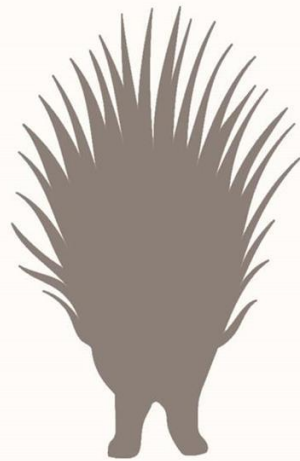


MAKING PEACE

WITH



Study Guide

PRICKLY PEOPLE

Transforming Relationships by Loving
God, Self, and Others

Deb Potts

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1: Who is this God?

Begin by connecting with God: *Father, I lack wisdom about You. As I begin this study today, I ask that You will reveal Yourself to me. Help me understand the passages and how to apply them to my life personally. Thank You for Your generous wealth of wisdom. (based on James 1:5)*

1. In Isaiah 9:6, the Hebrew for “Everlasting Father” is “*adl ab*”. “*Adl*” means forever, ancient, eternal, always, or continually. “*Ab*” means father, forefather, family, parent, ancestor, or clan.

The Everlasting Father is the Heart of God. How would you describe the Everlasting Father from the following verses?

- a. Psalm 147:2-3
 - b. Romans 8:15-17
 - c. Revelation 21:3-4
2. Another name for the Heart of God is *Abba*, meaning *Daddy*. In what area of your life do you especially need your *Abba* today?
 3. In Isaiah 9:6, the Hebrew words for “Prince of Peace” are “*sar salôm*”. “*Sar*” means official, commander, prince, officer, leader, captain, ruler, command, governor, or dignitary. “*Salôm*” is related to the word, *Shalom*. It has many meanings, including peace, safe, prosperity, well-being, success, good health, benefit, blessing, close friend, contentment, goodwill, harmony, kind, order, satisfied, secure, sound, trusted, unharmed, well-being, and *yes!*

The Prince of Peace is the Soul of God. How would you describe the Prince of Peace from the following verses?

- a. Numbers 6:24-26
- b. John 16:33

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c. 1 Corinthians 14:33

d. James 3:17

4. The Prince of Peace lives to bring peace to us. Describe what it would feel like to have perfect peace in your life.

5. In Isaiah 9:6, the Hebrew words for “Wonderful Counselor” are “*pele yoes*.” “*Pele*” can mean miraculous, astonishing, astounding, or marvelous. And “*yoes*” means advisor, encourager, or one who gives counsel.

The Wonderful Counselor is the Mind of God. How would you describe the Wonderful Counselor from the following verses?

a. Psalm 139:1-6

b. Daniel 2:21

c. Romans 11:33-34

6. The Wonderful Counselor has words of wisdom for every situation. What question do you have for Him today?

7. In Isaiah 9:6, the Hebrew words for “Mighty God” are “*gibbôr el*.” “*Gibbôr*” can mean warrior, brave, strong, able, hero, experienced, valiant soldier, or capable. “*El*” is the word used for God in the Hebrew, and can also mean mighty one, great, or heavenly being.

The Mighty God is the Strength of God. How would you describe the Mighty God from the following verses?

a. Isaiah 46:9-10

b. Jeremiah 32:17

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c. Revelation 1:8

8. The Mighty God is just a breath away, all we have to do is ask Him for His power. Where do you need the power of God today?

9. We're all at different places in our spiritual journey. At this point in your life, who is God – to you?

2: Making Peace with God

Begin by connecting with God: *Jesus – the suffering You must have experienced – for me! You were pierced by nails because of my failures. You were crushed by the weight of the cross because of my sin. The peace I can now have was earned by the raw, bleeding stripes on Your back. And the healing that is now available to me was wrung from Your oozing wounds. There are no words to thank You so I give you my life instead. (based on Isaiah 53:5)*

1. We have a big problem – it’s sin. What are the consequences of sin from these verses?
 - a. Isaiah 59:2
 - b. Psalm 32:1-4
 - c. Galatians 5:19-21

2. It is said that God wants a “relationship” with us. How would our sin make a relationship with Him difficult or impossible?

