

SERMON OUTLINE James 4:1-10

The Cause of and Cure for Conflict in the Church

FRIENDSHIP WITH THE WORLD AS THE CAUSE OF CONFLICT WITHIN THE CHURCH (4-5)

THE CURE FOR CONFLICT WITHIN THE CHURCH (6-10)

The Grace of God (6)

The Grace of God through a Particular Conduit (6-10)

1. *Humbling ourselves (6, 10)*
2. *Submitting ourselves to God (7)*
3. *Resist the devil (7)*
4. *Draw near to God (8a)*
5. *Repent (8b)*
6. *Lament (9)*

SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

MAIN POINT

The main point of this text and sermon is to help you see James's answer to the question of how God's people are meant to avoid, respond to, and heal from conflict within the Church. And his answer is simple, repentance enabled by the grace of God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What were your thoughts on the text/sermon? What most stood out? How was it helpful? Confusing?
2. Have you ever been a part of ending conflict among Christians? What caused the conflict and how did you help end it?
3. What kinds of conflict resolution have you seen in the Church? What was the result? How well did they line up with James?
4. Can you think of any specific ways that friendship with the world has caused conflicts among Christians?
5. Is it generally more natural for you to turn first to God for help in times of trouble, or to try first to handle it on your own?
6. Which aspect of James's six-part grace conduit is easiest and which is hardest for you to embrace in conflict?
7. Would the people you've sinned against describe your response more as indifference or lament?
8. As you consider James's "solution" to Christian conflict, does it seem like it will work in your real-life conflicts?
9. In what way do you most clearly see the greatness of God in this passage?

AREAS OF APPLICATION

10. Do your best to identify any ways in which you've forged a friendship with the world. Confess them as sin and repent.
11. Draw to mind any genuine conflict you've had or currently have with another Christian. Humble yourself, submit to God, resist the devil, draw near to God in fellowship, repent, and lament over your sins.
12. Commit to having a regular quiet time (draw near to God).
13. Share the good news of our conflict-defeating God with one non-Christian this week.
14. What is one specific thing you mean to do differently in the power of the Spirit as a result of the things you saw or heard in this text or sermon?

PRAYER POINTS

15. Adoration. Praise God for being gracious. Praise God for being wise. Praise God for being a healer. Praise God for being love. Praise God for being perfectly victorious in all His plans.
16. Confession. Confess any friendship with the world. Confess any sin that has stirred conflict among God's people. Confess any disobedience to James's conflict-ending commands. Confess any ways you've hurt other people in pursuit of selfish gain.
17. Thanksgiving. Thank God that there is a way out of all conflict, with Him through Jesus, and His people through grace. Thank God that there is hope for every conflict. Thank God that His kindness is always upon His people. Thank God that His promises are sure. Thank God that His grace flows freely. Thank God for revealing the path of grace.
18. Supplication. Ask God to end all divisions within the Church and to unify all true believers in Jesus. Ask God to show the power of the gospel to the unbelieving world through His conflict-ending grace among Christians. Ask God to save one of your friends. Ask God to grant us all repentance.