

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

# JAMES

Live your truth

### OPENING UP



Think about a diverse church. What does that look like to you?

### TEXT



**Seeing with the Eyes of Faith** | James 2:1-13

My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. <sup>2</sup> 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,<sup>3</sup> 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,” <sup>4</sup> have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? <sup>5</sup> Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him? <sup>6</sup> But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? <sup>7</sup> Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called?

<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. <sup>9</sup> But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. <sup>10</sup> For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it. <sup>11</sup> For he who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. <sup>12</sup> So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. <sup>13</sup> For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

### MESSAGE OUTLINE



**Big Idea:** Mature faith shows no favoritism.

1. Don't measure people by what they can give you (vv. 1-7)
2. Measure people by God's standards (vv. 8-13)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



1. James earnestly pleads with his audience to adopt rules in how they judge the people they meet. We all do this naturally. When you look out at the world, when you meet other people, what do you see? How do you measure the people in your life?
2. The Gospel puts us on a level playing field. Whether you drove here in a Lamborghini, or needed to borrow money for the bus fare, the Gospel labels you as a sinner saved by grace. In what ways are you tempted to follow the world's judgments rather than God's judgments for yourself and others?
3. James argues that we are fulfilling the commandment to love our neighbor when we refuse to show partiality. What do we risk when we are tempted to show favoritism?
4. James describes in verse 13 that mercy triumphs over judgement. When we think about measuring people by God's standards, what do we gain when we see the soul through the shell?
5. As people defined by the mercy of God, we define others by mercy in light of our sure hope that Jesus will one day come back. We know that we will not be judged by our wealth, our social standing, or our influence. We will be defined by our relationship with him. We will be fully seen in his mercy. In your personal life how can you begin to live in this truth? How can we live this as a church body?

## LIFE CHALLENGE



The next time you feel the inclination to rush to a judgment, slow down and judge yourself by God's perfect standards. The next time you feel like you ought to dismiss someone because they have nothing to offer you, pause and remind yourself that Jesus offered his life for you when you had nothing to give him. We are not defined by our earthly resources, whether rich or poor. We are defined by our need for a savior, and his bleeding heart nailed to a cross.

Ask God for opportunities to show this act of non-partiality towards those in your life.

## CLOSING PRAYER



Father, we are in awe of who you are to us. We thank you for showing us mercy, for taking our punishment, and by your grace, adopting us. We recognize our value in relationship to you, and we thank you for fully seeing us in our desperation for you. We ask that you would empower us to show no favoritism to those in our lives so that we may give hope to a diverse and broken world. Thank you for the new life you have given us. We love you. Amen.