

James 4.4-6 Grace Abounds

The Enemies of God, v. 4

- I. Throughout the Old Testament (e.g. Isaiah, Jeremiah and Hosea) God's people are pictured as the adulterous bride of God. This is usually in reference to her idolatry.
 - A. This would make us friends of the world and enemies of God. What does it mean to be a friend of the world?
 - 1. It is to be a friend of the world system that is driven by man's sin, under the dominion of Satan (the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life, 1 John 2.15-16). It is displayed in infighting, quarrelling over riches, divisions, discrimination, bitterness, envy, jealousy, selfish ambition and destructive pleasures (Phil. 3.19).
 - a) We cannot seek to serve sin and at the same time seek to please God. It is contradictory.
 - (1) But how great is our God? Rom. 5.10

The Longing of God, v. 5

- I. We also see throughout the Old Testament that God longs for his wayward bride and pursues her like Hosea longed and pursued Gomer. God pursues his bride with jealousy (Ex. 20.5)!
 - A. God wants our entire person and our entire devotion just as a husband would want his wife's devotion (Matt. 10.37).
 - 1. The point of this text is that God loves us, and he longs for us.
 - a) But God is not idle. He does something about it.

The Grace of God, v. 6

- I. The good news is that he gives **more grace!** Rom. 5.20. This is enabling grace to live like Christians (1 Cor. 10.13; Heb. 4.16).
 - A. Christians are not a strong group of people. The only way they are triumphant is through the One they are united to.
 - 1. Prov. 3.34. The proud desire to be self-sufficient and self-reliant. These desires lead to idolatry. Ps. 2.4.
 - a) Luke 6.24-26. The proud rely on worldly achievements and status.

- 2. The humble are the needy, the dependent, relying on God for all that they need and thank him for all that they have.
 - a) Humility meets us in our prayer closet as we come before an all-powerful and all-wise God.

- II. Application. He gives more grace to the humble, not the self-sufficient; not the "righteous" or "perfect" ones (Matt. 9.13). The self-righteous can only expect judgment.
 - A. There's more grace when there is failure. And this grace enables us to grow in Christlikeness. It is a constant cycle all the way up to glory. Christ was enabled in his flesh to accomplish what he came to do when he conquered sin, Satan and death by dying on the cross and rising from the dead. For the Christian, God gives us grace to be humbled in light of our own sin, that we may live as Christians in a fallen world. There is always more grace for you, for you are a child of God.
 - 1. From his fullness, we have all received grace upon grace (John 1.16). Amen.