MAIN IDEA

James 4:1-12 shows us how being scattered and distant from God can harden our hearts, causing us to both miss and misinterpret the things that lead to healthy lives and relationships. If we’re not careful to “close the distance,” it can make us misappreciate what we have, misdiagnose the cause of the problems in our lives, misbehave in our actions towards others, and misjudge who God is and how He sees us.

MAKE IT PRACTICAL

• We can close the distance when we focus on what we have and fight to stay thankful.
• We can close the distance when we “stay down.” God pours His grace on us when we are humble before Him.
• We can close the distance when we choose to love others and leave the judging to God.

“SO THEN, SURRENDER TO GOD. STAND UP TO THE DEVIL AND RESIST HIM AND HE WILL TURN AND RUN AWAY FROM YOU. MOVE YOUR HEART CLOSER AND CLOSER TO GOD, AND HE WILL COME EVEN CLOSER TO YOU.”

JAMES 4:7-8 (TPT)

TALK ABOUT IT

1. In what ways do you feel like you most distance yourself from God and others? How can you close the distance? Discuss your answer.
2. How does focusing on and being thankful for what you do have change your perspective on what you don’t have?
3. Think about a time when you felt distant from God. In what ways did the distance cause you to misjudge how He sees you as His son or daughter?

“SURRENDER, AND STAND UP!”
**PRAYER**

Jesus, thank You for wanting to be close to us. Soften our hearts, Lord, so we don’t miss the good You have for us. Help us to be thankful for what we have, to be humble in spirit, and to love others well. We surrender our lives to You!

**LEADER TIPS**

- Invite any of your group members who have not gone through the Highlands Growth Track to attend with you, starting at the beginning of this next month. Encourage anyone who has not been baptized to take that step by registering online and making an appointment at their campus.