



This guide will help you facilitate a clear understanding of the Bible passage with a focus on applying God's truth to our lives together. You should spend at least half your time discussing questions that are application focused. Look at the Big Idea and What your CG Must Take Away sections at the beginning of the guide to keep the discussion focused.

Introduction and Series Overview

The aim of the Redeeming Relationship series is to help us understand the various roles we play relationally, and how each of these is to be done under God empowered by the gospel. This gives us a proper framework for both redeeming broken relationships and relating to others, and how to generally relate to church members in a way that builds them up. It also helps us understand our own hearts and each other in relationships so that we can be compassionate and clear with them, as well as specific relationships that people find themselves in family, marriage, kids, work, etc.

Big idea

We need to deal with our own hearts before we deal with difficult people. Having humbled ourselves before God, we are to step out in love towards difficult people, not speaking evil or judging them.

What your CG must take away from this study

For your group to draw near to God for grace and to deal with difficult people with grace.

Read James 4:1-12

¹ What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? ² You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. ⁴ You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. ⁵ Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, "He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"? ⁶ But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." ⁷ Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹ Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you. ¹¹ 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. ¹² There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?

- 1a. What are some of the reasons we often give for fighting with others?
- 1b. What does James say is the reason we have quarrels and fights with other people?
- 2a. What are some “passions that are at war” within people? (v1)
- 2b. Where have you seen these passions revealed in your own life?
- 3a. Why does James call his audience “you adulterous people”? (v4)
- 3b. How is “friendship with the world enmity with God”?
- 3c. Have you been in a situation where your passions and idolatry have been overwhelming and uncontrollable? Think especially about the context of your relationships (with your spouse, your colleagues/boss, your parents/kids/siblings) What did you do in that situation?
- 4a. What does James tell us the solution is to constant quarrelling in our relationships?
- 4b. How can we draw near to God in a way that promises he will draw near to us as well?
5. Think about your difficult relationships. Have you had moments where you were able to humble yourself before God when you were tempted to sin? What happened?
6. How does humbling ourselves before God and asking for his grace change our response to others in our difficult relationships?
7. James mentions two specific sins in verses 11-12 - speaking evil of others and judging one another. How does speaking evil of and judging one another reveal the pride in our hearts?
8. How have you seen your desires and passions damage relationships?
9. Think of how your passions and desires boil up in difficult situations in your relationships. How can the gospel of grace help us in the moments when we are full of pride and anger?
10. What are some practical ways we can help each other as a CG in the moments our passions flare up within us?

Apply Practically

- a) Break up into pairs and share about a difficult relationship in your life. How does your own pride and internal passions affect the way you respond in that relationship? Share with your partner.

- b) Remind each other that God gives you more grace in that moment (James 4:6). Pray for each other that you would humble yourselves before God in that moment.
- c) Follow-up with your partner: Remember what your partner has shared, and follow up with him/her next week. How is that relationship going? Did they respond differently in a similar situation? How can you continue to pray for them?