

EXCERPT FROM TEXT

¹ What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? ² You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. ³ When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures (James 4:1-3, NIV).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What is the silliest fight that you've gotten in lately? How long did it go on?
- You've likely been involved in a foolish fight that you knew was silly but kept pressing into. Why do we prolong silly fights?
- If you could identify one core issue behind most of the fights you get into, what would it be?

READ JAMES 4:1-3.

- This weekend we heard from James that most fights stem from jealousy. How does this square with your own experience? How has jealousy been the cause of some of your disagreements?
- If you are honest, what incites your jealousy?
- Where do you see self-indulgence working in our broader culture? How does what you see around you support what James is saying in Scripture?
- Look through Genesis 4:1-8. What led Cain to kill his brother? Why can we simply not afford to let jealousy and sinful desires continue unchecked (see verse 7)?
- How would you respond to someone who chases sinful desires with excuses like, "live and let live," or, "I'm just pursuing my own truth"?

READ JAMES 4:4-10.

- The same power that raised Jesus from the dead—what we celebrated last week—gives us the power to overcome our desires. Why, then, don't we turn to God to overcome our sinful desires? How can we make turning to God in the midst of our desires a pattern in everyday life?
- How does being in love with the things of the world harm our relationship with God? Is there anything you need to change about your relationships with people or your desires for things as a result of being taught by God's Word?
- Who is the most humble person you know? What could you emulate about his or her life? How does cultivating a humble heart keep us away from jealousy and conflict with others?

READ JAMES 4:11-12.

- Have you ever gotten in a fight because you said something that you shouldn't have said? What led you to speak those words?
- This weekend, we heard that the way out of jealousy is to celebrate others. How is celebration the opposite of jealousy? What has God done for someone else in your life that you need to celebrate?
- How does celebration warm your heart not only toward other people, but also toward God?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- How does your own selfishness affect and harm other people? Why is this something that we cannot afford to ignore as followers of Christ?
- Which relationship in your life could benefit from greater humility?
- How could actively celebrating people instead of judging them and being jealous of them lead to opportunities for you to share the grace of God with them?

WORK OUT (THIS WEEK'S ASSIGNMENTS)**PRAYER REQUESTS****MY NEXT STEPS**

1. This week, I will memorize James 4:8a, "Come near to God and He will come near to you ..."
2. This week, I will come near to God by daily setting aside some time to pray and read the Bible.
3. This week, I will answer the question, "Who or what is currently determining my self-worth and value?" and ask forgiveness if it's anything other than Jesus.
4. This week, I will write a note to someone celebrating the great things God is doing in their life.