

WALKING CLOSER

James 4:7-10

March 18, 2007 Sunday p.m.

INTRODUCTION

- A. How do you get closer to another person?
 1. Spend time with them.
 2. Take an interest in them.
 3. Listen to them.
 4. Care about them.
- B. How do you get closer to God?
 1. James says its possible-4:8.
 2. How? Listen to what James tells us.

I. FIRST, WE MUST ADMIT WE NEED TO BE CLOSER TO GOD.

- A. Ever feel far away from God? Guess who moved? Us.
- B. James says we can get closer to God, though. What does this mean?
 1. It means we must make the first move.
 2. It means when we do, God will not pull away from us, but rather will draw closer to us.
- C. What are to benefits of drawing closer to God?
 1. For one thing, the closer we get to God the further away we get from the things that got us far from God in the first place-i.e. sin, pride, busyness, etc.
 2. For another thing, the more we seek God the more he will bless us-Psalms 37:4.

II. SECOND, WHAT MUST WE DO TO GET CLOSER TO GOD?

- A. First, we must make sure we put God in his proper place-v.7a & 10.
 1. "Submit" means to "align oneself under the authority of another".
 2. Doing this says, "I'm not the center of the universe", God is.
 3. Further its says, "Its not about me, its about you".
 4. Chan Gailey, football coach for the Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets, told how he learned a lesson in humility.

Gailey was then head coach of Alabama's Troy State, and they were playing for a National Championship. The week before the big game, he was headed to the practice field when a secretary called him back to take a phone call.

Somewhat irritated, Gailey told her to take a message because he was on his way to practice.

She responded, "But it's Sports Illustrated."

"I'll be right there," he said.

As he made his way to the building, he began to think about the upcoming article. It would be great publicity for a small school like Troy State to be in Sports Illustrated. As he got closer, he realized that a three-page article would not be sufficient to tell the whole story. Coming even closer to his office, he started thinking that he might be on the cover. "Should I pose or go with an action shot," he wondered. His head was spinning with all of the possibilities.

When he picked up the phone and said hello, the person asked, "Is this Chan Gailey?"

"Yes, it is," he replied confidently.

"This is Sports Illustrated, and we're calling to let you know that your subscription is running out. Are you interested in renewing?"

Coach Gailey concluded the story by saying, "You are either humble or you will be humbled."

Alan Price, Chatsworth, Georgia; source: Chan Gailey speaking at a dinner in Dalton, Georgia (4-20-04)

- B. Second, we must make sure we put the devil in his proper place-v.7b.
 1. "Resist" means to "oppose or stand up to another".
 2. How? Not by ourselves-Ephesians 6:11.

3. What can we expect when we do oppose the devil?-I Peter 5:8; I John 4:4; 5:4-5.
- C. Third, we must make sure that we're getting rid of what we need to get rid of-v.8b.
1. "Sinners" is a word best applied to an unbeliever, but James was addressing Christians who were acting like unbelievers.
 2. "Double-Minded" is someone trying to play both sides of the field.
 3. "Wash" and "Purify" are pictures of ceremonial cleansing-Isa. 1:16 & Exo. 30:19-21.
 4. How do we do this? I John 1:9.
- D. Fourth, we must make sure we're not just going through the motions-v.9.
1. James is not suggesting the Christian life should be joyless.
 2. He is, however, saying we must take sin seriously.

CONCLUSION

- A. Do you need to draw closer to God?
- B. Acts 3:19 offers this prescription.