

“...And That’s How the Fight Started”
Small Group Discussion Guide

James 4:1-10

6/24/18

Opening warm-up question: When you were little, what did you want to be, or do, when you grew up?

Goal for the discussion: This is concluding our study of James. A key theme in James is “Outside conduct comes from an inside condition.” Today we’re specifically looking at what causes our arguments, quarrels and fights.

Read James 4:1-10

What kinds of things do we usually attribute our quarrels to?

- (Examples: The other person started it, moods, we know we’re right)

What does James mean when he says, “You desire but do not have, so you kill?” Is he just talking to murderers?

- (Hint, See Jesus’s teachings on murder in Matthew 5:21-22)
- In what ways do we “kill” to get what we want? Does it work; do we get what we wanted?
- Andy said (quoting N.T. Wright) “The ultimate argument is force.” What are other, more productive and less hurtful ways of “arguing” (or, persuading) someone if you think your position is valid?

Read verse 3 again.

- What does it mean to “ask with the wrong motives?”
- How might we ask for something with the *right* motives?

Read verse 4 again. Then see Exodus 20:4-5.

- Andy said that “if we seek our desires *before* God, we won’t get either one.” Why won’t God “share us with a rival”?
- What is the difference between God’s jealousy for us and our envy for worldly things?
 - o Hint: Abbreviated definitions for:
 - Jealousy: To be fiercely protective or vigilant over one’s rights or possessions
 - Envy: The discontented longing aroused by someone else’s possessions, qualities, or situations

Verse 6 says, “But he gives us more grace.” So GRACE (not laws or requirements) is God’s offer, his solution to his jealousy for us.

- What does this say about God’s love? God’s approach to humanity?
- In light of this, how should we respond to God’s offer?

Our passage concludes, "Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up." How do we humble ourselves, and how does he lift us up?

If you are comfortable, share a desire that you have or had which you may have been giving priority to.

If you are comfortable, share an issue that frequently causes quarreling with someone in your life. How can today's passage help you with that?

Close by asking God to reveal how he wants you to respond to the desires "battling within you", and by praying for one another.