Icebreaker:
Who did you fight or argue with the most growing up?

From last week:
James says that with the same mouth we can praise God and curse his creation. Who is someone that you don't easily see the image of God in and are tempted to curse? Pray each day for that person (or persons) instead of thinking about cursing them. How did that go this past week?

Read this week's scripture and discuss:
1. James begins this passage talking about disputes and conflicts. Where do the conflicts and disputes in your life come from?

2. If James doesn't literally mean "to murder" in verse 2, what are other ways that we "try to kill" those of whom we are envious?

3. What are the ways of the world and in what ways are you friends with it?

4. What does it mean then to be a "friend" of God? Are you such a friend?

5. James reminds us to humble ourselves and that God will lift us up. Read Philippians 2:5-11 to see Jesus' example of humility. How do we cultivate humility?

6. Reading verses 11-12, do you find it difficult not to judge or slander others? If yes, why do you think you struggle with that?

Working out your faith:
What are the things in your life that cause you to be more envious or less; more slanderous or less? Examples might be Instagram or Facebook, a favorite television show, or the friend that likes to gossip. This week, challenge yourself to take a Sabbath from the thing that causes you to be envious or to talk about others negatively.

Prayer: As your group closes in prayer, please remember the following requests from our church family.

> Prayers of comfort for the Nieman family in the death of Wendy's brother.
> Prayers of healing for Mike Leslie and Phil McCauley.
 Requests from ZPC's May Prayer Calendar:
> Pray for the individuals involved with the Neighborhood Christian Legal Clinic.
> Pray for Dan McNerney and his ministry to Muslims.

Who are our friends? Friendships and relationships are vitally important. James encourages us not to be friends with the world and enemies with God. We are called to draw near to God, submit to God, be humble before God, and God will lift us up. Choose to be a friend of God and to be a good friend to those around you.

[Question 1] Disputes and quarrels can come from the desires and battles within us. They also come from wanting what we don't have. James goes on in this passage to tell us how to combat those desires, to turn to God.

[Question 2] We can kill by our words and actions; by putting others down to lift ourselves up. It is tempting to kill through our words and thoughts, but we are called to humble ourselves and attempt to put others' desires first.

[Question 3] N.T. Wright says this world is, "the way the world behaves, the pattern of life, the underlying implicit story, the things people want, expect, long for and dream of that drive them to think and behave the way they do." God calls us to not long for the things of this world, but to turn our attention to the things of God – compassion, joy, simplicity, kindness, loving God and loving our neighbor.

[Question 4] Jesus called his disciples his friends in John 15:15. We can be friends of God when we draw close to God and continually to try and choose God first over the world.

[Question 5] We can be inspired by Jesus' ultimate example of humility, spelled out so well by Paul in Philippians 2. In the same way, James tells us to submit to God, resist the devil, receive God's grace, draw near to God, and not to judge others. By these practices, and with the inspiration that Christ gives, we can choose to be more humble.

[Question 6] It is tempting for almost all of us to think or talk about others. It is tempting to play the comparison game (my house / yard / kids are better than their house / yard / kids). It can be a struggle to want to make ourselves feel better. Nevertheless, we always lose playing the comparison game and we only hurt ourselves and others by being judgmental. May we be encouraged this week by the grace of God to be humble, draw near to God, and to put others before ourselves.