

Small Group Guide



Icebreaker

Share about a time when you experienced genuine unity with other believers that felt different from any other relationship or community you'd been part of. What made it special?

Key Scripture

James 4:1 - "What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you?"

Key Takeaways

- **External conflict begins with internal disorder** - The war in our hearts causes war in our relationships and church.
- **Our desires aren't the problem; trusting them over God is** - Like Eve, we often want good things but pursue them without surrendering to God's way.
- **Unity is a spiritual battle** - Satan works to divide us; we fight by submitting to God and resisting the enemy.
- **The way to be lifted up is to humble ourselves** - Following Jesus' example means laying down our lives and trusting God to exalt us in His time.
- **Christian unity is countercultural and powerful** - When diverse people unite under Christ's lordship, it bears witness to His resurrection power.

Discussion Questions

1. James says fights and quarrels come from "desires that battle within you." What does this mean practically? Can you think of an example from your own life?

2. The sermon connected James 4 to Genesis 3 and Eve's decision in the garden. What similarities do you see between Eve's choice and the conflicts James addresses?
3. Eve wanted wisdom (a good thing) but pursued it in the wrong way. What are some "good desires" that can become destructive when we pursue them without trusting God?
4. In John 17, Jesus prayed that believers would be one "so that the world may believe." Why is unity such a powerful witness to the world and what makes Christian unity different from other forms of community or togetherness?
5. The sermon mentioned that the early church struggled with unity across divisions of race, wealth, gender, and status. What divisions challenge unity in the church today?
6. How can diversity actually strengthen rather than weaken the church when we're united under Christ?
7. Share an area where you've struggled to surrender control to God. What made it difficult?
8. The sermon described Satan as "that voice in your head questioning God's word." When have you experienced this?
9. James promises that when we come near to God, He comes near to us. Have you experienced this? Share your story.
10. The sermon emphasized this isn't about "trying harder" but about turning to Jesus. How does this change your approach to spiritual growth?
11. The sermon said, "The way up is down. The way to life is to die." How did Jesus model this, and what does it look like for us to follow His example?