

# James 4:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.

## Analysis

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**Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.** Be afflicted, mourn, and weep; let laughter turn to mourning. James calls for godly sorrow over sin. Superficial happiness must give way to Spirit-wrought lament that leads to change.

Reformed repentance involves grief and hatred for sin that turns to God. Such seriousness about sin contrasts with worldly levity.

## Historical Context

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Like Old Testament prophets (Joel 2), James summons God's people to lament. Diaspora believers flirting with worldliness needed heartfelt contrition rather than lighthearted excuses.

## Related Passages

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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

## Study Questions

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1. When have you last wept over sin—personal or communal?

2. What practices help cultivate godly sorrow?
3. How can lament lead to actionable repentance?

## Interlinear Text

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ταλαιπωρήσατε καὶ πενθήσατε καὶ κλάυσατε ὁ γέλως  
**Be afflicted** **and** **mourn** **and** **weep** <sup>G3588</sup> **laughter**  
G5003 G2532 G3996 G2532 G2799 G1071

ὑμῶν εἰς πένθος μεταστραφήτω καὶ ἡ χαρὰ εἰς  
**let your to mourning** **be turned** **and** <sup>G3588</sup> **your joy to**  
G5216 G1519 G3997 G3344 G2532 G5479 G1519

κατήφειαν  
**heaviness**  
G2726

## Additional Cross-References

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**Matthew 5:4** (Parallel theme): Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

**Proverbs 14:13** (Parallel theme): Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth is heaviness.

**Luke 6:25** (Parallel theme): Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep.

**Psalms 119:67** (Parallel theme): Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.

**Ezekiel 16:63** (Parallel theme): That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord GOD.

**Ezekiel 7:16** (Parallel theme): But they that escape of them shall escape, and shall be on the mountains like doves of the valleys, all of them mourning, every one for his iniquity.

**Job 30:31** (Parallel theme): My harp also is turned to mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep.

**Jeremiah 31:9** (Parallel theme): They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.

**Luke 16:25** (Parallel theme): But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

**Psalms 119:71** (Parallel theme): It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.