

FORMULA FOR FREEDOM

(Jas. 4:1-10)

Introduction:

1. We are engaged in a spiritual warfare that intrudes and plays out in the physical world. But God has not left us as helpless sheep. He has given us our Shepherd and armed us for the warfare. Let us consider just two passages that provide for us the formula by which we may be free from the attacks of our adversary.

Discussion:

I. Jas. 4.

- A. Freedom from the fustiness (vv 1-6).
 1. The problems in the church (wars and fights) find their source in two main places: selfishness and worldliness (vv 3, 4).
 2. The root of these is pride and the solution is submission to God and His word (vv 4-6).
- B. Freedom from the foe (vv 7-10).
 1. Submitting to God = resisting the devil (cp. Gen. 3:1-6; Matt. 4:1-10; John 8:31-47).
 2. Drawing near to God = God drawing near to you = the devil fleeing from you (seeking light produces light which dispels darkness).
 3. Submitting to God (drawing near to Him) also produces cleansing, purification, and single-mindedness (cp. Matt. 6:19-24; Phil. 2:5; 1 Cor. 1:10; 2:16; et al).
 4. Pride (laughter and joy) needs to be made humble (lamentation, mourning, weeping, and gloom).
 5. Ultimately, submission to God produces our elevation (exaltation) by God.
- C. Freedom from the fall (vv 11-17; cp. Prov. 16:18).
 1. We are to love one another and not presume to judge/condemn (v11, 12; cp. John 5:30; 7:24).
 2. We must humble ourselves before God in all aspects of our lives (vv13-17; cp. Matt. 6:33).

II. 1 Pet. 5.

- A. Freedom from the fall (pride; vv 1-7).
 1. Elders free from fall of pride (vv 1-5a).
 2. Younger folks too (vv 5-7).
 - a. Submit, clothed in humility = receiving grace and exaltation (vv 5, 6).
 - b. Knowing all the while that God cares for you so don't worry so much (v7).
- B. Freedom from the foe (vv 8, 9).
 1. Be sober and on guard because a hungry lion is loose.
 2. Resist him = by being steadfast in the faith (= submitting to God in Jas. 4:7) and understanding this is nothing new or strange (cp. 1 Pet. 4:12, 13; John 15:18ff; Acts 14:22).
- C. Freedom from fear (vv 10-14).
 1. If we submit to God and resist the devil = God will perfect (not *teleos* = complete, but *katartizo* = to mend, to fully equip; cp. Matt. 4:21), establish (place firmly, to fix in place), strengthen, (from same root *histemi* as establish) and settle (to lay a foundation, to make stable) us (v10).
 2. Glory and dominion to God (the one we're tied to; v11).
 3. We are not alone in this fight so be brave (vv 12-14).

Conclusion:

1. Understand the danger within which we find ourselves. Submit to God and draw near to Him = He will draw near to us and the devil will flee. Stay alert and on guard, steadfast in the faith and be free and remain free.
2. Invitation.