

**Sermon or Lesson: James 4:9-10** (NIV based)  
[Lesson Questions included]

TITLE: Grieve Your Significant Sinfulness

INTRO: None of us is perfect. And from experience, we know that at some point in time each of us believers wanders from God and wades into the miry clay of significant sinfulness.

Let's look at what is necessary to get out of that miry clay of significant sinfulness, and back on solid ground of right-standing with God. (cf. Psalms 40:1-2)

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READ: James 4:9-10, with verses 4-8 for context

REVIEW FOR CONTEXT: Verses 9-10 are a continuation of the steps started in verse 7 of the process of a believer coming out of significant sinfulness such as engaging in "worldliness, envy, selfish ambition, sensual desires, coveting, destroying, quarrels, or fights" "among" other people in the church or ministries, and coming in to getting one's life in spiritually healthy right-standing with God. (vv.4:4; 3:14; 4:2,1)

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vv.9-10 - READ

[Lesson Question: In these verses, what are we being directed to do and why?]

SECTION POINT: Prepare for and go through a time of mourning, lament.

- - Take on a personal authentic regard about your own significant sinfulness, characterized by: grief, "distress", deplorable state of misery, anguish, deep regret, mourn, wail, cry, sorrow, emotional sensitivity, remorse, agonizing, sadness, shame. (v.9, Strong's #5003 - 'grieve')
  - - Go through a time of mourning, lamenting about your significant sinfulness. (v.9)
  - - For that time, refrain from all cheerfulness, laughter, and joyful demeanor to instead focus, dwell, and immerse yourself in a demeanor of gloom, "shame, sadness, downcast", and mourning about your significant sinfulness. (v.9, Strong's #2726 - 'gloom')
  - - Terminate all pride that you have, and exchange it for humility, which the Lord requires in your approach to Him. (v.10)
  - - Empty yourself of any lofty thinking you have about yourself, and replace it with the truth and reality that this is the kind of sinful person you are and will continue to be if God leaves you to yourself. (v.10)
  - - Contrary to modern psychology, dump all of your self-esteem and replace it with God-dependent esteem. (cf. Philippians 4:13)
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[Lesson Question: What specific steps should we be taking as we go through a time of mourning for our significant sinfulness?]

SECTION POINT: By implication, conduct a thorough self-assessment of various aspects of the significant sinfulness you have been doing.

- - Inclusively identify all of the evil you have been doing. (v.3:16; cf. v.3:10)
- - Honestly evaluate all of the damage you have brought, caused, and inflicted upon other people, God's Kingdom, and your relationship with Him. (see REVIEW FOR CONTEXT on page 1 of this lesson, and also see each of the individual lessons for James 3:13 through 4:6)

SECTION POINT: Adopt the findings of your accurate self-assessment.

- - Embrace the truth. (v.8b)
  - - Embrace the realities. (v.8b)
  - - Take ownership. (v.8b)
  - - Be deeply sorrowful. (v.9)
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BIG IDEA: Grieve the significant sinfulness you have been doing, and start taking the necessary steps towards spiritually healthy right-standing before God.

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SECTION POINT: Make all necessary corrections to start "submitting to God". (v.7)

- - Irrevocably "throw off" and get rid of "every evil practice" you have in your life, and the sinful activities you identified in your reflective self-assessment. (Hebrews 12:1; v.3:16)
  - - Discard all pride. (v.3:6)
  - - Admit and accept that you have a high propensity for the kind of evil you have been doing. (vv.7-9)
  - - Adopt an attitude of humility, especially in relation to your sinful activities and corresponding spiritual weakness propensities. (v.10)
  - - Immediately and consistently start obeying God in each of the areas of significant sinfulness, whether you feel like it or not, and even if it comes at a cost to you. (vv.7,1-3)
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[Lesson Question: What verses in Psalms chapters 38, 6, and 51 add descriptive clarification for these steps in this process of coming out of significant sinfulness and getting into right-standing with God?]

SECTION POINT: Confess all of it to God.

- - Psalms 38:4 "My guilt has overwhelmed me like a burden too heavy to bear."
- - Psalms 38:6 "I am bowed down and brought very low; all day long I go about mourning."
- - Psalms 38:8 "I am feeble and utterly crushed; I groan in anguish of heart."
- - Psalms 38:9 "All my longings lie open before you, O Lord; my sighing is not hidden from you."
- - Psalms 38:18 "I confess my iniquity; I am troubled by my sin."

- - Psalms 6:3 "My soul is in anguish. How long, O LORD, how long?"
- - Psalms 6:6 "I am worn out from groaning; all night long I flood my bed with weeping and drench my couch with tears."

SECTION POINT: Cry out to God.

- - Psalms 6:4 "Turn, O LORD, and deliver me; save me because of your unfailing love."
- - Psalms 51:1 "Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions."
  - - Psalms 51:2 "Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin."
  - - Psalms 51:3 "For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me."
  - - Psalms 51:10 "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me."
  - - Psalms 51:12 "Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me."
  - - Psalms 51:16-17 - "16. You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. 17. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise."
  - - Psalms 6:9 "The LORD has heard my cry for mercy; the LORD accepts my prayer."

[Lesson Question: How should we regard and handle the outcome from this process and the consequences of our significant sinfulness?]

SECTION POINT: By implication, accept whatever outcome God determines for you.

- - Accept God's opinion and everything He says in His Word about what you have done. (v.10)
- - Fully accept all of the blame, and do not make any excuses. (v.6)
- - Accept the consequences. (vv.6,10)
- - Accept God's disciplining. (vv.6,10; cf. Hebrews 12:4-14)
- - Patiently wait upon the Lord to "lift you up" out of your grieving, distress, mental anguish for the significant sinfulness you have been doing. (v.10)
- - If you have the prescribed heart attitude and approach, He will then establish you in a healthy frame of mind, which rests upon your new righteous living and right-standing before Him. (vv.6,10)
- - All of these steps need to be done sincerely, authentically, and comprehensively. Failure to do these steps in this manner and instead holding some parts in reserve indicates to God that you still like and agree with and want some of them, thereby preventing comprehensive spiritual cleansing. (v.3)

INVITATION:

- - Let's pause this meeting right now.
- - As we all sit still here in silence, each of you take some time and start a self-assessment like we have been learning about in this passage.

- - What significant area of sinfulness does God want you to face and deal with?
- - Right here, right now, start taking the steps we learned and deal with your significant sinfulness before God.

[Pause the meeting, stop talking, stop the music, and allow God to work on their hearts.]  
[Troubled expressions, downcast demeanors, and tears on their faces suggest God is at work right there in your meeting before your eyes. :) Praise the Lord!! ]

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Works Cited:

Bible. "The Holy Bible: New International Version." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

"Strong's Greek Dictionary." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

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