



DISCUSSION GUIDE

Week 7

October 8th & 9th, 2011

Ice Breaker: Given the choice between two free all-day passes to Disneyland or a cabana, boogie boards, beach chairs and picnic lunch for two in front of the Hotel Del, which would you choose?

Opening Prayer:

Father God, we invite the Holy Spirit to work in our hearts today. We know one of the outcomes of your presence in us is joy. What a great gift. Thank you!

For Discussion:

Ask a volunteer to read James 1:22-25, in the Good News Translation, if possible.

Pastor James opened his message with stories from people who have not just listened to the messages in this series, but put the messages into practice in their lives. Take a look at the topics we have gone through in this series:

- Guilt says, "I owe you." The solution to guilt is confession.
- Anger says, "You owe me." The solution to anger is forgiveness.
- Greed says, "I owe me." The solution to greed is generosity.
- Jealousy says, "God owes me." The solution to jealousy is celebration.
- Pride says, "It's all about me." The solution to pride is humility.

Share one thing from this series that you have put into practice in your life.

James closed this series by talking about lust. He reminded us that lust is different from guilt, anger, greed and jealousy in one very important way: God created it; therefore it is not necessarily sinful. Lust is a part of healthy sexual desire. It is an appetite we all possess and that we must learn to manage.

Ask a volunteer to read Proverbs 25:28, in the New Living Translation, if possible.

What does this illustration mean, when considered from a historical perspective?

Give a practical example of how self-control protects us.

How can pornography and/or sexual promiscuity be a dangerous way to fulfill our need for real intimacy?

Ask a volunteer to read John 14:15-21.

What is the promise presented in this passage?

What is the condition presented in verse 15?

Have you ever jumped onto the latest fad, from "organic foods" or the latest exercise like "P90X" craze? How did your shopping and schedule have to change to accommodate this new lifestyle?

As a Christ-follower, what kinds of life-style changes can generate more purity and health in our spiritual lives?

The ultimate work of purifying our hearts must be done by God's Spirit and received through personal invitation. How are you doing? Track your progress as Pastor James said: "how we think, what we say, what we do". Follow John 14:15 "If you love me, keep my commands." Have you invited Jesus to cleanse and purify your heart and to empower you to follow him from today forward? If so, this is his promise back to you:

"And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart." Ezekiel 36:26 (NLT)

Closing Prayer: Father God, thank you for caring about the condition of our hearts. Help us to monitor our hearts on a regular basis. We want our hearts to be a clean and pure dwelling place for your Spirit.

