

How to Live With Others, Part 1

Study Guide for Small Group Discussion and Personal Application
Lynn Haven UMC – September 27, 2020 – Pastor Terry Tatum

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This is our fourth week in our sermon series titled “**How to Live**” based on the New Testament Letter of James. As a congregation we are following a reading plan through James and studying selected passages. Check out mylhumc.net/grow for more information.

According to scripture, life is a series of tests. These challenges help us to grow stronger, and to become who God intends for us to be. In recent weeks we have studied how Christians are to handle trials and temptations. For the next two weeks we are investigating how Christians are to live with other people, both inside and outside the community of believers.

⇒ When you hear the phrase “difficult person” is there someone that comes to mind immediately? (Do not share that thought!) Is there a difficult person you know who is a part of the community of believers? Keep them in mind as we study today.

Learning how to deal with challenging people is one of the most important life skills someone can learn. People are people and they come with quite a variety of personalities and experiences. We are called to love them all and to treat them well. How does James say we should do this?

How do we live with others?

1) Listen to them

My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man’s anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires. (James 1:19-20 NIV)

How do we live with others?

2) Don’t Judge them

Brothers, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against his brother or judges him speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it. There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor? (James 4:11-12 NIV)

We do not have control over the behavior of others, we only have control over ourselves and how we respond to other people. In addition, we usually do not know the whole story behind someone's choices or behavior. Scripture teaches that we should embrace others more than casting judgment on them.

We must be very careful not to say unkind or untrue things about others.

How do we live with others?

3) Help them

My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back, remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins. (James 5:19-20 NIV)

For Discussion – How Do We Live Well With Others?

⇒ **Listen to Them.** How are you doing with the command to be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry? Which one of those three is the one you need to work on the most? How might you change your habits to make progress in that area?

⇒ **Do Not Judge Them.** What is slander? Can you think of an example? What do you think you should do if someone slanders another person in your presence?

⇒ **Help Them.** Can you think of someone who is wandering from the truth? Did you know that we have a responsibility to help bring them back to truth and the community? What might that look like? How else could you be a helper to others this week?

Don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. (James 1:22a NLT)