

# Strong and Humble

(James 4)

## Introduction

We have been learning lessons from the book of James. In our first lesson, James taught us that if we want to become strong in our faith, we must become **wise**. In our second lesson, James taught us the importance of being **faithful**. In our third lesson, James taught us that to grow strong in our faith we must learn to always **speak kindly**.

In this fourth lesson, James will teach that **humility** in our daily life is a necessary trait of a strong believer in Jesus Christ. We will see that just as Jesus humbly endured a horrifying death on the cross for our sakes, we must obey God, even when it means we must give up our own plans.

We will learn how to become stronger Christians through humility.

## Opening Prayer

Father, we submit ourselves to You. Give us humble hearts so we may learn more about You so that we can reach others for Christ. In Jesus' name. Amen.

## Memory Verse

*If we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9 ESV)*

## Lesson

**Ask:** What does the word *humble* mean? How would you describe a humble person? (Modest, simple, respectful, peaceful, patient, kind, faithful, gentle, self-control, not selfish.)

**Ask:** Why is being humble hard? (Because we sin and want to get our own way instead of making serving others.)

Pride is a sin and the opposite of humility.

James 4:1-3

*What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Don't they come from the **evil desires** at war within you? (2) You want what you don't have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are **jealous** of what others have, but you can't get it, so you fight and wage war to take it away from them. Yet you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it. (3) And even when you ask, you don't get it because your motives are all wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure.*

**Ask:** What does this verse say that causes fights among people? (Selfish desires; coveting things you don't have, jealousy of others.)

**Ask:** What should you do if you are jealous of what others have? (Be thankful for what you *do* have. Be glad for your friend to have such a desirable possession.)

James tells us three things we must do to become stronger Christians:

James 4:7-10

*So **humble yourselves before God**. **Resist the devil**, and he will flee from you. (8) **Come close to God**, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world. (9) Let there be tears for what you have done. Let there be sorrow and deep grief. Let there be sadness instead of laughter, and gloom instead of joy. (10) Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up in honor.*

**Ask:** What is the first thing James tells us we should do?

#1. The first thing James tells us to do is submit to God or “*humble yourselves before God*.”

**Ask:** What does that mean? (Yield to His authority and will, commit your life to Him and His control, and be willing to follow Him.)

#2. The second thing James tells us to do is “*Resist the devil*”.

**Ask:** How do you “resist the devil”? (Ignore him; don't fall for his tricks; don't allow Satan to entice you to sin.)

James says if you resist the devil, he will flee from you.

#3. The third thing James tells us to do is to come close to God, and God will come close to you.

**Ask:** How do you do that?

James tells us what we must do to come near to God. He says in verse 8, “*Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, ... (9) Let there be tears for what you have done. Let there be sorrow and deep grief. Let there be sadness instead of laughter, and gloom instead of joy.*”

**Ask:** What is James telling us here? What does it mean to wash your hands, purify your heart, and be sorrowful?

James is telling us we must come to Jesus in prayer and confess our sins so that we can be forgiven and cleansed. He wants us to be sincerely sorry for our sins because we have broken the heart of our holy and righteous God. And, He wants us to live a pure life—a life set apart for His work.

**Ask:** What is the result if we humble ourselves before the Lord? (He will lift us up in honor; He will restore us to our righteous standing before Him. [Review the Memory Verse for today.]

Humbling ourselves means to recognize that our worth comes from God alone, not from our own possessions or achievements. Submitting to God is necessary if we want to become strong and humble Christ-followers.

Humility requires selfless, sacrificial service, like Jesus, who even gave up his own life.

James 4:13-17

*Look here, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we are going to a certain town and will stay there a year. We will do business there and make a profit.” (14) How do you know what your life will be like tomorrow? Your life is like the morning fog—it’s here a little while, then it’s gone. (15) What you ought to say is, “If the Lord wants us to, we will live and do this or that.” (16) Otherwise, you are boasting about your own pretentious*

*plans, and all such boasting is evil. (17) Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it.*

**Ask:** Were the people in these verses being humble or prideful? How do we know? (No! They were making their own plans.)

Our goal in life must be to surrender to God’s plans for our lives. He wants to make us strong and humble believers.

## CLOSING PRAYER

Father, give us the strength to humbly come to You and to surrender our lives into Your hands. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES

### GAME CENTER

#### *Ping Pong Ball Toss*

Write point numbers in the cups of two egg cartons. Place the two cartons long sides together. Divide the children into two teams. Give a child from each team 3 tosses of the ball for every right answer. The team with the highest points gets two pieces of candy while the other team gets one piece.

Or, use the following questions in another game or discussion.

1. What does the word *humble* mean? How would you describe a humble person? (Modest, simple, respectful, peaceful, patient, kind, faithful, gentle, self-control, not selfish.)
2. Why is being humble hard? (Because we sin and want to get our own way instead of making serving others.)
3. What causes fights among people? (Selfish desires; coveting things you don’t have, jealousy of others.)

4. What should you do if you are jealous of what others have? (Be thankful for what you *do* have. Be glad for your friend to have such a desirable possession.)
5. What does it mean to humble ourselves before God? (To recognize that our worth comes from God alone, not from our own possessions or achievements.)
6. How do you “resist the devil”? (Ignore him; don’t fall for his tricks; don’t allow Satan to entice you to sin.)
7. What does James tell us to do to come close to God? (In verse 8-9 James tells us to come to Jesus with clean hands and a clean heart.)
8. What does it mean to wash your hands, purify your heart, and be sorrowful? (Confess your sins according to 1 John 1:9)
9. What is the result if we humble ourselves before the Lord? (He will restore our right standing before Him)
10. What should our goal in life be? (Our goals in life must be to surrender to God’s plans for our lives. He wants to make us strong and humble believers.)

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