

## Anything But Normal, Week 5

### Scripture and Background Information for June 14-20.

To prepare for your group discussion each week, group members should use the **Community Group Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD'S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scripture below.

This week we'll be looking at **James 4:1-10**. Remember, James writes his letter to a church that is scattered abroad. James writes to encourage fellow believers to, no matter their circumstances, press on with their faith. Since scattered abroad, James wants the church not to compromise their faith, but serve their Lord wholeheartedly. In today's text, James warns the church against a divided heart. In James's eyes, a divided heart is not only a contradiction for believers but also contains a lot of problems for the church.

#### Information's for James 4:1-10

In today's passage, James takes up a thought which he already introduced in chapter 1:13-14. In referring back to chapter 1:13-14, James uses startling pictures to describe the depth of the desire of the believers. In explaining the first three verses, Matthew 5:21-22, will be helpful. Also, help your group see the connection to chapter 1:13-14.

The verses 1-3, as well as verse 5, are oriented towards verse 4. The primary theme of our passage is built up in Verse 4.

Note the contrast between the verses 4-5 to 6-10. James already showed in chapter 1 that our strength, to overcome trials and temptation, lies in God. Similarly, James explains that the power to live a godly life does not come out of ourselves. God's grace is bigger than our failure. His grace restores us. Talk about the imperatives of 7-10. How would they practically look like in our lives?

*Side note:* It seems as if James is recounting the teachings of Jesus. The letter appears almost like an echo of Jesus's teachings. Today, a parallel study will help you enormously in understanding the text. Please read Matthew 6:24 prior to your group meeting.

#### Scriptures for upcoming weeks:

June 28

James 3:13-18

July 5

James 4:13-17