So then, He Whom you worship in ignorance *is* the one *that* I proclaim to you. He *is* the God Who made the world and all things that *are* in it. Being *the* Lord of heaven and earth, He does not dwell in temples made by hands; nor is He served by the hands of men, as *though* He needs anything, *for* He gives to all life and breath and all things” (vs 23-25).

This ties in very clearly with *judging one another’s hearts* is not what we ought to do. That doesn’t mean that we cannot sin. We ought to condemn sin, God does and tells us to repent. But, on the other hand, here Paul is saying that God is giving everything to everyone.

Verse 26: “And He made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell upon all the face of the earth, having determined beforehand *their* appointed times and the boundaries of their dwelling; in order that **they might seek the Lord...**” (vs 26-27).

That’s part of overcoming. If you’ve been walking out into the world too far then you need to come back and seek God.

“...if perhaps they might feel after Him and might find Him; though truly, He is not far from each one of us” (v 27).

So, I submit to you that God is a whole lot closer than we would like to recollect. And besides,

space and time in eternity do not affect God—do they? *No!* So He’s near to everyone of us—right?

Verse 27: “In order that **they might seek the Lord** if perhaps they might feel after Him and might find Him; though truly, He is not far from each one of us, for in Him we live...” (vs 27-28).

I want to emphasize again, *there isn’t one thing, brethren, that we have that God did not give one way or the other, not a single, solitary thing!* He created the world all that in there is. He created all human beings and all of us are made of one blood so that we may seek after Him.

Verse 28: “For in Him we live and move and have our being; as some of the poets among you also have said, ‘For we are His offspring.’” We’re made in the image of God, a little lower than Elohim.

Verse 29: “Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we should not think that the Godhead *is* like that which *is made* of gold, or silver, or stone—a graven thing of art *devised by the* imagination of man; for *although* God has indeed overlooked the times of this ignorance, He now commands all men everywhere to repent” (vs 28-30). So does He not then give a way out? *Yes!* That is called *the grace of God!*

We like to get to ‘important’ things, like the Epistles of Paul and the sayings of Jesus, but I tell you one thing, after going through and studying the book of James, I can see one thing, *it goes right to the heart and core of human nature very quickly!* It says the things to us that our human nature does not like to hear.

Psalms 119:150: “They draw near, those who follow after wickedness; they are far from Your Law. **You are near**, O LORD, and all Your commandments are Truth” (vs 150-151).

- God is near!
- His commandments are near!
- His commandments are true!
- His way is righteous!

—without a single doubt!

Isaiah 55:6: “Seek the LORD while He may be found... [because there may be a time when He may not be found] ...call upon Him while He is near.... [there is a time when we may drive Him far away from us because of our sins] ...Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon” (vs 6-7). *That’s how God is giving more grace!*

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) James 4:1-12, 16-17
- 2) Hebrews 3:12-14
- 3) Revelation 3:14-21
- 4) James 4:6
- 5) Acts 7:51-54, 58
- 6) 2 Timothy 3:8-9
- 7) Romans 9:19-20
- 8) James 4:6-7, 10
- 9) 1 Peter 5:5-9
- 10) Matthew 23:2-3, 12
- 11) Isaiah 57:15
- 12) Isaiah 66:1-2
- 13) Philippians 2:7-8
- 14) James 4:7
- 15) John 17:15
- 16) Ephesians 6:10-18
- 17) James 4:7
- 18) Acts 17:22-30
- 19) Psalm 119:150-151
- 20) Isaiah 55:6-7

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 17
- Jeremiah 17:9
- Psalm 51
- Matthew 25
- 1 Corinthians 3
- Romans 8:7
- Numbers 11
- John 16:27
- Hebrews 12
- Matthew 4
- Luke 4
- Matthew 6:12-17
- Revelation 12:15

Also referenced:

Sermons/Sermons Series:

- *The Truth of the Passover*
- *Who is Jesus?*
- *Satan's Ten Most Believable Lies*

Books:

- *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten* by Robert Fulghum
- *Satan's Ten Most Believable Lies* by David Breese
- *The Lies We Believe* by Chris Thurman

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