

# JAMES - THE ART OF FAITHFUL LIVING

## WEEK 4: FAITH WITHOUT FAVORITISM

JASON BRINKER - 9/29/24

---

### GROWING TOGETHER *(ANSWER ALL OR JUST SOME OF THE ICE-BREAKERS)*

---

- If you could have dinner with anyone from history, who would it be? And no, you can't say Jesus—we're all here for Him already.
- Can you recall a time where you have felt welcomed by someone different from you?
- Let's flip this—what's one thing you absolutely love about someone who is nothing like you? Maybe a different hobby, personality, or even a completely different way of thinking.

### GROWING WITH GOD *(ANSWER ALL OR JUST SOME OF THE QUESTIONS)*

---

**THIS WEEK'S BIG IDEA:** If we truly follow Jesus, we won't play favorites—we'll love and treat one another with the same love and mercy God shows us.

Read [James 2:1-13](#), [John 3:16-17](#), [Deuteronomy 10:17](#), [Matthew 22:37 & 40](#), [Romans 15:7](#) & [Romans 5:8](#) aloud and go over your sermon notes with one another. (Answer all or some of the questions)

We all have favorites—favorite foods, places, and teams. But what about people? James 2:1 challenges us not to show favoritism, yet we're naturally drawn to those like us. In the church, God chooses our family, and they might be very different from us. James calls us to treat one another with Christ-like mercy and resist favoritism.

- **We're called to love people who may be nothing like us, and yet we're often drawn to those who share our background, interests, or values. How can we grow in loving people we might naturally overlook or avoid?**
- **Reflect on a time when you felt overlooked or dismissed because of how you looked, your background, or your status. How does that experience help you understand James' call to avoid favoritism?**

James 2:2-4 confronts the sin of favoritism, showing how it's incompatible with the Gospel. We're all guilty of judging others based on appearance, wealth, background, or even politics. But in God's eyes, we're all equal and His love doesn't play favorites. As believers, we're called to reflect that same love and mercy, resisting the urge to show favoritism.

- **We naturally gravitate toward people who are like us. How can we be more intentional about connecting with those who are different from us, especially in church?**
- **The Gospel calls us to love others the way God loves us—with mercy and without favoritism. What's one practical step you can take this week to reflect that love toward someone you might not usually connect with?**

The passage from James challenges us to live out the "royal law" by loving others as we love ourselves. This love is more than a feeling—it's a reflection of our faith in God. When we show favoritism or treat others differently because of their background, appearance, or opinions, we're missing the mark of what it means to truly love. Real love, Agape Love, as Jesus demonstrated, is full of mercy, not judgment.

- **Have you ever found it hard to love someone because they were different from you? How did you handle it, and what did you learn?**
- **We often separate acceptance from approval. How does God's acceptance of us challenge how we view and love others, even when we disagree with them?**

## GROWING IN SCRIPTURE AND OBEDIENCE

---

Here are a few insights Pastor Jason gave us to reflect on.

Pastor Jason shared with us a definition of **favoritism**: *Showing preference and bias toward some while showing prejudice and bias toward others.*

- Showing favoritism in unChristian (James 2:2-4)
- Favoritism is incompatible with the Gospel (Deuteronomy 10:17)
- Favoritism is the opposite of the Great Commandment (James 2:8)

## GROWING IN OBEDIENCE

---

### **Love Without Favoritism (James 2:8-9)**

Let's be intentional about how we treat people, especially those who are different from us. Ask yourself, "Am I showing love without favoritism?" This week, find someone in your life who you've overlooked or treated differently, and take a step toward loving them as Christ loves you.

**Life Group Leader:** Encourage your group to reflect on moments where they may have shown favoritism. Create space for them to share those experiences and discuss how they can move toward loving others without partiality. Consider checking in during the week to see how they've applied this in their relationships.

### **Align Faith with Actions (James 2:12)**

How we live should reflect our faith. Does your life show the mercy, love, and justice that Jesus commands? This week, take a moment to evaluate whether your actions truly align with the faith you profess. Ask God to reveal areas where you can better live out His Word.

**Life Group Leader:** Challenge your Life Group to think about any disconnect between their faith and their actions. Encourage them to share specific ways they can better align their lives with their beliefs. Offer to check in with them over the next week to see how they're growing in this area.

### **Mercy Over Judgment (James 2:13)**

Let mercy guide your words and actions instead of judgment. Who in your life needs mercy right now? Whether it's a family member, a friend, or someone at work, look for a way to extend kindness when judgment might be easier.

**Life Group Leader:** Help your members think through situations where they've been quick to judge rather than show mercy. Ask how they can change their approach in those scenarios and support them by praying together for opportunities to demonstrate mercy.

## GROWING IN PRAISE AND WORSHIP

---

This week's song list if you'd like to worship with your group

[Egypt](#)

[Build My Life](#)

[King of Kings](#)

## FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA //

---



