

## LEADER OVERVIEW - MARCH WEEK 2

**Text:** James 4:1-6

**Objective:** For Young Adults to recognize the root of division and to fight for relationships and unity in their Home Group.

**Text Overview:** James writes this straightforward letter to a body of Jewish believers outside of Palestine. The audience is significant because followers of Jesus are called to strive towards unity. James clearly states that the audience's selfish passion is the reason they are experiencing division. He highlights how this lifestyle is contrary to the lifestyle of a friendship with God.

**Text Explanation:** This passage focuses on “quarrels” and “fights” (v. 1) that James' audience is experiencing. Indirectly, the passage says a lot about what unity looks like. Whether through divisions, selfishness, or anger which has led to murder, the divisions in community clearly keep them from having fellowship with Christ and with one another. James highlights even their prayer life reflects their selfishness because they ask God to give them things to spend on their sinful passions. If we want a friendship with God, we must abandon the selfish “passions” outlined in the world around us. If we are going to relate well with God and one another, we must focus on the interests of others instead of our own. We must learn to fight for relationships rather than fight for our own interests. This means the other end of any disagreement should be closer intimacy and friendship.

This section closes with an amazing one liner: “But he gives more grace” (v. 6). What is God's response to our selfishness and fighting with Him? *Grace*. He still pursues a deeper relationship with us. He treats us with kindness in hope that we repent. Sometimes, He opposes us in our pride to put us in our place. But ultimately, even that response is *grace* and ultimately good for us. We should learn to imitate God's response by becoming *peacemakers* instead of “peacekeepers.” As Christians we are called to actively pursue reconciliation in our relationships.

**Discussion Instructions:** Gossip and fighting are an easy path for intimate relationships to break apart. Churches and ministries are not exempt from experiencing this type of evil. Whether in marriages and friendships, or in your Home Group, Satan loves to use our selfishness to drive wedges in our relationship. God wants oneness (unity) more than anything—with Him and each other. Satan, on the other hand, wants isolation more than anything. Your Home Group may already have experienced relational tensions or conflicts. If you haven't seen this yet, expect these tensions to come as intimacy grows. Allow this discussion to be a space where your group can healthily talk about responding to conflict and pursuing unity as a body of people chasing after Jesus.

Additionally, the word “passions” here refers to sinful, worldly desires (e.g. sexual promiscuity, drunkenness, greed, etc). This does not mean what someone is “passionate” about (e.g. the outdoors, soccer, art, helping people, etc). God loves when we are passionate about what He has created—just not when our passions fall outside the guard rails of his design.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS - MARCH WEEK 2

*Introduction:*

1. When have you seen gossip or fighting divide a community or friendship in the past?

*Read James 4:1-6*

2. What might it mean to have “your passions at war within you” like James says?
3. What should Christ-like unity look like?
4. How does God respond to us when we fight with Him?
5. What would change if you fought for relationships instead of your own interests? (Think in friendships, marriage, family, home group). How does this apply to our home group?

