

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



**PRINCE
OF PEACE**
Called to Connect



Conflict & Arrogance

February 8 & 9, 2020

Conflict in the Church is common, because human beings are bent toward self-centeredness. James diagnoses the underlying causes of conflict in the Church, and prescribes the remedy for healthy, faithful community. What James says here is applicable in our families and in our church communities.

SCRIPTURE TEXT: JAMES 4:1-17

Read the scripture text together as a group.

BACKGROUND INFO

James implies that the conflict in the congregation arises from selfish desires. When James talks about “friendship with the world” he’s referring to a willingness to indulge the culture’s encouragement to live self-focused lives. Not only is that way of living opposed to the self-giving attitude of Christ (Phil 2:3-8), it will always create relational conflict. James goes so far as to call this “adultery” in that the attitudes and actions of these Christians reveals more love for self and the world than love for Christ. So, what’s the answer?

- It starts with humility, a recognition that we are but dust and redeemed sinners.
- Resist the Devil. That is, resist the self-centered impulses of our sinful nature.
- Come close to God... a way of calling the community back to fidelity to God alone.

One sign of the people’s lack of humility is that they made plans without consulting with God, recognizing God’s sovereignty over life. Making long-term plans without recognizing the uncertainty of life and the certainty of God’s sovereignty reveals an arrogance that fails to reflect the character of Christ. James reminds the community that knowing the right thing to do and failing to do it is sin. And as James has said before, all sin, no matter how seemingly small, is a big deal to God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What indicators would you look for in the church today that we’ve fallen prey to a self-focused attitude leading to conflict?
- How can we avoid self-focused attitude? What motivation can we tap into?
- Practically, what does it look like to “humble yourself before the Lord”?
- How do we balance healthy ambition with unhealthy arrogance?

APPLICATION: This week, ask God to help you shift your focus from selfish desires to love for Christ. Humble yourself before the Lord and lean into love through your actions and interactions with others.