

## No Partiality in the Kingdom

### WARM-UP

- Who is your best friend? Why?
- Has anyone ever showed you favoritism? How did it make you feel?
- Have you ever felt like someone was treated better than you? What happened?

### WORD

*<sup>1</sup>My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. . . . <sup>8</sup>If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well.*

**JAMES 2:1,8**

James was speaking to the Christian Jews scattered because of persecution. While his letter started with encouragement during trials, it was also a reminder of how to act as followers of Christ. Here, we see how he reminded them to *show no partiality* and to love their neighbors as themselves. For those of us who hold to the gospel proclaimed (James 2:1), we must demonstrate the gospel by showing no partiality to others in what we see, what we say, or what we think.

## 1 What We See

*For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in . . .* **JAMES 2:2**

James contrasted two men: one wearing jewelry and expensive clothing, and the other faded or torn clothing. Often, the first thing we notice about others is what we see—their looks, clothes, behavior, achievements, and status. Sometimes, we rank others as better or worse than one another based on these. Have you ever made a wrong judgment about people based on how they looked? What happened?

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## 2 What We Say

*. . . and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, "You sit here in a good place," while you say to the poor man, "You stand over there," or, "Sit down at my feet". . .* **JAMES 2:3**

James continued by contrasting how the two men were treated. The rich man was shown to a good seat. On the other hand, the poor man was told to stand, or to sit on the floor. When we see others as better or worse than one another, it comes out in how we speak to them and treat them. What does Galatians 3:28 say about who we all are in Christ?

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### 3 What We Think

*. . . have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?* **JAMES 2:4**

James called those who treat others based on how they see them, *judges with evil thoughts*. Ultimately, the way we think determines the way we see, speak to, and treat others. The way we see them affects how we treat them. However, as followers of Christ, there is no place for partiality, because Christ died for us all equally. So even in our thought life, the gospel must be demonstrated. What does Romans 12:2 say about the way we should think?

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### APPLICATION

- How have you met Christ? What have you learned about your identity in Him?
- What is an appearance or behavior that tends to annoy you? What is one thing you can do this week to remind yourself not to compare people with one another or yourself, even just in your thoughts?
- What is one thing you can do this week to deliberately show a family member or friend that you see them the way Christ sees them—loved and worth saving?

## PRAYER

- Thank Jesus for showing no partiality to any person when He died on the cross for us. Thank Him for your personal relationship with Him.
- Ask God for His mind, His eyes, and His words to show others His love for every person through you, no matter how they look or behave. Pray that with Him you will learn to show no partiality to others.
- Pray for God's grace to change the way you think about and see others. Pray that you will be able to show His impartial love to a family or member this week.

## NOTES

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