

Small Group Questions
Sunday 23 June
James 4.1-10: God gives us more grace

Some possible questions:

1. Name one thing that stood out for you from Phillip's sermon.
2. Do you think Philip was right to say that some contemporary Christians experience a "loss of agency" in regard to sin?
3. Describe the words or images that come to mind when you hear/read the word "grace".
4. How is James using the word "grace" in James 4.6?
 - Leaders' note: James is clearly presenting grace as a remedy to the ills of the church described in 4.1-4. This is more than forgiveness of sin, this is the power of God in the church to overcome sin and create a community free from this evil. As Sam Allberry puts it: "The grace that forgives is also grace that changes and transforms people".
5. Why is it that there is no remedy for sin outside of a gift of grace from God?
6. Can you give some examples of what submission to God might look like?
 - Leaders' note: submission is a voluntary act; the choice of a free person to follow instruction or advice. So try and find examples that have this characteristic.
7. As a pastor I have often found that people struggling with serious sin (and suffering the consequences), may still find it very difficult to take instruction from others. Why do you think this is so?
8. What is the difference between confessing sin, or being open about our sin, and the submission that James 4.7 calls for?
 - Leaders' note: submission means we go beyond merely being open about sin, to seeking out guidance and direction (from others) for a way out of our sin. It is to recognise that (like a lost tourist) we cannot find our way out of sin on our own, but need direction from others.
9. Why are small acts that resist the demands of sin in our lives potentially so powerful?
10. Perhaps as Kiwis we are unlikely to literally weep and wail on account of our sins. But can you think of other practical ways that might help us register the seriousness of sin in our lives?
 - Leaders' note: this is potentially a difficult question, but let's see what people have to say!
11. Why does God give grace to the humble?