



**Read** – James Ch 4 v 1 – 6

**Discuss** –

What do you think causes divisions in the church today?

In what areas of your life do you think you are prone to selfish?

James makes it clear that if we are ruled by selfish desires and are continually dipping our lives in the fleshly pleasures and desires of the world then the result will be division in the church and a testimony of unanswered prayer. Many people do not experience powerfully answered prayer because of these two reasons. God will not be mocked and will not entrust the power of answered prayer into the hands of the sinful and the selfish.

**Discuss** – How do you think we can recognise and cut off selfish and fleshy desires out of our lives? What responsibility do you think we have to each other in this area?

**Read** – James Ch 4 v 7 – 10

**Discuss** – What practical advice does James give us to help us overcome selfishness and sin?

How do you think you can develop these things in your **daily walk** with God?

That practical advice of this passage is that we both submit every area of our lives to God, recognising our weakness and our need of His power and grace and yet using our more aggressive nature to resist the devil and his temptations, because if we do he will flee from us. James makes it clear we need to confess regularly our sins to God before they become a stumbling block and hardness in our lives. To see sin, temptation and the devil's works destroyed in our lives all we need to do depend fully on God and resist the devil!

**Discuss** – What do you think stops us resisting the devil and sin?

How do you think we can deal with this?

**Read** – James Ch 4 v 11 – 12

James gives us the harsh realities of gossip and judgmental attitudes towards others. He says when you slander your brothers and sisters in Christ what you are doing is putting yourself in the place of God. This results in a harsher judgement being applied to your own life by God. He says you judge each other, but when you do so God then judges you.

**Discuss** – Why do you feel even Christians slander and gossip about each other?

How do you think we can be responsible to look out for each other in a way that is not slanderous or judgmental?

**Some Practical Outworking of the Passage:-**

**Renounce Pride and arrogance** – Refuse to participate in unnecessary arguments and heated discussion that is only about winning points over another. Be humble and stand against your own selfishness and self-centredness.

**Renounce Rebellion** – Even when your desires or emotions tell you something is right live in line with the word of God in everything. The Devil's sin was rebellion and we need to make sure that our sin or pride do not lead us to rebel against God and His word.

**Be quick to confess Sin** – God can and willing does forgive us our sins – However it is fundamentally important that we regularly confess our sin to God before they become a strong hold in our lives as we seek to justify them. Sin is not doing the good we should, as well as deliberate sinning.

**Renounce Slander** – Do not get drawn into gossip about others and pull them down by judgmental attitudes. – Rather speak more highly of others even to your own discredit.