

James 4:13-17- Results of Humbling Ourselves Handout

We have a turning point in our own story. At salvation, we are freed from the shackles of sin and wonderfully and miraculously made heirs to God's kingdom.

- Will we gladly and proudly live out our new role and responsibilities?
- Will we excitedly declare our loyalty to our Father's kingdom?
- Will we just say a prayer and simply go on with life and live lives unchanged?

1. Humbling ourselves leads us to change our attitudes.

James gives us some very clear instructions of how we show our loyalty to our Father's kingdom, and it begins with humbling ourselves before God.

Attitude is defined as a settled way of thinking.

James is rebuking the believers for boastful, sinful attitudes. A boastful attitude is rooted in our sinful nature.

A. A new attitude makes us aware of our limitations.

Humbling ourselves and submitting to God's Lordship means we recognize our limitations.

We have limitations because we're not God.

"All such boasting, when life is so precarious, is worse than absurd, it is wicked, a positive sin, a specimen of the ungodly haughtiness of which men should repent." (Moffatt)

We have limitations because we're not God. But when we're humbling ourselves then our attitude changes because we realize we don't have to be.

B. A new attitude makes us aware of our freedom.

James is not discouraging us from planning and doing things but is discouraging the planning and doing apart from His leading.

At salvation, many changes take place: hearts made new, adopted into a new family, and given a new role and new responsibilities.

As believers, we now have victory over sin nature. We are no longer slaves to sin. We've been set free. But we are freed for a purpose that is bigger than us.

Sinful nature wants us to live for ourselves and our happiness, but we've been made new to live for righteousness!

When we humble ourselves...

- dying to ourselves and what we want
- foregoing old life, old attitude
- choosing the new life in Christ, new attitude

Our life becomes all about his kingdom and not ours.

Our attitude about our role and responsibilities changes because we remember we're no longer citizens of earth but heaven, heirs of God's kingdom.

B. A new attitude makes us aware of divine appointments.

Humbling ourselves results in viewing our interactions differently. With a new attitude, we will be diligent and intentional with our normal everyday activities. So now every opportunity we have we will view as a divine appointment that God has given us.

Life is no longer about things to do but people to impact.

Rather than focusing on our plans for life, we make plans loosely creating room and balance for God's work.

When we say yes to something, we we're saying no to something else.

Humbling ourselves leads to a change in attitude because we go from being boastful to beautifully submissive. And not because we're good, but because we realize Jesus is worth it.

2. Humbling ourselves leads us to change our actions.

Humbling ourselves before God opens our eyes to the ugliness of our sin, but then our eyes are also opened to the beauty of God's grace.

A. When we humble ourselves, we will resist the devil.

Resist comes from two Greek words: stand and against. This means do not comply in any way.

We are born with a sinful nature, so we don't want to resist or stand against!

"The devil doesn't come to you disguised with a red face and horns but everything you have ever wanted.

To really resist, we have to remember that we are no longer slaves to sin, and we have a new identity.

We are new creations, and we have new responsibilities that don't include dragging around sin that we've already been freed from. We can't live the life that God has called us to if we're not resisting the enemy.

Keep saying no, keep resisting... so he will keep fleeing!

B. When we humble ourselves, we will draw near to God.

It is no good to submit to God's authority and Lordship and resist the devil's attack and then fail to draw near to God.

We approach Him the same we approached him for salvation: humbly and childlike. We then continue coming to him in the same way daily.

When we draw near to God, we are entering into the presence of the One who loves us and accepts us. But don't miss the incredible reality that same One is GOD ALMIGHTY!

Because of Jesus' death on the cross, the veil is torn, and the doors are flung wide open for us! We are not just allowed on his porch, but we're allowed into the most sacred place. When we draw near to God, we're entering the throne room of the King.

When we draw near to God, God will draw near to us.

As we draw near to God, we will repeatedly humble ourselves as we see the ugliness of our sin in comparison to who God is.

C. When we humble ourselves, we will find cleansing at the cross.

Our sin is a big deal so mourning and weeping is appropriate with the conviction of sin.

Our petty sinful actions should make us weep and desire cleansing, but we mourn and weep, repent and then move on. We don't stay in our mess. We don't keep dragging it around.

James returned to his consistent theme: the idea that genuine faith is proved by action.

We can't walk worthy of our calling, worthy of our new identity, if we're not truly humbling ourselves before the Lord daily.

We've been freed from the shackles of our sin.

We've been made new.

We've been given a new identity.

We've been given new responsibilities.

Heirs no matter what because of salvation, but may we choose to daily to accept our role and responsibilities and walk worthy of this royal role we've been given.

May we humble ourselves before the Lord daily and proudly live out our new role and responsibilities for His kingdom.

Homework Questions

Describe the turning point in your story. (after salvation) Was it difficult to take on your new role and responsibilities?

How are you gladly and proudly living out your new role and responsibilities now?

Not being a judge 😊, but basing the answer off God's word, what does one's life reveal if they've claimed to be saved yet live a life that is unchanged?

How does humbling ourselves lead to a change in our attitudes?

Define in your own words: attitude (as used here)

What does a boatsful attitude reveal?

How does a new attitude make us aware of our limitations?

Describe a time when you learned you have limitations the hard way.

Why is a new attitude important in regard to our freedom?

Describe in your own words what humbling ourselves looks like.

How does a new attitude make us aware of divine appointments?

What changes can you make to ensure you plan loosely and leave room for God to use you?

Describe a time when saying yes to something meant saying no to something else. How does humbling ourselves lead us to change our actions?

What strategies does the enemy use to tempt you?

What are some specific ways can you resist the devil?

Why is failing to draw near to God so detrimental?

How does knowing that you're not just allowed on his porch, but allowed into the most sacred place (His presence) affect your willingness to draw near to him?

Finish the verse. When we draw near to God,

What response should we have to our sin?

Why is it important to reevaluate every day the choices we make regarding our role and responsibilities?

How can you gladly and proudly declare your love and loyalty to God's kingdom this week?