



Leader

10/11 - James 4:11-12

LOVE

A new commandment I give to you, that you love *one another*... (John 13:34)

- *Internal*: How was your week? Any new life updates? How was your walk with the Lord this week?
- *External*: Practically, is there any individual or family that needs encouragement from us as a group?

TRUTH

Let the word of God dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing *one another*... (Col. 3:16)

Understanding:

1. When you reflect on the message from Sunday, what most resonated with you?

[Open Discussion]

2. Let's read our primary text. What exactly does James forbid in verse 11, and how is "speaking evil against" someone different from honest, loving correction?

The word James uses means to talk down, disparage, or slander, often behind someone's back. He is not forbidding loving rebuke, which Scripture commands elsewhere (Matt. 18:15; Gal. 6:1; James 5:19–20). The difference usually shows up in motive, audience, and goal: slander aims to diminish a person and is spoken about them to others, while biblical correction aims to restore a person and is spoken to them, with humility.

3. James uses the word "brother" three times in verse 11. Why does that family language matter?

It underlines how serious the offense is. The one being torn down is not an outsider but a member of God's family, bought by the same blood of Christ and adopted by the same Father. Speaking evil against a brother is a kind of family betrayal. It also reminds the speaker that he stands on the same level as the one he criticizes, not above him.

4. How does this passage connect to what James has just said in 4:1–10?

Slander is one of the "quarrels and fights" that flow from the passions at war within us (4:1), and it is a form of pride. James has just commanded, "Humble yourselves before the Lord" (4:10). Judging others is the opposite move: we lift ourselves up by pushing someone else down. It also echoes his warning about the untamed tongue (3:1–12). The humble person does not need to climb by comparison.

5. What is the difference between being "a doer of the law" and being "a judge" of it?

James has already called us to be "doers of the word, and not hearers only" (1:22–25). A doer stands under Scripture and submits to it; a judge stands over it and evaluates it. The person who habitually judges others has quietly swapped roles, from servant to magistrate. The fix is not a better opinion of others but taking our proper place beneath God's Word.

6. How does the gospel free us from the need to play judge?

For those in Christ, the one true Judge has already rendered his verdict: "There is therefore now no condemnation" (Rom. 8:1; see 8:33–34). We no longer need to establish our standing by comparing ourselves to others, because our righteousness is received, not achieved. And people who know how much mercy they have been shown become merciful: "mercy triumphs over judgment" (James 2:13).

Application:

7. Before you correct or critique someone, how can you check whether your goal is their restoration or your being right? What question will you ask yourself first?
8. Is there a person you have quietly "sentenced," written off, or decided the worst about? What would it look like to hand that verdict back to God this week?
9. As our church navigates decisions and differences, what is one way you can be a peacemaker this week: a conversation to have directly, a rumor to stop, or a person to pray for by name?
10. Any other thoughts you would like to share before we wrap up this text?

GREAT COMMISSION

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations... (Matt. 28:19-20)

- *Internal:* Did you make time to disciple your family this week? Pray with them?
- *External:* Is your life marked by joy/contentment? Are you prepared to share the gospel if the Holy Spirit prompted? Is the name of Jesus on your lips in your day-to-day activity?

CONFESSION/PRAYER/REPENTANCE

But exhort *one another* every day, as long as it is called "today," ... (Heb. 3:12-14)

- Confession is agreeing with God about our sin according to the Scriptures. Is there anything you want to confess before the group (generally)? [*apathy, idolatry, selfishness, jealousy, anger, envy*]
- Let's pray, asking God to help us apply His word to our lives.

Sources:

- ESV Study Bible Commentary
- GotQuestions.org
- Multiple AI Resources