

**CONFLICT AND THE GOSPEL #1**  
**RESTORING THE VERTICAL RELATIONSHIP**  
**JAMES 4:1-3**

**GETTING STARTED**

How did your family of origin deal with conflict?

How has this family history influenced the way you deal with conflict?

**DIGGING IN**

When you deal with conflict poorly, do you tend to try an escape response (peace-faking) or an attack response (peace-breaking)?

Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God." Does peacemaking seem like a weak or passive thing to do? Why or why not?

How would your outlook change if you began to approach conflict as an opportunity to glorify God?

In James 4:1-3, we see that the source of our conflicts is found in the desires of our hearts. When your desires or goals are thwarted, how does it impact you personally (anger, resentment, depression, anxiety, fear, withdrawal, etc.)?

Too often, we justify our existence rather than deal openly and authentically with the God who loves us and transforms us. When you search your heart deeply, you will begin to peel back layers of hiding and disguising and dressing up the idols of your heart. Do you find it difficult to locate and deal honestly with the root causes of conflict in your heart? What things help you to discern your heart? Read Psalms 139:23-24 and discuss.

**LIVING IT OUT**

Because of Jesus, God's love and grace is always available to us in spite of our failures and the darkness of our hearts. We are to confess our sins and repent, and he is always faithful to forgive us. Is there any sin you need to confess to him right now?

Trusting God does not mean that we never experience questions, doubts or fears in our trials or temptations. Ken Sande says, "Trusting means that *in spite of our questions, doubts and fears* we draw on his grace and continue to believe he is loving, that he is in control, and that he is always working for our good. Such trust helps us to continue to do what is good and right, even in difficult circumstances."

Are there any situations in your life where you need to trust that God loves you, that God is in control, and that God is always working for your good? Are there any relationships in your life that you need to reconcile with God's guidance and strength?

These sermon notes are produced each week for further study and discussion in our small groups. If you are interested in joining a small group, please contact Pastor Jeff at [smallgroups@chathamchurch.org](mailto:smallgroups@chathamchurch.org) or 933-9477.