

## Lesson 6: Humility in Our Desires<sup>1</sup>

The Book of James

**Scripture Passage:** James 4:1-12

### **Growing Connected (10 min.)**

Briefly go around the group naming someone you deem as humble (besides yourself!) and how he/she impacted you. As a group, spend time asking God for humility.<sup>2</sup>

### **Introduction (2 min.)<sup>3</sup>**

In U.S. culture there is a great emphasis on “self worth.” For instance, culturally speaking, decision-making is often geared towards self-interest. Social media platforms are almost entirely dedicated to self-promotion. We can even see this in our collective drive for “self worth” in popular songs and the New York Times Best Sellers under the genre of “self-help.” This posture ultimately equips us to build up and defend our self-esteem at all costs.

It’s true that every human-being has God-given value and dignity that should be respected (Genesis 1:26). However, ideas of self-worth oppose God’s design when they are absorbed in pride and/or violate the dignity of others. Ever since Adam and Eve sinned, humanity has been guilty of prizing self, and this has led to all kinds of wars, murder, divorce, and physical and emotional abuse. In essence, a lifestyle that lives to build and defend self-worth will eventually lead to unhealthy relationships.

The Book of James teaches about an attribute that overcomes our pride: humility. In the Bible, humility describes a person who is lowly, dependent on God and not self. James 4:1-12 teaches us that:

**Big Idea: Humility is the mark of the spiritually mature.**

***PLAY VIDEO- PT. 1- Video Notes***

### Think Tank

Brainstorm as a large group (10 min.)

The teacher said that our desires can lead us to believe that we are superior to others.

As a large group, list answers to the following questions.<sup>4</sup>

What essential things do humans yearn for?	What are some good motives for wanting these things?	What are some wrong motives for desiring these things?
I.e. Love		

Partner up with someone on Zoom Breakouts and discuss the following questions (15 min.).

1. When you think about 'your desires' and 'who God is', what kind of awareness does that bring to your soul? Why is it important for you to have this awareness when relating to others?
2. Verse 2 makes two important connections to show the corrupted nature of our desires.
 

**You desire and do not have,**  
*so you murder.*

**You covet and cannot obtain,**  
*so you fight and quarrel (ESV).*

In the New Testament, hate is equivalent to murder (Mt. 5:21-22; 1 Jn. 3:15). Therefore, James is saying that our sinful desires are often linked to what others have and that leads us to conflict. **What do we believe about ourselves when we fall into the trap of comparison? In what ways does comparison ruin relationships?**

3. The teacher made it clear that God calls us to do the following when we notice our own pride in relation to others. **Which of 4 steps below most resonates with you today? Why?**
  - a. **Humble Ourselves:** recognize that we need Him and nothing in this world (pleasures, riches, power, etc.) will ever be like his grace. Therefore, we willingly yield to his authority in all areas of our lives.
  - b. **Resist the Devil:** refuse to act in the ways of this world.
  - c. **Cleanse Our Hands:** turn away from our sinful habits and behaviors.
  - d. **Purify Our Hearts:** ask God to give us that loyal heart, and to cleanse us from any desires that do not come from Him.

## **PLAY VIDEO- PT. 2- Video Notes**

### **Group Training (25 min)**

*Individual Activity (15 min.)<sup>5</sup>*

*On an note or piece of paper, jot down answers to the following questions (10 min.):*

1. **Recognize Your Desires:** As you think about a recent relational conflict you've been in, what is it that you really desire? Be authentic. For example, are you desiring: Approval? Understanding? Pay back? Provision? Honor? Comfort?
2. **Recognize the Gospel:** Think about the Gospel (the message about His death and resurrection). How does the Gospel of Jesus Christ transform your view of yourself? How does the Gospel change the way you view God at this present moment?
3. **Recognize a New Way:** As you've reflected on the Gospel, in what ways will you seek to be humble (lowly and dependent on God) in this situation?

*Group Sharing (10 min.)*

*Bring the group back and ask if 3 people can share what they wrote down. Avoid sharing any relational tension that has to do with someone in the group.*

### **Training Session Wrap-Up (15 min.)**

*Summary:* To be humble means to be dependent upon God even in our desires. Humility is the mark of the spiritually mature.

*Closing Prayer:*<sup>6</sup> Ask someone from the group to pray that God would transform us to be humble in our relationships.