



**LIVE THE GOOD LIFE (Faith Evidence #3: Real Faith Manifests in Godly Behavior) 7<sup>th</sup> of the Faith that Shows Series James 4**

Faith can be that internal strength flowing from a strong belief in God. But faith is not entirely inward; it manifests itself outwardly. In fact, faith is not just an abstract ideal but is manifested by words, actions and decisions. 13-18 faith is dead.

In the last weeks, we learned that

1. Faith manifests joy when tested.
2. Faith relies on wisdom provided by God
3. Faith produces righteousness
4. Faith is more than skin-deep

- Faith evidence #1: Believers can tame their tongue
- Faith evidence #2: Faith Exercises Heavenly Wisdom
- **Faith evidence #3: Real Faith Manifests in Godly Behavior**

It is disturbing to realize that even Christians can behave contrary to the attitude that Jesus models. However, it is true that (1) even Christians are capable of behaving like (or, even worse than) non-Christians, and (2) even Christians can walk the path of foolishness which ends in destruction.

**To claim that we have faith ought to result to the good life.**

James pointed out that heavenly wisdom results into the good life (3:13). This good life is the same as "right conduct" or, simply, "godly behavior".

In Chapter 4, James addresses the consequences that flow from acting inconsistently with one's professing of faith. This leads us to the third evidence of real and living faith: GODLY BEHAVIOR

**LIVE THE GOOD LIFE: Truths Behind Godly Behavior**

**Godly behavior always starts with godly motives** (James 4:1-3)

- **Ungodly motives produce outward conflicts** . *What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight (v. 1-2).*

- **Ungodly motives often disqualify us from receiving from God because of two reasons:**

1. **Because we are too proud to ask from Him.** *You do not have because you do not ask God (v. 2)*

2. **Or, because we want things so we can spend them on our pleasures.**

- **If we only check our motives, we can behave in godliness.** When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures (v. 3)

**Godly behavior is a result of submission and strong commitment to God** (James 4:4-10)

- **Godly behavior cannot come from an adulterous heart.** "You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God" (v 4).

**A. What An Adulterous Heart is?**

1. It is attachment or friendship to the world.
2. It is being divided as to who to serve (Matthew 624)
3. It is making God "enemy" by abandoning God over what the world provides (Remember, all throughout the Bible, God expects that His people will be devoted to Him alone).

**B. Effects of having an adulterous heart**

1. Becoming enemy with God.
2. Grieving the Holy Spirit. "Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us?"

- **Godly behavior can be produced once we rely on God's grace:**

But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble"

- **Godly behavior results from Strong commitment and submission**

**A. Submission:** "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you."

1. To come under the rule of God and invite Him to reign over us again

**B. Strong commitment:** "Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up."

1. Admission of guilt and being cleansed from it: "Wash your hands, you sinners,"

2. Purifying our hearts by repenting from our double-mindedness: "purify your hearts, you double-minded"

3. Grieve over the seriousness of our condition: "Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom."

4. Expect God to lift up as He sees the brokenness in our hearts: "Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up."

**Godly behavior restricts us from becoming judgmental**

(James 4:11-12)

- **Godly behavior is not offensive**
- **Godly behavior will not in any way cause us to be judgmental of others**

**Godly behavior leads us to depend on God's will** (James 4:13-17)

- **Godly behavior cannot be proud about our limited human understanding**

**A. The pride in us refrains us from entrusting our future to God.** Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money."

**B. The pride in us pushes us to think that we are in control of our lives; we forget how short our life is:** What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. <sup>16</sup>As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil.

- **Godly behavior flows from dependence on God.**

**A.** Dependence expressed as we yield to God's will. <sup>15</sup>"Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that."

**B.** Dependence expressed by doing the good we ought to do: If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them.

**FOR DISCUSSION:**

1. React: It is disturbing to realize that even Christians can behave contrary to the attitude that Jesus models. However, it is true that (1) even Christians are capable of behaving like (or, even worse than) non-Christians, and (2) even Christians can walk the path of foolishness which ends in destruction.
2. Reflect: To claim that we have faith ought to result to the good life. James pointed out that heavenly wisdom results into the good life (3:13). This good life is the same as "right conduct" or, simply, "godly behavior".
3. Reflect: Godly behavior always starts with godly motives
4. Review the effects of ungodly motives. How has ungodly motive affect your relationship with God and others?
5. Review the qualities of an adulterous heart. Have you caught yourself becoming too attached to the things of this world? What can be done to keep your heart committed to God?
6. Review insights under "Strong commitment". Do you think you need to undertake these in order to commit to God again?
7. Reflect: Godly behavior restricts us from becoming judgmental
8. Reflect: Godly behavior leads us to depend on God's will
9. Are you living the good life? Does your behavior show that you are godly and have real faith?
10. What practical steps should you do in order to obey what you think God wants you to do?