

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

TO APPLY, NOT REHASH, THE SERMON

Read

Read James 4:1-10 out loud and consider making some observations about the passage.

Sermon Recap

Review the sermon with your group, highlighting the following:

- Conflict within the church is caused by unmet and conflicting desires within our selves and among our members.
- Our desires aren't necessarily wrong in themselves, but can lead us to sin when we feel others are keeping us from having what we want or think we deserve.
- Sometimes we don't have the things we want because we don't ask God for them. Sometimes we don't have them because we use God to get them without delighting in God Himself, showing that we love those things more than Him.
- James calls the church to take responsibility for their roles in conflict and come humbly to God, who is ready to forgive.

Group Discussion

1. Before this sermon, what would you have said is the root cause of interpersonal conflict? What would you say now?
2. How can our personal desires lead to conflict with others? How have you experienced this in your life?
3. What does it mean to be friends with the world, and why does this make someone an enemy of God (vv. 4-5)? (*Read Matthew 6:24 or 1 John 2:15-17.*)
4. Has God ever said "no" to your prayers? How did that affect your relationship with Him? (*How did you feel? What did you think of God?*)
5. How are James' exhortations (vv. 6-10) a "solution" to the problem of "quarrels and fights" within the church?

WEEKLY RESPONSE QUESTIONS

- Reflect:** Meditate on God's jealous love for your soul. Reflect on the promises He makes in this passage to those who draw near to Him.
- Respond:** Write down any unmet desires you have and consider: Have you asked God for these? Do you trust Him to give you all you need?
- Reach:** Is there anyone with whom you have unresolved conflict? Ask God to help you understand and acknowledge your part in it.

PRAYER

- Praise God for His readiness to draw near, show grace, and lift us up at the right time. Ask for His help to humbly draw near to Him!
- Ask God to make us a group whose greatest desire is to know and enjoy Him more. Pray that we would gladly say no to worldly desires that displease God.
- Ask God to unite our group and church as we seek to love one another as He has loved us.