3. List the evidence in each verse that Jesus did not sin.
 - a. John 19:4
 - b. Hebrews 4:15
 - c. 1 Peter 1:18-19

4. Jesus cried out in Matthew 27:46, “Abba, Father, why have you forsaken me?” How would you describe the feeling of abandonment? What does it mean to you personally that Jesus was abandoned by God for us?

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5. Every aspect of Jesus' personality was put to the test in his last days on earth. He suffered: heart (emotionally), soul (spiritually), mind (intellectually), and strength (physically). Next to each verse, write which types of suffering it represents.
 - a. Mark 14:50
 - b. Isaiah 53:5-7
 - c. 2 Corinthians 5:21
 - d. Luke 22:41-44
6. Does knowing the extent of Jesus' suffering change your view of Him? Why or why not?
7. Why do you think it's so hard to love God? What prevents us from loving God like He loves us?
8. Read the parable of the seeds in Matthew 13:3-9, and 18-23. Four types of seeds are described that represent four different ways that people receive the truth about God.
 - a. Which type of seed represents your story? Describe what happened.
 - b. In *Making Peace with Prickly People*, Deb describes each of the four types of seed in modern day terms, offering suggestions for moving forward in your spiritual life (pages 58 – 63). Which suggestions will you pursue?
9. Jesus has overcome the broken world we live in. He offers us peace; real spiritual peace with God. He knows that kind of peace is the only thing that can help us in this difficult life.
 - a. Have you ever received the peace of God by believing in Jesus? What difference has it made in your life?
 - b. If you have never made that decision, what are your reservations?

3: Who am I?

Begin by connecting with God: *God, who am I? I know truly understanding myself is crucial to my life, my career, and my relationships to You and to others. I've read that You love me, and You sacrificed Your only son for me. Why would you do that, God? Please be with me as I study Your word this week. Help me to see Your fingerprints on me as I attempt to discover who I am. (based on Psalm 8:4)*

1. Take the Personality Key© assessment (found at www.pricklypeople.com) to determine your personality blend. Write down your results below. If you disagree with the results, feel free to adjust them. Or ask a close family member or friend to take the assessment for you and compare the results.
 - a. Choleric Strength _____%
 - b. Sanguine Heart _____%
 - c. Phlegmatic Soul _____%
 - d. Melancholy Mind _____%

2. Think about these statements. Based on your assessment results above, in what ways do you show your love for God?
 - a. Loving God with your heart is like loving God as a sanguine would (emotionally, creatively, including and influencing people, in groups).

 - b. Loving God with your soul is like loving God as a phlegmatic would (by listening, with deep pondering, through putting others before self, through quiet service).

 - c. Loving God with your mind is like loving God as a melancholy would (in holiness, self-sacrificingly, intellectually, paying attention to details, digging deeply into His word).

 - d. Loving God with your strength is like loving God as a choleric would (by leading, solving problems, working hard, having courage and stamina).

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3. Think through the relationships in your life. Is there one that stands out to you that you would really like to improve? Write that person's initials down here. Then go through this study with them in mind. Commit to working to understand and improve that relationship (if she sits next to you in the study group, just put 'X!').

My prickly person is _____.

