

## God's Solution to Worldliness By Trey Sullins

The Bible declares, "Friendship with the world is enmity with God" (James 4:4). Friendship with the world is enmity with God because the world chooses sin and rejects the path to God; therefore, striving to resist the world has always been a problem for the righteous. The book of James does not stop there but continues to explain several things that must be done in order to accomplish this goal.

First, James explains that we must submit to God. James 4:6-7 say, "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.' Therefore submit to God." What this means is putting aside our desires, wants, and ideas and setting up God first in our lives. This also means putting aside the inventions and cares of the world so that God can be first. In other words, nothing else in life should be over the Almighty in terms of what we follow and obey. It is also important to recognize that submission is an ongoing action. When we choose to submit to God then we must continue always choosing to submit to God. If we forsake that commitment, God is not going to look at us in a positive manner or as if we were still submitting. When we humble ourselves, He lifts us up (James 4:10).

Second, James explains that we must resist the devil. James 4:7 finishes by saying, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." This step is quite simple and should go without saying. If you want to avoid worldliness then stay away from Satan and his works; However, the hard part is putting it into practice. The temptations of the world come after us and attempt to pull us away from following our God, but we must endure these things and resist! The last statement of the verse provides a great deal of encouragement by saying, "he will flee from you." Imagine that, the "father of lies" (John 8:44) and "ruler of this world" (John 12:31) will flee from us if we resist him. After Jesus' temptation in Matthew 4:11 this very thing happened, and it can happen in our lives too! We truly have the power to stay away from worldliness and its works.

Third, James explains that we must draw near to God. James 4:8 instructs, "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded." We have to draw near to God by making ourselves clean and pure before Him. Applying His word in our lives accomplishes this very goal. Sometimes in life people wait for things to come to them; but in relationship to God, we have to make the choice to get closer to Him. Avoiding worldliness and having salvation are not just going to fall into our laps! Cleaning and purifying ourselves also removes the stain of worldliness. First John 1:7 shows us that this is possible because of the blood of Christ which was shed for us.

The world in which we live can sometimes seem bleak and frightening. However, if you consider it from the perspective of God's power then the world becomes a much more hopeful and joyful place! To escape from the world's problems what we must do is submit to God, resist Satan, and draw near to God. This simple pattern will put us on the right path which leads to heaven. This path will also lead us away from the life of worldly struggles and to a life of spiritual purity and cleanliness. When we put these things to practice in our lives, then James 4:10 says, "He will lift you up."