

FAMILY DEVOTION : PRIME : INSIDE OUT

LESSON 6 :: AMBITIOUS IMITATION

Jorge Luis Borges once wrote, "The image of the Lord has been replaced by a mirror." What he meant was that people have begun placing themselves in the role of God. They see themselves as the ruler of their lives instead of God. This way of thinking is a covert attack on the people of God and can cause great destruction. Self-promotion is a great danger to believers because it is often hidden by seemingly good intentions.

Think about how the world tries to promote good self-esteem. A healthy self-esteem is a great thing, but when a person thinks too well of himself, it becomes a sinful issue of pride. The world, however, often portrays pride as healthy and good when in fact it hurts individuals and their relationships.

James, the half-brother of Jesus, wrote this letter to believers so that they would understand what the practical daily walk of a Christian should look like. In 4:1-10, James was clear that pride and humility cannot share the same mirror. Pride is a mirror hog--it promotes jealousy, strife, quarreling, and self-indulgent living. With this kind of attitude, believers fight within and amongst themselves.

James further reminded us that only through a humble relationship with Christ can we rid our hearts, homes, families, and society of pride. Through the simple act of thinking less highly of ourselves, we shrink the mirror hog and make room for the true image that we should reflect--the image of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

CONNECTION QUESTIONS

1. Verbs are words that call for action. Make a list of every verb that appears in James 4:1-10. How are we measuring up as a family in carrying out these instructions?
2. How do we purify our hearts so that our family image reflects Christ?
3. What does it mean to "draw near to God?" Read 1 Peter 5:5-6 and Matthew 23:12 for help in answering this question.
4. Ask each family member to make a list of ways to wage war on selfishness and self-promotion. Be specific. (Example: When my brother asks me to take out the trash for him while he studies for a test, instead of saying, "It's not my job to take out the trash," I could respond with humility and gladly help him out.)
5. Why is it important to mourn over our sins like James 4:9-10 says?