4. Compare your personality style to that of your prickly person. How do you differ? How are you similar? Feel free to take the Personality Key © assessment for them to help you think through this.
 - a. Someone who scores high in the choleric strength style tends to accomplish a lot. They are problem solvers and are usually right. They're hard workers and tend to be leaders. They make decisions quickly and love to achieve goals. They usually have a lot of confidence. When taken to an extreme they may make rash decisions, think they are always right, or be impatient. They could be considered workaholics. Is your prickly person more choleric or less choleric than you are?
 - b. People whose sanguine heart score is high make friends easily and are enthusiastic and optimistic. They're creative, big idea people. They readily volunteer but may have trouble following through. They're good up front and good at conversation. When taken to an extreme, they can be naïve, and unbelievable. They can also be fickle friends and compulsive talkers. Is your prickly person more sanguine or less sanguine than you?
 - c. The phlegmatic soul personality is easygoing, quiet, and relaxed. They are humble, and may shine as mediators and listeners. They're adaptable and stable emotionally. When taken to an extreme, they may be lazy and too accommodating. They may have difficulty making decisions. They may be unwilling to contribute to conversations and may let others take advantage of them. They can also be resistant to change. Is your prickly person more phlegmatic or less phlegmatic than you are?

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- d. The melancholy mind personality is detail oriented and accurate. They see the problems and are compassionate towards those who are more unfortunate than they are. They are choosy friends, but remain self-sacrificing friends for life. They are thoughtful and deep. When taken to an extreme, they can be obsessive about details and struggle with analysis paralysis. They can appear “down” or moody. They may be so choosy about friends that they have very few friends. And they may appear withdrawn. Is your prickly person more melancholy or less melancholy than you are?
-
5. The personality of the Proverbs 31 woman – read Proverbs 31:10-31.
 - a. What do you think is the preferred personality style of the Proverbs 31 woman? Give reasons for your answer.

 - b. How is your personality similar to her and how is it different?
-
6. Martha and Mary’s personalities - read Luke 10:38-42 and John 12:1-3
 - a. What would you say is Martha’s preferred personality style? Mary’s? Give reasons for your answers.

 - b. How is your personality similar or different from Martha’s?

 - c. How is your personality similar or different from Mary’s?

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7. Sarah's personality – read Genesis 16: 1-6.
 - a. What would you say is Sarah's preferred personality style? Give reasons for your answer.

 - b. How is your personality similar or different from Sarah's?

8. Esther's personality – read Esther 4:15-17.
 - a. What would you say is Esther's preferred personality style? Give reasons for your answer.

 - b. How is your personality similar or different from Esther's?

4: What is a Prickly Person?

Begin by connecting with God: *God, Your word is alive and active. It's not like any other printed material. Let Your words be penetrating to me today, dividing my old self from my new self, judging and examining my thoughts and attitudes. Nothing in all creation is hidden from You, and I pray today that nothing in me will be hidden from me. I want to know where I've failed You in this prickly relationship and be washed clean in Your forgiveness. (Based on Hebrews 4:12-13).*

1. Read the story of the prickly relationship between Hannah and Peninnah in 1 Samuel 1:1-8.
 - a. Why do you think Peninnah responded so harshly to Hannah? What was Peninnah's greatest need or greed?
 - b. Why do you think Hannah was so heart-broken? What was her greatest need or greed?
 - c. Who is the only person who could meet the needs of both these women?

2. David had fallen into great sin. He had an affair with a married woman. She got pregnant, and then David caused her husband Uriah to be killed. David's friend Nathan decides to challenge David to come clean. Read this story of a potentially prickly relationship between David and Nathan in 2 Samuel 12:1-13.
 - a. Why do you think Nathan used an imaginary story to broach the subject with David in verses 1-6?
 - b. In what ways *could* David have answered Nathan's challenge in verses 7-12?
 - c. What do you think caused David to respond by admitting his guilt in verse 13?
 - d. How are you tempted to respond when someone brings up one of your failures?

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3. Deb describes four imaginary case studies of prickly situations beginning on page 107 of *Making Peace with Prickly People*. In your opinion, what are the most compelling needs of each of the antagonists? For a list of the emotional needs, see page 75 of *Making Peace with Prickly People*.
 - a. Mona

 - b. Claudia

 - c. Phil

 - d. Sally

4. Read Proverbs 6:16-17, 21:4.
 - a. What does “haughty eyes” mean to you?

 - b. Look up “haughty” in a thesaurus (thesaurus.com). What word is the antonym or opposite in meaning?

