

Small Group Guide: “Family Life - Can We Just Stop Fighting?”

Opening Question: If you could describe your family in one word or phrase, what would it be and why? *(Feel free to share lighthearted descriptions!)*

Opening Prayer: *Heavenly Father, thank you for bringing us together today. As we explore Your Word and discuss today’s message, we ask for open hearts and minds. Guide our discussion and help us draw closer to You and to each other. Let us learn how to bring peace into our relationships. In Jesus’ name, Amen.*

Key Takeaways:

1. **Source of Conflict:** According to James, our conflicts often come from our own desires and unmet wants, highlighting personal responsibility in resolving disputes.
2. **Role of Prayer:** Before confronting others about our problems, we should first take our concerns to God in prayer.
3. **Humility Over Pride:** God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. Humility is crucial in resolving conflicts.
4. **Spiritual Growth:** Growing closer to God can positively affect our relationships with others, decreasing tension and increasing understanding.
5. **Practical Steps:** James offers practical steps like submitting to God, resisting the devil, drawing near to God, and asking for forgiveness as ways to live a life of less conflict.

Discussion Questions:

1. **Read James 4:1-3.** How does James describe the source of fights and quarrels among us? How have you seen this play out in your own relationships?
2. The sermon mentions different conflict styles (pacifist, stuffer, litigator, screamer). Which style do you tend towards? How does this impact your relationships?
3. How might pausing to recognize “I’m not getting what I want” change the dynamic of an argument?
4. **Read James 4:6.** In this verse, James states that “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” How does pride play a role in interpersonal conflicts? How does pride create resistance with God?
5. **Read James 4:7-8.** This passage encourages believers to submit to God and resist the devil. What does it look like practically to “resist the devil” in the context of relationship conflicts? How does growing closer to God impact our relationships with others?
6. **Read James 4:2-3.** This passage mentions that we often pray with selfish motives. How can we shift our prayers to align more with God’s will? *(Hint: Instead of asking God to help me get what I want, pray and ask God to help me want what He wants.)*
7. Why is it important to take sin seriously, especially in the context of relationships (**see James 4:8-10**)?

Practical Applications:

1. **Take Ownership:** This week, when you feel a conflict arising, pause and ask yourself: “What do I want that I’m not getting?”
2. **Pause and Pray:** Before engaging in any conflict, commit to pausing and seeking God in prayer for wisdom and perspective. Practice bringing your desires to God in prayer before addressing them with others.
3. **Daily Devotion:** Set aside time each day this week to draw near to God through Bible reading and prayer, asking God to grow you spiritually and to help manage relationships wisely.
4. **Seek Forgiveness:** Regularly examine your interactions and be quick to ask for forgiveness where you've contributed to conflict. If you've hurt someone, practice asking for forgiveness without adding “but” statements. (*Hint: Don't do this — “I know I have my faults, but ...”*)

Closing Prayer: *Lord, help us to recognize the role our own desires play in conflicts. Give us the humility to put others first and the wisdom to bring our needs to You. May we grow closer to You and, as a result, experience more peace in our relationships. In Jesus' name, Amen.*