

Discussion Guide: God's Grace in Our Lives

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Acts 2:42 (NIV)

February 9, 2003: Today's sermon was delivered by Reese Kauffman, President of Child Evangelism Fellowship, Inc. Although he did not title his sermon, the content of the sermon focused on the condition of our heart in our relationship to God and others as he taught from James 3:13 to 4:10 with a focus on 7-10.

Reese described James 4:7-10 as the eight steps of James to receive more of God's grace in our lives:

1. Submit yourself to God...aligning yourself with doing God's will.
2. Resist the devil...take your stand when confronted with evil.
3. Come near to God...pursue a close intimate relationship.
4. Wash your hands...confess your sins.
5. Purify your hearts...pour your heart out to God.
6. Grieve, mourn and wail...before God over your sins.
7. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom...there is nothing to be happy about when living a carefree life of sin.
8. Humble yourself before God¹...
 - a. in your own eyes, and
 - b. before others.

Discussion Questions:

A. Submission

1. To whom does God call us to submit?²
2. What are the consequences of not submitting?
3. What are the benefits of living a life of submission?
4. Why is submission so hard to do?
5. In what areas of your life is God calling to be more submissive?

B. Resisting the devil

1. What is God's promise if we take a stand against the devil?³
2. What specifically can you do to resist the devil?

¹ James 4:6

² 2 Chronicles 30:7-9; Job 22:21; Romans 13:1-5; 1 Corinthians 16:15-16; Ephesians 5:21; 5:22-33, 6:1-4; 6:5-9; Colossians 2:20; Hebrews 12:7-11, 13:17; James 4:7a

³ James 4:7b

3. Have you done so in the past? What were the results?

C. Come near to God

1. What have you found helpful in drawing near to God?
2. What is life like when your relationship with God grows cold?
3. What differences have you experienced when you are near to God?

D. Confess our sins

1. What are the benefits of confessing our sins to God?⁴ To Others?⁵
2. When confessing our sins, what should be our attitude about our sins?
3. **Activity Suggestion:** Pray specifically for one another during the next couple of weeks. Handout 3x5 cards to everyone and have them write down a couple of personal prayer requests on one side of the card and their name on the other. Collect the cards and place them in two gender baskets with men praying for men and women praying for women. Pass the baskets around and each select a card from the appropriate basket...a card that is not your own. Follow-up with the person whose card you draw and encourage them in their walk with the Lord.

E. Pride vs. Humility

1. What are the benefits of being humble in your relationship with God? How about Others?
2. What happens when pride becomes a major driving force in areas of our life?
3. In what areas of your life do you need "a little more" humility?

*Search me, O God, and know my heart;
test me and know my anxious thoughts.
See if there is any offensive way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting.
Psalms 139:23-24 (NIV)*

⁴ 1 John 1:9

⁵ James 5:16