 - c. When lists are found in the Bible, the first item in the list is often the most important. Why do you think “haughty eyes” is listed first in the list of things God abhors in Proverbs 6:16-17?

5. Dr. John Guttman says that contempt is the single highest predictor of a marriage in trouble. It can also be a high predictor of conflict in any relationship.
 - a. Look up contempt in a dictionary and write what it means to you.

 - b. Read Proverbs 18:3. How does God feel about contempt?

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6. Paul Ekman and Wallace Friesen developed the Facial Action Coding System (FACS) to catalogue every human facial expression. They assert “If it’s in your heart, it’s on your face.”
 - a. Read Proverbs 27:19, Matthew 6:22-23. What do these Scriptures say to you about how our inner feelings are reflected in our outward appearance or actions?

 - b. Dr. Salim Munayer writes, “While loving our enemies is not impossible, it is extremely difficult, and usually some form of hatred shows through in our actions and attitudes.”

You may have never thought about what your facial expressions, tone of voice, or body language is saying to your prickly person. Do you feel that God is speaking to you about this now? Is there someone you know who could honestly tell you what your non-verbals are saying when you are in the presence of your prickly person?

7. Read Romans 12:17, 19-20.
 - a. What is God’s attitude about us taking revenge?

 - b. What are some ways people can show their desire for revenge against others?

8. Colossians 3:1-2 admonishes us to set our minds on things above, not on earthly things. Read the following verses about our thought life. Next to each passage, list the benefits to us when we keep our thoughts purely on “things above.”
 - a. Romans 12:2

 - b. Isaiah 26:3

 - c. Philippians 4:6-7

 - d. Ephesians 4:22-23

 - e. Proverbs 4:20-23

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9. To overcome toxic thinking, we need a plan. Anticipate that you will struggle with your thought life. Plan ahead what you will do instead of thinking the toxic thoughts. When those thoughts inevitably come, you will be prepared with a plan of attack.

Some suggestions follow. Circle the ones that you plan on starting, feel free to add your own ideas.

- a. Write your favorite bible verses on sticky notes and put them in places where you will be tempted, then read them out loud when necessary.
- b. Play some beautiful instrumental music or hymns or praise and worship music. Use headphones if during the night.
- c. Listen to a nature sounds app.
- d. Start a thankfulness journal. When the toxic thoughts start, write about what you are thankful for.
- e. Put a rubber band on your wrist and snap it when those thoughts start.
- f. Change your activity if possible. Go outside and take a walk. Call someone who understands and talk about something else.
- g. Write a breath prayer and use it when you're tempted to have toxic thoughts.
- h. If you need extra help with this, consider joining Celebrate Recovery, or get counseling.
- i. Read a great Christian classic, contemporary Christian book, or a Christian fiction book.
- j. Memorize scripture to use when tempted.
- k. Drop to your knees and pray.
- l. Find new friends who love Jesus and can be a positive influence on you.
- m. Get more exercise so you are better able to fall asleep at night.
- n. Take a course or read a book to learn a skill that will help you achieve a desire. Set some goals and work toward your desire.
- o.
- p.
- q.
- r.

5: Making Peace with Me

Begin by connecting with God: *Search me, O God, and know my emotions; test me and know my anxious thoughts about myself. See if I have an offensive attitude toward myself, and lead me in the everlasting way. (based on Psalm 139:23-24)*

1. Jesus can be described as having a four-fold personality so each of us, no matter what our personality, can relate to Him. He is the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, the Wonderful Counselor, and the Mighty God.
 - a. Which of these four personality styles of Jesus appeals to you the most? Why?
 - b. From Appendix C in *Making Peace with Prickly People*, identify your three most compelling needs and write out how Jesus can meet those three needs.

2. Read John 10:14-15.
 - a. How well does the Good Shepherd know you?
 - b. Using your personality assessment results, write a few sentences describing yourself as God would describe you.

