



This guide is an invitation to follow Jesus with greater purpose and hope. It will help you to explore the scriptures and challenge you to live out your faith. Each week we'd love for you to think about how you relate: **Up** (with God), **In** (with church) and **Out** (with neighbors).

Weekly Questions:

- How is God getting my attention? For help, think about these areas:
- How are you living up with God?
- How are you living in community with other followers of Jesus?
- How are you living out on mission with your neighbors?
- What are you going to do about it?

Devalued: Dishonoring

Read James 2:1-13

- James 2:1-4 explicitly warns against showing favoritism. What are some subtle (or not-so-subtle) ways favoritism can manifest in a church community or in our personal lives today?
- Pastor Josh said, "Favoritism is a form of dishonor." How does showing favoritism devalue individuals and contradict the biblical truth that "Every person is made in God's image"?
- James 2:5-7 states that God has chosen the poor to be rich in faith, yet we often dishonor them. In what ways might societal or even religious systems inadvertently dishonor those who are considered "poor in the eyes of the world"?
- How does remembering that our worth and belonging come from Jesus, not our own achievements or status, empower us to extend honor and grace to others?
- James refers to "the royal law" found in Scripture: "Love your neighbor as yourself" (James 2:8). How does showing favoritism forsake this royal law, and why is it impossible to truly love our neighbor while simultaneously discriminating against them?
- "Mercy triumphs over judgment" (James 2:13) is a powerful statement. How does practicing mercy in our interactions with others reflect God's character, and what does it mean for you personally to choose mercy over judgment in a specific situation this week?
- Pastor Josh encouraged us to "Avoid convenient forgetting." How can we become more aware of our presuppositions and biases that might lead us to judge others' actions harshly while excusing our own?

This week, where do you sense God asking you to honor someone by letting mercy triumph over judgment? Or where have you needed mercy over judgment and you need to go toward the person you have wronged and asked for forgiveness?