

# The BOOK of JAMES

WHAT VIBRANT *faith* LOOKS LIKE

## Key Scriptures

*James 2*

*My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism. 2 Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. 3 If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," 4 have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? 5 Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? 6 But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? 7 Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong? 8 If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right. 9 But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. 10 For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. 11 For he who said, "You shall not commit adultery," also said, "You shall not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker. 12 Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, 13 because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment.*

## Favoritism

James 2 says we must not show favoritism, but, instead, love our neighbor as ourselves. The enemy wants to divide the Church, and we need to be intentional and diligent to preserve our unity. We have to fight together against division.

### Think about it.

The three main lessons for life-change are:

- **We must change the way we see, and look at others from the inside out.** We are all made by the same Father, in His own image. We need to see people the way God sees and values them. Read 1 Samuel 16:7.
- **We must change the way we speak, and speak words of honor and life to others.** We cannot allow favoritism to determine what we say to and about other people. Often, our words give us away (Luke 6:45). The vocabularies we use to describe certain people groups show our prejudices, favoritism and even dislike.
- **We must change the way we feel about others.** We need to grow in love for all people, and extend mercy to those who need it. Remember: "Mercy triumphs over judgement."

### Share your insight.

1. What are some ways you have shown favoritism or experienced the negative effects of favoritism in your life? Why is it important to look at others from the inside out?
2. Talk about what kind of language divides us and what kind unites us. How can you use your words to promote unity in your home, church, and community?
3. What does it mean to show love without judgment? Talk about some practical ways we can love our neighbors as ourselves.

### Pray for one another.

- Ask God to reveal to you any form of favoritism in your heart and surrender it.
- Pray this corporately:  
*Father, thank You for making us one in You. Give us Your perspective and Your heart for others so we can be quick to extend love and mercy in every situation. Help us to never favor one person over another, but to love our neighbors as ourselves. Give us awareness and strength to resist the attacks of the enemy that would divide us, and empower us to fight for unity together, in Jesus' Name.*