3. Each of the following statements are true for those who follow Christ, even though you may not *feel* they are true. Circle the ones you have trouble believing are true for you.
 - a. I am filled with the peace and joy of God. John 14:27, Romans 14:17
 - b. I am God's beloved child. John 1:12, Ephesians 1:5
 - c. I am completely forgiven, perfectly righteous, and free from condemnation. Romans 5:1, 1 Corinthians 6:20, Ephesians 1:7
 - d. I am God's glorious temple and am filled with His fullness. 1 Corinthians 6:19, Ephesians 3:19
 - e. I am holy and blameless. Ephesians 1:4

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- f. I am the recipient of an eternal, infinitely rich inheritance. Ephesians 1:11, 18, 1 Peter 1:4
 - g. I am inseparable from God's love and will never be abandoned. Matthew 28:20, Romans 8:35-39
 - h. I am the beautiful bride of Christ who ravishes the heart of God. Song of Songs 4:1-15, Ephesians 5:25-32
 - i. I am one over whom the Lord rejoices, sings and claps. Zephaniah 3:17
 - j. I am indwelled by a fearless Spirit of love and self-control. 1 Timothy 1:7
 - k. I am more than a conqueror in all things. Romans 8:37
4. How would your life change if you really believed every statement above was 100% true in your life?
5. Dictionary.com describes a “defining moment” as a point in time in which the essential nature or character of a person is revealed or defined. Think back to some of your “defining moments.”
- a. Describe a defining moment that reinforced a positive self-image.
 - b. Describe a defining moment that reinforced a negative self-image.
 - c. If we are children when these “defining moments” occur – we may come to childish, wrong conclusions about ourselves. If this is true for you, describe those conclusions.
6. Sometimes we can become mental “hoarders”, trashing ourselves with our thoughts, believing untrue junk about our potential and garbage about our abilities. We wallow in the muck of our failures, thinking there is no way out. Read 2 Peter 2:19b. People are slaves to whatever masters them. What untrue thoughts master you?

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7. 1 Corinthians 13:11 concludes with “when I became an adult, I did away with childish things.” As adults, we are free to re-parent ourselves. We can choose our own friends, our own healthy habits, and we can engage our minds in the truths we believe. Which truths from question 3 can you exchange for the lies you’ve believed?

Note: Christians may be susceptible to mental health conditions just as the general population is. About 1 in 5 American adults will have a mental health condition in any given year, yet only 41% of them will receive services. It is a self-loving act to get the health care you need, whether it is through traditional medicine, counseling or other healing.

If you suspect you may be experiencing a mental health condition, I recommend you take one of the free, anonymous surveys at the Mental Health America website (www.mentalhealthamerica.net, click on Finding Help, then click Mental Health Screening Tools). There are surveys for Depression, Anxiety, Bipolar and PTSD. If your results are positive for any of these disorders, I encourage you to share your results with a physician or healthcare provider. Your church may be able to recommend a provider for you.

8. Read the following passages where God encourages us to imitate others. Who and what *should* we imitate?
 - a. 1 Corinthians 4:15-17

 - b. Hebrews 6:11-12

 - c. Hebrews 13:7

9. Who do you know in your church or among your circle that has godly qualities you could imitate? Will you contact that person and ask them to pray for you to grow spiritually?

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10. There are many practical ways to grow as a Christian, some examples are given below. Some will work better for your personality than others. Circle one or two that you will begin today.

