



## IV. Specific Areas of Discontentment in the Church

### 1. “The church isn’t meeting my needs”

- The ultimate purpose of the church: not my fulfillment but God’s glory
- Seek true joy in serving others

### 2. The church has disappointed my expectations for fellowship and growth

- Pray, then examine your heart, then pursue appropriate action steps
- Receive God’s blessings even if they are different than your expectations
- Only leave a church after much prayer and seeking of counsel

### 3. I have a hard time liking other church members

- Pray for those you dislike
- Consider God’s love for those who are hard to like

## V. Conclusion: Trust God, Not Circumstances

## Core Seminars—Living as a Church Class 7: Discontentment within the Church: A Test of Unity

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### I. Introduction

*What are some ways that our response to discontentment can harm unity in the church?*

*How can a good response to disappointment strengthen the church?*

Purpose of Class:

- To consider how we can protect and promote unity when we encounter discontentment in the church

Scope of Class:

- Responding to discontentment that stems from *non-sinful* actions of others in our church (in two weeks: address sin in the church)
- Focusing in discontentment *in general* (next week: address discontentment from disagreement with church leaders)

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## II. Bitter Fruit from Poor Response to Discontentment

### 1. Discontentment can lead to complaining and grumbling

“Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.”

- Philippians 2:14-15

### 2. Discontentment can lead to discord

### 3. Discontentment distracts us from what really matters

## III. Addressing Discontentment

Key: Understanding how the gospel transforms our response

*Four Guidelines for addressing discontentment:*

### A. Pray for God’s mercy

### B. Examine your desires; confess and repent of those that are sinful

“What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel.”

- James 4:1-2a

## C. See other believers the way God does

- Pray for others and love them in concrete ways
- Consider how much others value to God: “In humility count others more significant than yourselves” (Philippians 2:3)

## D. Speak . . . In Love

How you talk about discontentment will affect whether discontentment grows or subsides.

*Suggestions:*

- Follow previous three steps before talking to someone about discontentment (*i.e.*, pray, examine desires, see others with God’s love)
- Let your words be constructive, designed to build up
- Recognize your responsibility as a church member
- Speak publicly against a proposed decision only when an issue is both clear in the Bible *and* important.