

THE BEREAN

"...EXAMINING THE SCRIPTURES DAILY..." (Acts 17:11)

HUMBLE YOURSELVES

*A STUDY OF THE EPISTLE OF JAMES
PART FIFTY FOUR OF SIXTY FOUR*

James stresses the need for God's people to beware of friendship of the world which results in enmity with God (James 4:4). We must not limit our concept of the world merely to deeds of sensuality or criminality. There is also a worldly mindset which by corrupting our heart, destroys our spirituality. The pagan mind, which the early Gentile Christians had to leave, still flourishes in our day. Promoted by many groups, it permeates nearly all levels of society. Much of it is based on pride. Thus the need of humility in our hearts. "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall exalt you" (James 4:10). This has never been a popular concept and never will.

It was a harsh, cold, unsympathetic world into which our Lord came to display the love of a heavenly Father for all men. This world gave little thought to the needs or the rights of the humble and lowly. What little concern that Jews had for those who were needy among their own nation found itself exhausted within the narrow limits of their national confines. Pagans were almost bereft of consideration of the poor and lowly. The pagan view was that some men were vastly superior to others

because they were particularly gifted, either intellectually or by virtue of wealth or power. The many existed for the benefit of the privileged few. Jesus Christ, however, came to reveal to men everywhere that each man is of infinite value in the sight of God because he is the object of God's love through Christ. All men are equal as God views them, regardless of economic rank. Instead of neglecting the unknown and the helpless, our Lord singled them out for special care and emphasized to His followers the importance of love even to "these least." One of the reasons why resentment against Christianity in the Roman world was so bitter was because this new faith exalted the beggar and the outcast, as well as the gifted and the great. The pagan world with its arrogance and pride could not stand the Christian emphasis upon humility which it considered the characteristic of a slave, nor could it understand the Christian concern for those that were poverty-stricken and those that were simply "nobodies." (Frank Pack)

We can never overcome this arrogant approach until we saturate our minds with the gospel of Jesus Christ which will soften our hearts, take the rough edges off our words, and put grace in our deeds.

(B. G. Echols)

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