- a. Attend an in-depth bible study
- b. Attend a topical bible study
- c. Lead a bible study with other Christians
- d. Lead a bible study with non-believers
- e. Prayer in a group
- f. Prayer alone
- g. Breath prayers
- h. Fasting
- i. Reading Christian non-fiction
- j. Memorizing Scripture
- k. Reading through the bible in a year
- l. Having a daily devotional time
- m. Reading Christian fiction
- n. Writing bible studies, Christian fiction or non-fiction
- o. Public speaking or teaching others
- p. Creativity: writing music, performing music, painting, photography
- q. Physical expressions of worship: singing, dance, movement, Christian yoga, etc.
- r. Serving quietly in the background
- s. Teaching or caring for children
- t. Mentoring or coaching others
- u. Working to serve others less fortunate
- v. Short-term mission trips
- w. Becoming a missionary
- x. Listening to great preaching/speaking
- y. Sharing my faith
- z. Lead a ministry or committee in a church or para-church setting
- aa. Helping out in an administrative way
- bb. Helping out physically: building, sewing, cooking, painting, driving, etc.
- cc. Being outside in nature

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11. Is there a secret desire or goal you've had about your life? What is it?

- a. How does it fit in with your image of yourself?
- b. How does it fit in with God's image of you?
- c. How have your defining moments or untrue conclusions about yourself discouraged you from achieving that desire?
- d. How would changing your view of yourself – to agree with God - make your secret desire more realistic?

6: Making Peace with Them

Begin by connecting with God: *Abba, You have set a Royal Law for me to follow: to love my prickly person as myself. I want to do right and follow Your law. Please help me put my sinful, prideful feelings aside and obey You. I know by doing right I will be at peace. (based on James 2:8)*

1. Vertical forgiveness is an agreement between us and God to forgive the other person. This type of forgiveness is required of us. Read the following passages and write what you learn about vertical forgiveness.
 - a. Ephesians 4:31-32
 - b. Mark 11:25
 - c. Luke 6:37
2. Horizontal forgiveness is between two people. This type of forgiveness requires the participation of both people. It is not required of us. Read the following passages and write what you learn about horizontal forgiveness.
 - a. Luke 17:3-4
 - b. Romans 12:18, 21
3. Would you like to vertically forgive your prickly person now? If so, remember that requires you make three promises: not to bring up the subject with others, with your prickly person or yourself. For each promise, write your action plan for what you will do instead of your former behavior.
 - a. When I am tempted to bring the subject up with other people for the purpose of slander, I will do this instead:

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- b. When I am tempted to bring the subject up with the person to remind or punish them all over again, I will do this instead:
 - c. When I am tempted to rehash the subject in my mind over and over again, I will do this instead:
4. Have you ever sought horizontal forgiveness with your prickly person? If you feel this might be possible, write out a statement in each of the following areas of granting forgiveness. Before approaching your prickly person, ask a trusted family member or friend for their advice. If you are not able to broach the subject in a calm and loving manner you may need to work through the three promises of vertical forgiveness first.
- a. How do you feel about the insult or injury? Be honest with your feelings.
 - b. What are your future expectations toward your prickly person?
 - c. Let go of your desire to get even, to blame, or to be resentful and disrespectful. Confess how your actions in these areas may have escalated the disagreement.
 - d. Lovingly ask your prickly person if they are willing to talk about the situation. Share the above with them, being careful to express only your perspective, your feelings. Use “I” statements, not “you” statements.
 - e. Work toward building the relationship, knowing that your horizontal forgiveness can only be given if and when they are ready to ask for your forgiveness.

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5. Read Titus 2:7-8. Changing our perspective may mean that instead of focusing on our prickly person's imperfections in the relationship, instead we focus on being the best we can be. Fill in the blanks in the following sentences indicating your change of perspective.
 - a. Wrong question:
Why was I given a (*parent, spouse, friend, sibling, child, etc.*) like _____?
 - b. Right question:
Why was _____ given a (*parent, spouse, friend, sibling, child*) like me?
 - c. If you asked Jesus the second question, what do you think He would say?

6. Hurt people often hurt other people. Consider what you know about your prickly person's background. If you don't know their story, is there someone you could ask?
Understanding where someone is coming from may change our perspective about them.
 - a. What were their defining moments?

 - b. How have those defining moments wounded them?

7. Read Genesis 50:20-21. Joseph's brothers left him for dead in the desert. Joseph was able to forgive his brothers because his perspective was God's – and God intended good out of the whole sorry mess. If you could love your prickly person as yourself, what good could come from that?

