

# HOW TO GET ALONG WITH GOD AND PEOPLE

Part 9 of Foundations 260. Acts 15-16; James 3-5.  
Peter Foxwell. Cornerstone Church. March 9, 2025.

## INTRODUCTION

**The Bible teaches us how to get along with God and people.**

- That's something worth exploring.

## JAMES 4:1-10 (CSB)

1 What is the source of wars and fights among you? Don't they come from your passions that wage war within you? 2 You desire and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and wage war. You do not have because you do not ask. 3 You ask and don't receive because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.

4 You adulterous people! Don't you know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? So whoever wants to be the friend of the world becomes the enemy of God. 5 Or do you think it's without reason that the Scripture says: The spirit he made to dwell in us envies intensely?

6 But he gives greater grace. Therefore he says: God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.

7 Therefore, submit to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Be miserable and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.

10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

## THE SITUATION IN JAMES

**The situation was a conflict in the congregation.**

- "What is the source of wars and fights among you?" - verse 1.

- The conflict was serious enough to be called a “war” and “murder” - v. 2.
- That may be hyperbole to indicate that we can kill with our words.
- The passage is addressed to the whole congregation: “you” is plural.
- Hopefully, today’s teaching prepares us to resolve our conflicts.

## **WHAT BRINGS CONFLICT IN A CHURCH? Verses 1-5**

**The passage describes four interconnected sources of conflict with God:**

- Hostility toward God - verse 4.
- Spiritual adultery - verse 4. For example: Jeremiah 31:21; Hosea 3:1; Ezekiel 23:45.
- Friendship with the world - verse 4.
- Pride - verse 6.

**All of the above are also the sources of conflict with people:**

- Verses 1-3 describe the symptoms of spiritual adultery, friendship with the world and pride: passions (or cravings), unmet desires, coveting, not obtaining, not praying, and wrong motives.
- Conflict with people is inevitable when we put ourselves first, reject God’s supremacy, and refuse to follow his will and ways.

**If you’re at war with God, you must seek peace. Jesus is the peacemaker.**

- Jesus made peace with God on the cross.
- Turn from your self and sin. Turn to Jesus by faith.
- “Lord, I am a sinner in need of a Savior. Please cleanse my guilt, wash away my sins, forgive me, give me new life, and restore me to the Father. Amen.”

# WHAT BRINGS PEACE? Verses 6-10

## 1. God's help brings peace.

- He gives us “greater grace” - verse 6.
- This is not referring to **saving** grace that forgiveness our sins and gives us new life through faith in Jesus Christ.
- This is **sanctifying** grace that gives us power to overcome pride.
- God wants to help us resolve conflicts.

## 2. God will help us on one condition: We must humble ourselves.

- “Humble yourselves before the Lord” (verse 10) because he “gives grace to the humble (verse 6).
- Humility is described in verses 7-9.
- Humility is saying yes to God and his help, and saying no to sinful pride and the devil's lies.

# GETTING ALONG WITH GOD AND PEOPLE

**There are three decisions we can all make today to live humbly by grace, and at peace with God and people:**

- Listen to God and people. Try to understand their point of view. See James 1:19-21.
- De-escalate. Don't sulk or shout to get your own way. Wait for the Lord. See James 1:19-21.
- Cooperate. Look for common ground and ways to get along. Leave room for God's leading and be willing to change your mind.

# SMALL GROUP GUIDE

## Review

- Review Peter's March 9<sup>th</sup> teaching and study guide.
- What were the highlights of Peter's teaching?
- What questions do you have about the passage or Peter's teaching?
- Use the S.P.E.C.K. method to reflect on and apply the teaching:
  - S: Sins to confess
  - P: Promises to claim
  - E: Examples to follow
  - C: Commands to obey or Christ to rest in
  - K: Knowledge or insights to consider

## Discuss

- What is the connection between obtaining peace with God and living at peace with people? Explore the following references to generate an answer: Romans 5:1; 12:18; Hebrews 12:14; Matthew 5:9.
- What are helpful ways to de-escalate a conflict with someone? Refer to Colossians 3:1-11 for insights.
- How does a gentle answer turn away wrath? (Proverbs 15:1-2).?

## Prayers

- Pray for everyone associated with the Cornerstone to find saving grace.
- Pray for us all to live by sanctifying grace that supports humility and peace.
- Pray Colossians 1:9-13 for the group and the Cornerstone.