

God Blesses Humility

James 4:6 is a very interesting passage, “God is opposed to the **proud**, but gives grace to the humble.” The truths here are deeper than one might suspect upon a cursory reading.

First, we learn that one sure way to make God your enemy is to live in pride (this use of “pride” being the kind that exalts self and one’s own achievements without acknowledging God’s providence and provision.) God is opposed to that kind of pride because, by definition, it vaunts self in unhealthy, unspiritual ways. The Greek word here is hyperephanois, which literally means to be “over appearing”- that is to say trying to appear to be what one is not. Since God gives us life, strength and intelligence we cannot properly claim to be the only source of our own achievements.

We also learn from this verse that God, Himself, gives grace to those who humbly recognize Him as the source of their blessings and give Him the credit for the things in life which we do not control (our initial I.Q., health, genetics, et al). Grace (Greek karin in this passage) means unearned gifts or unmerited favor.)

God intervenes in the lives of the humans He created and brings undeserved gifts based **not upon actual earned items**, but based on our **humility**, which includes giving Him the credit for who and what we are in those ways we cannot control. In the account of the death of Herod in Acts 12:20-23, we see clearly that he lost his life because he did not give God the glory for the abilities God gave him. The point is clear from James 4:6 and Acts 12:20-23, that our choice is to give God the credit for who we are, the inborn characteristics He gave us and the strength we used to develop them. He makes our hearts beat and He decides when it will stop!

Our choice is a clear one, whether it is always easy or not - choose humility and be blessed by God, or choose pride and make God our enemy. Somewhere deep in the recesses of the human heart God planted within us an innate ability to sense and recognize pride in others. We have a natural inclination to react negatively against pride when we see it. It turns our stomach and destroys relationships. *But wouldn’t it be great if we could develop the same sensitivity and distaste for pride in ourselves?* We can! James 1:19-25 is a primer for personal maturity. Therein we also find that God’s word is like a mirror in which we can see ourselves more clearly. Then it becomes our challenge to remember what we read, apply it to our lives and give God the glory for our talents and abilities as we use them to His glory.

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For further study: Prov. 16:18; Proverbs 21:4; Proverbs 21:24; Psalm 101:5; Ezek. 16:50; Romans 12:16