8. Read 2 Samuel 16:5-12. Shimei is hurling insults on David for allegedly stealing Saul's kingdom. But God purposefully put David in Saul's place as a man after God's own heart.
 - a. David was the king. If you were David, how would you feel about Shimei's false accusations?

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- b. Why do you think David refused to be offended?

 - c. What good do you think came from David's attitude?
9. What could God's greater purpose be in prickly relationships? Read the following passages and write what the greater good is.
- a. James 1:2-4

 - b. James 1:22-25

 - c. 1 Peter 1:6-9

 - d. 1 Peter 3:9

Leader Notes

The Making Peace with Prickly People Study Guide is written in such a way that in depth Bible knowledge is not required. There are 8-10 questions per chapter, and there are some Scriptures to read and digest, but the study would be appropriate for someone with a minimal knowledge of the Bible.

Suggested groups for a study of this type might include a divorce recovery group, or a group of wives who are experiencing challenging marriages. Young married women might also be a target audience, since they may be navigating that tension-producing mother-in-law relationship. But in general, this study would be appropriate for any group seeking to grow to love God, love self, or love others better.

I've always found it's best to set the rules of play before the game begins. When I start a small group study, I make sure everyone has a printout of the guidelines, and go over them with the group. This is especially important if your group has a shared challenge – for instance divorce or struggling marriages. I always strive to ensure that the meetings don't become a place to slander our "prickly people". Our aim is never to "fix" them, but to seek God's guidance on how *we* can grow spiritually and relationally. When the topic is prickly people, we want to make sure the sessions don't focus on the negative.

The goal is to create a welcoming atmosphere so everyone feels comfortable and safe enough to share. Here are the guidelines that I've found to be most useful.

1. We are all at different places in our faith. Therefore, everyone is given the right to their own opinion, and questions are encouraged and respected.
2. Anything of personal nature shared during the small group is never repeated outside of the group.
3. If our nature is to converse openly, we will agree to be careful about dominating the discussion, enabling each person to have an opportunity to share or ask questions. If our tendency is to listen quietly, we will challenge ourselves to ask, inquire, and share.
4. We will remember that suggestions and advice can be inappropriate when unsolicited and can come across as "knowing it all" or "having it all figured out." We will be as willing to share our own weaknesses and struggles as we are to advise and offer solutions.
5. We will share our experiences, questions, and ideas without referring to any particular Christian denomination or church either in a negative or positive way. Experiences influenced by church backgrounds are sometimes a huge influence in one's life, but they

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can be easily and effectively shared without specifically naming the denomination. For instance, “my experience has been...”, “When I attended our family’s church...”, In the denomination in which I was raised...”. Simply using the words “tradition” or “Denomination” helps to avoid stereotyping groups of people.

6. If we, as leaders, feel the conversation is taking a direction that’s inappropriate for the group setting, we may need to redirect the conversation. Our goal in this small group is to seek God’s guidance as we examine how we may grow to love God, love self, and love others. We are not gathering for the purpose of changing our “prickly people”, but to humbly ask God how *we* can change to be more like Him.

About the Author

I hope you gained some insight into making peace with your prickly person; no matter who that might be. I have provided some resources to help you dig deeper into this material. For complementary resources, go to www.pricklypeople.com. You will find a link to the free personality assessment, a downloadable study guide, leader notes, a prickly person prayer calendar, and more.

My greatest joy is sharing the wisdom God has given me about forgiveness, healing, and destiny. I do that in coffee shops and in auditoriums; in speaking and in writing; with humor and with candor.

I'm a specialist in the study of personality and love to weave something about our unique personalities into all of my work.

You can connect with me at my website. Join me on Facebook (DebPottsSpeaks) or twitter (@DebPottsSpeaks).

Let me know how I can serve your Women's Ministry group. I would love to hear from you! Email me at deb@debpotts.com.

...because U count, deb