

# *Rejecting Favoritism*

GENUINE FAITH | WEEK 4

# *James*: THE BOLD LITTLE BROTHER

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- James was the younger brother of Jesus, born and raised in Mary and Joseph's household.
- He was a nonbeliever until seeing Jesus risen! (John 7:5; 1 Corinthians 15:7) and then became a believer and leader of the Jerusalem church (Acts 1:14; 15:13). He was martyred in 62 AD by stoning

# *Genuine Faith*

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- We are all moving from broken, fractured people to whole, completed people like Jesus.
- Genuine faith will lead a person to faithful obedience to Jesus Christ
  - Week 1 – Pain helps us grow!
  - Week 2 – Experience retained will lead to a life of maturity toward Christlikeness.
  - Week 3 – Wealth is not meant to be stockpiled but spread out and used for the glory of God and the good of others.
  - This Week – Genuine faith in Jesus doesn't play favorites

# *Who don't you see?*

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- We all make artificial distinctions in our hearts about people
- The distinctions we make often lead to partiality — to showing favor to certain people over others
- James is calling all of us to be impartial and to reject artificial distinctions that have no place within God's family

# *Who don't you see?*

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- The poor? The rich?
- The down and out? The high and mighty?
- The needy? The sick?
- Those you deem “unattractive”?
- The elderly? The younger generation?
- Those in habitual sin?

Genuine Faith in Jesus Helps Us  
**SEE EVERYONE**

# *James 2:1-13*

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“My dear brothers and sisters, how can you claim to have faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ if you favor some people over others? 2 For example, suppose someone comes into your meeting dressed in fancy clothes and expensive jewelry, and another comes in who is poor and dressed in dirty clothes. 3 If you give special attention and a good seat to the rich person, but you say to the poor one, “You can stand over there, or else sit on the floor”—well, 4 doesn’t this discrimination show that your judgments are guided by evil motives?

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5 Listen to me, dear brothers and sisters. Hasn't God chosen the poor in this world to be rich in faith? Aren't they the ones who will inherit the Kingdom he promised to those who love him? 6 But you dishonor the poor! Isn't it the rich who oppress you and drag you into court? 7 Aren't they the ones who slander Jesus Christ, whose noble name you bear?

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8 Yes indeed, it is good when you obey the royal law as found in the Scriptures: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” 9 But if you favor some people over others, you are committing a sin. You are guilty of breaking the law. 10 For the person who keeps all of the laws except one is as guilty as a person who has broken all of God’s laws. 11 For the same God who said, “You must not commit adultery,” also said, “You must not murder.” So if you murder someone but do not commit adultery, you have still broken the law. 12 So whatever you say or whatever you do, remember that you will be judged by the law that sets you free. 13 There will be no mercy for those who have not shown mercy to others. But if you have been merciful, God will be merciful when he judges you.”



# *Judged by the Law that sets us free 2:12*

- James ties favoritism to lack of mercy. Do you want God to play favorites? Against you?
- “Christians are covered by the blood of Christ and so will receive mercy instead of condemnation in the final judgment. Nevertheless, Scripture speaks of the divine judgment as a reality that should deter all people, most of all Christians, from sin. For all people, including Christians, will give an accounting of what they have done. Specifically, we will give an accounting of whether we have lived by this royal law, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”  
- IVP New Testament Commentary

# *Genuine Faith helps us See Everyone*

- “...how can you claim to have faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ if you favor some people over others?” James 2:1
- “As humans, we tend to form judgments based on selfish, personal criteria rather than seeing others as God sees them.” – [GotQuestions.Org/Bible-favoritism](https://www.gotquestions.org/Bible-favoritism)
- “Then Peter replied, ‘I see very clearly that God shows no favoritism. In every nation he accepts those who fear him and do what is right.’” – ACTS 10:34-35

# *Choosing to see people*

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## 1. CONSIDER YOUR MOTIVATION

- Why do you pursue certain kinds of people?
- What is your underlying motivation?
- The heart of favoritism:
  - “I’m pursuing you because of what you can give me.”
  - “I’m not pursuing you because you can’t give me anything.”
  - WIFFM – What’s In It For Me?

# *Choosing to see people*

## 2. CONSIDER YOUR FAMILY (the Body of Christ)

- We BELONG to Each Other:

“Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ’s body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.”

— ROMANS 12:4, 5

# *Choosing to see people*

## 2. CONSIDER YOUR FAMILY (the Body of Christ)

- We are **UNITED** with Each Other:

“I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me.”

— JOHN 17:21

# Choosing to see people

## 2. CONSIDER YOUR FAMILY (the Body of Christ)

- We are **DEPENDENT** on Each Other:

“The way God designed our bodies is a model for understanding our lives together as a church: every part dependent on every other part, the parts we mention and the parts we don’t, the parts we see and the parts we don’t. If one part hurts, every other part is involved in the hurt, and in the healing. If one part flourishes, every other part enters into the exuberance. You are Christ’s body—that’s who you are! You must never forget this.

— 1 CORINTHIANS 12:25-27 (the Message)



# *Choosing to see people*

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## 3. CONSIDER YOUR WITNESS

- What are two common critiques of the “Church” at large?
  - Hypocritical and judgmental
- “So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.”

— JOHN 13:34-35

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Genuine Faith in Jesus Helps Us  
**SEE EVERYONE**

THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT...

1. Find the person you don't normally "see" and engage them this week
2. Don't try to be all things to all people. Choose to do for ONE what you wish you could do for everyone!
3. Get out of your comfort zone. It may not contribute as much to your life as you think!