

THE CAUSE OF CONFLICTS

JAMES 4:1-10

CHURCH GROUP SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE – NOVEMBER 19, 2023

SCRIPTURE READING

James 4:1-10 ESV

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.

ICE BREAKER QUESTION

What has been some unhelpful advice you heard on conflict resolution?

SERMON RECAP

YOU ARE YOUR MAIN PROBLEM IN YOUR RELATIONSHIPS.

Factors that influence how we handle conflict:

- Our upbringing
- Trauma
- Physical or physiological factors
- Ultimately... Inordinate Desires
- I want I desire I demand I judge I punish

Right diagnosis and Right posture of humility lead to Restoration and Reconciliation.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Observation: What does the passage say?

1. Read James 4:1-10 aloud as a group. Let group members share observations. Try not to move into interpretation of the passage or application of what you read quite yet. Simply share what you observe.
 - What causes quarrels and fights among people? (vv.1-3)
 - What does friendship with the world entail in relationship with God? (vv.4-5)
 - What is the remedy to prideful desires that cause the conflict? (v.6)
 - What seven things does James exhort readers to do in order to combat pride? (vv.7-10)

Interpretation: What does the passage mean?

1. How is it that passions are still at war within the hearts of Christians even after regeneration? What does the battle against the old sinful nature look like (See Galatians 5:16-17)?
2. In verse 4, what is James implying about a Christian's relationship to God and to the world (i.e. Sinful way of thinking and living) (See 2 Corinthians 11:2)?
3. In verse 5, is James misquoting Scripture? How is this a summary statement of God's jealousy for His people (See Exodus 20:5; 34:14)?
4. What do you think James means by each exhortation listed in verses 7 through 10?
5. How would you summarize the main point of James 4:1-10 in your own words?

Application: How can we apply this passage to our lives?

1. Conflict with God
 - How does the gospel resolve our conflict with God to transform our relationship to Him (See Romans 5:7-10)?
 - Conflict with others
2. Who did you have a conflict with recently? How did you respond in that situation? What was the inordinate desire that drove you to act that way?
 - Are there any unresolved conflicts with others? What is one action I can do this week to respond in humble surrender to the Lord?

LEADER NOTES

COUNSELING CONVERSATIONS | As we walk through the book of James, check out mcleanbible.org/counseling-conversations For resources to help you process and pray the various topics covered in this book.

PASTORAL INSTALLATION OF MIKE KELSEY | Join the MBC church family across all locations on December 3 to celebrate and commission Mike in his new role as Lead Pastor. Details can be found at mcleanbible.org/installation.