

A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED UPON THE LETTER OF JAMES

WIN OVER YOUR BROTHER/SISTER

James 5:9 “Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door.”

Several translations use the word “grudge” instead of “grumble.” The Greek word can also be translated as “to complain strongly against.” This verse has in mind that the grumbling or bearing a grudge is derived from, based upon something negative that has been said or done. The one bearing the grudge or grumbling has self-appointed themselves as a judge over the one they hold their negative feelings. What makes this situation even worse is this behavior is happening between two individuals who claim to be in fellowship with Jesus Christ. (Christians)

Jesus spoke the following regarding seeing the fault or sin of another person, “Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.” (Matthew 7:1-2,5) Again Jesus said, “. . . with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.” (Luke 6:38) Remember what James wrote in chapter 4:11-12? “Do not speak evil against one another, brothers. The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?”

Judging, bearing grudges, condemning are signs of a lack of patience. (James 5:7) Jesus taught in Matthew 18 how He wants us who believe in Him to treat one another, especially when we believe someone has sinned against us, “If your brother sins against you, go and confront him privately. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. “If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over.

(Matthew 18:15) You will note, Jesus says your goal should be to “win over your brother.”

Prayer: I must confess, heavenly Father, it is often difficult for me to deal with my brother and sister with love and concern for their soul. I am quick to become frustrated, desire their punishment and care little about them receiving either Your or my forgiveness. Give me the heart of Jesus who prayed from the cross for those who put Him there, “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.”

Where charity and love prevail There God is ever found;
Brought here together by Christ’s love By love are we thus bound.

With grateful joy and holy fear His charity we learn;
Let us with heart and mind and soul Now love Him in return.

Forgive we now each other’s faults As we our faults confess,
And let us love each other well In Christian holiness.

Let strife among us be unknown; Let all contention cease;
Be God’s the glory that we seek; Be ours His holy peace.

Let us recall that in our midst Dwells Christ, His only Son;
As members of His body joined We are in Him made one.

For love excludes no race or clan That names the Savior’s name;
His family embraces all Whose Father is the same.

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