

Sunday, September 19, 2021 – Easter Hill United Methodist Church

**Bible Study – James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a
“Roots of Conflict”**

Open with a word of prayer

Gathering Time (5-10 minutes) In pairs or groups of three, have participants share their understanding of peace. [Encourage an understanding that moves beyond the absence of conflict but includes positive traits as well.]

James 3:13-4:3, 7-8. Context. In this passage, James puts in the starkest terms the difference between the "wisdom from above" and the "wisdom from below," and the impossibility of trying to have it both ways. His readers are Christians who want to be friends of God, but they are constantly tempted to be friends of the world where happiness and fulfillment is measured in terms of stuff. He concludes this passage by encouraging his hearers to choose rightly and draw near to God. His description of the “wisdom from above” echoes the passage from Proverbs.

Read James 3:13-4:3, 7-8

What touches your heart, what do you hear in the scripture, what questions do you have, or what doesn't make sense to you in the story?

Write down your thoughts or share your thoughts with the person or group you are with.

Read James 3:13-4:3, 7-8 again.

Some reflection questions – Write down your thoughts or share your thoughts with the person or group you are with.

- How do commercials and advertisements promote the continual need for more stuff?
- How are envy and selfish ambition at odds with order, peace, and mercy (James 3:14-18)?
- How is “wisdom from above” (1:17) in contrast to the wisdom of our culture?
- How do verses 4:7-8 reveal the source of how we can be doers of the word? [Through submitting to God's ways and drawing near to God's strength.]
- What actions, practices, or habits would help us submit to God's ways and draw us nearer to God? [The means of grace are a great place to start – worship, prayer, Scripture reading, journaling, fasting, and so on.]
- What might God be calling you to do as a response to this passage?

Closing Reflection Question

How is this scripture calling you to change, to see, to be or what might it be calling you to do?

Prayer (10 minutes). Each person prays sharing their answer the following statements:

I ask God for....

I thank God for.....

Sending Forth (2 minutes). After all, have shared, pray the closing prayer. Ask for a volunteer to lead the group or read the following prayer in unison:

God of transforming grace: when we draw near to you, we cannot help but be changed. We submit to your love, your grace, your mercy, your Holy Spirit that you would glorify yourself through our demeanor, behavior, and words. **Amen.**

And now we pray The Lord's Prayer....

Our Father who art in Heaven

hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,

on earth as it is in Heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lead us not into temptation

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power

and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.