

DISCUSS

- In the message, Pastor Shane talked about acting 'different' around a celebrity or someone well known. Share the most well-known person you have met or got close to...what was the situation? How did you react?
- Have you ever felt like you experienced partiality or prejudice? What was it like?
- The world tends to judge people by outward appearance or wealth. Samuel the prophet fell into this trap in not seeing that it was David who God had chosen (1 Sam. 16). What does God look at? How can we be more like God? What things can we do to not judge by appearance?
- It might be uncomfortable, but share how diverse your relationships are? Very diverse? Not at all?
- God's Word gives us 'freedom' (v.12). How?

APPLY

- This week invite one another to take the challenge of memorizing Jesus' words in Matthew 5:3-10.
- Share how you have most been convicted in this passage and share where you feel you most need mercy right now.
- Consider together one way you can get involved in supporting or loving those who might be poor or marginalized in our church or community.

GROUP PRAYER FOCUS

- Ask the Holy Spirit for a soft heart in hearing a hard word from Him when needed, that your heart might not be polluted by the world by showing favouritism.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to complete His good work in you in growing your walk and obedience with Him.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you love others more.

Making FAITH + WORK

Book of James

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Week 4: Love Everyone the Same

Key Text: James 2:1-13

OPEN

In his letter, James lays out the importance of matching your 'walk' with your 'talk' in pursuing genuine faith and a true walk with God. From a place of loving concern, James in our passage this week, calls out an issue we all struggle with – showing favouritism. Exposing the incompatibility of favouritism and faith, James asks the question, "how can you claim to have faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ if you favour some people over others?"(v.1). Showing favouritism has two sides. Partiality and prejudice. Both come down to treating or relating to someone based on appearance or outward things. Instead, James says we should love everyone the same and show mercy to those the world shuns.

REFLECT

- James has tough words in calling out the sin of favouritism, but how does he begin his address to those he is writing?
- What example does James use in verses 2-3 and why do you think he highlights this particular kind of favouritism?
- What is the real root, according to James, of being either partial or prejudice, as he states in verse 4 and why?
- James is writing believers. What are the reasons he cites to convince believers of the seriousness of showing partiality?
- The passage ends on a note of triumph. What triumphs over our judgements, or prejudices, if we exercise it (v.13)?