



## Are We Lost? – Week 1

### DISCUSSION GUIDE

#### Overview

Welcome to the first message of the new series entitled, *Road Trip*. We will learn how to overcome some common enemies we all face when we get off-course in our relationships.

#### Discussion Questions

We will discover how bitterness and the fruit of bitterness are the primary source of conflict and disharmony in our relationships.

**“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them.” (Colossians 3:18)**

**“Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord; looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;” (Hebrews 12:14-15)**

The definition of “bitterness” is: exhibiting intense animosity, bitter enemies, harshly reproachful, marked by cynicism and rancor, intensely unpleasant, especially in coldness or rawness.

Bitterness brings indifference and is the key cause of emotional separation.

#### Three Weeds of Bitterness

1. Rejection and envy.

The root of envy is rejection. When we are not successful and those around us are, there is a temptation to feel a sense of rejection, resulting in envy. Bitter envy and rejection will cause us to put unrealistic expectations on others. We must find our sense of security and identity in Christ.

- Describe your identity in Christ. How does knowing your identity in Christ extinguish envy?

2. Self-seeking and strife.

Strife and selfishness are another weed of bitterness. Serving and encouraging others is the key to overcoming the bitter root of selfishness.

3. Lust and possessiveness.

**James 4:1-2** says, **“Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have...”**

Lust is trying to get a legitimate need met illegitimately. God Himself primarily meets our needs, and our other relationships are designed to complement our relationship with God.

- Why is it sinful to meet a legitimate need in an illegitimate way?

## Three Steps to Uproot Bitterness

1. Humble yourself and submit to God.

**“God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Therefore, submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” (James 4:6-7)**

Humility is the posture to have power over the enemy. The first step toward getting healed from these roots of bitterness is to humble ourselves before God in submission. When we submit to God, He gives us the power to resist the lies of the enemy. Under God’s protection these lies are exposed and can be dealt with.

- How does pride promote bitterness in relationships?
- Why does humility weed out the root of bitterness?

2. Draw near to God.

**“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you...” (James 4:8)** As we draw near to God, we will experience a divine connection and intimacy with God daily. When we come into a right relationship with Him, only then can we be in a right relationship with others. When we encounter God through prayer, He will begin to speak to us and give us wisdom.

- Explain why there’s a direct correlation between our relationship with God and our relationship with others.

3. Reconcile.

**“Confess your trespasses to one another and pray for one another that you may be healed.” (James 5:16)** To have healthy relationships, it’s important for us to ask for forgiveness. Being reconciled with others is more important than being “right”.

- Why do we oftentimes “need to be right” instead of desiring to reconcile?

## Life Challenge

This week, identify ways that you can weed out bitterness. Ask God to reveal any bitter roots that are in your heart.

## Prayer

*Thank You, God, for guiding us in our relationships. Search our hearts for any roots of bitterness and give us the strength to humble ourselves and resist the enemy. Give us wisdom as we navigate life with others. Amen.* Pray for the specific needs of the group.