

Grace Downtown CG Discussion Guide

May 27-30, 2019

Series: Faith Lives Here

James 4:1-12



Announcements:

Summer Getaway: Join us for the Summer Getaway at Great Country Farms in Bluemont, VA. Enjoy playgrounds, wagon rides, a jumping pillow, farm animals, and more! Bring family and friends and make a day of it! **Saturday, June 22 from 10 am to 2 pm** at Great Country Farms, 18780 Foggy Bottom Road, Bluemont, VA 20135. Group tickets at the gate are \$8 for guests ages 3+. (Tell them you're with Grace Downtown).

Network Worship Service and Members Meeting: All three congregation of the Grace DC Network will meet for worship at **10:30 am** on **June 16** at Grace Meridian Hill, 810 Shepherd Street, NW. Worship will be followed by our annual members' meeting to vote on leadership candidates and review budget. There will be no 5 pm Downtown worship service that day.

Commons Intern Dinner: All interns are welcome at Commons, a weekly dinner and discussion group near Capitol Hill. Beginning **Tuesday, June 4 at 6:30 pm** 807 Independence Ave SE. For more information contact Michael at mlanger@ministrytostate.org

The Warmth of Other Suns Book Discussion: Please join us on **Monday, June 24th** for a dinner discussion hosted by the Grace Downtown Diaconate to discuss The Warmth of Other Suns. While well-written and engaging, the book is lengthy, so if interested, please schedule in the appropriate time to do the reading. RSVP to Yan at yanlee@ucla.edu by Monday 6/17, so that she knows how much dinner to prepare.

Introduction:

How would you describe the current health of our interactions as a church community right now? While there will always be exceptions, would you say that overall our church fellowship dynamics are mostly positive or do you sense a constant and underlying degree of friction?

With respect to the quality of relationships, what are the signs of a healthy Christian fellowship, in general? What are the signs of an unhealthy Christian fellowship?

Read and Discuss:

James 4:1-12

Vv 1-3:

1. What does James see as the root cause of Christians quarreling with each other? How does this quarreling affect the community's prayer life?

2. Why does James link interpersonal friction with coveting?

Vv. 4-6:

1. What is the connection between quarreling, coveting, being in friendship with the world, and pride? (Can you summarize the exact nature of the problem James is speaking to in vv. 1-6?)
2. In what way is friendship with the world in direct contradiction to friendship with God? What does this look like practically?

Vv. 7-10:

1. Imagine a community of Christians that is coveting one another's worldly goods and thus has distanced itself from God through pride. What does James say about the nature and importance of repentance here?
2. How does one, by an act of the will, "submit to God," "resist the devil," "purify the heart," "grieve and mourn," and "humble oneself"? (What does this look like in practice?)

Vv. 11-12:

1. This community not only covets but it also slanders and judges. What does it mean to "slander"?
2. What is the relationship between Christians who judge and God, the Lawgiver and Judge? How are these Christians, according to James, "judging the law" when they judge one another?

Overview:

1. How does James connect Christians' relationships with each other with their relationship with God?

Application

1. Do you ever fall prey to coveting, slandering and judging other Christians?
2. How does humbly submitting yourself to God and resisting the devil affect your relationships with other Christians you have a hard time loving? Why is repentance usually so difficult to do?

Prayer

The Grace Downtown Prayer Team creates opportunities for our community to learn more about prayer together for our church family, our city, and our world. Throughout the coming week, the Prayer Team is asking our church community to pray...

...Lord, we thank you for the work that you are doing in each of our hearts. Please help us to be patient and wait for your timing. Help us to trust that you love us and will give us the good gifts that we need at the best time.

...Heavenly Father, please open up our spiritual eyes while we go through this series on the book of James. Help us to not only see these truths, but put them into practice. Help us to be doers of the word.

...Lord, we continue to ask for your hand to be at work in our world. Please bring peace where there is chaos and turmoil, healing where there is brokenness, and grace to every corner of the world.