



KINSTON FIRST  
PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS CHURCH

# MESSAGE REWIND

SERMON NOTES & STUDY GUIDE

*Reflect. Discuss. Apply.*

**Sermon Series: “Everyday Faith” (Study of the Book of James)**

**Sermon Title: “No Favorites In God’s Family” (*James 2:1-13*)**

**Date: Sunday, September 7th**

James addresses a real problem in the early church. That problem is showing favoritism based on wealth, status, or appearance. He reminds us that faith in Jesus leaves no room for partiality. God looks at the heart, not the outside. True Christianity is lived out in how we treat others, not just in what we say we believe. As people who have received mercy, we are called to extend mercy, love, and welcome to all.

## Message Rewind:

### 1) Faith Leaves No Room for Favorites

**Scripture:** James 2:1–4; Deuteronomy 10:17

**Truth:** God does not show favoritism. At the foot of the cross, all stand equal. To judge people by appearance, wealth, or status contradicts the gospel.

**Illustration:** In 2007, world-class violinist Joshua Bell played in a Washington, D.C. subway wearing plain clothes. Thousands passed by without noticing, though a week earlier people had paid \$100 a ticket to hear him. Same music, same musician, but ignored because of appearance.

**Application:** In church and in daily life, treat everyone with dignity. Look past outward appearances and see people as God does.

### 2) God Honors What the World Overlooks

**Scripture:** James 2:5-11; 1 Samuel 16:7; 1 Corinthians 1:27–29

**Truth:** God often chooses the poor, the weak, and the overlooked to accomplish His purposes. Man looks at the outside, but God looks at the heart.

**Illustration:** In the 1960 Olympics, Abebe Bikila of Ethiopia shocked the world by winning the marathon barefoot. He had no sponsors or fancy gear, but he outran them all. God often uses those the world underestimates.

**Application:** Never discount what God can do through you or through someone others ignore. Value people the way God values them.

### 3) Mercy Triumphs Over Judgment

**Scripture:** James 2:12–13; Matthew 5:7; Titus 3:5

**Truth:** Because we have received mercy from God, we must extend mercy to others. Judgment without mercy is hypocrisy. Mercy reflects the heart of Christ.

**Illustration:** Pastor David Wilkerson welcomed gang members into Times Square Church, even letting them take the offering. One of them, Nicky Cruz, went from hardened criminal to powerful evangelist all because someone extended mercy instead of judgment.

**Application:** Show mercy to people who are still growing. Love sinners while trusting the Holy Spirit to bring change.

#### Rewind and Reflect: Discussion Questions:

- When have you felt left out or overlooked? How does that help you relate to others?
- Why do you think favoritism is so damaging inside the church?
- What does it mean for mercy to triumph over judgment in your daily relationships?
- How can your church family go “over and beyond” to make newcomers feel welcome?
- What practical step can you take this week to see people as God sees them?

#### Prayer Focus:

- **Thanksgiving:** Thank God that He shows no favoritism and that we are loved equally at the foot of the cross.
- **Repentance:** Ask the Lord to forgive any moments when we have judged others by appearance, wealth, or status.
- **Compassion:** Pray for a heart that sees people as God sees them valuing every person as His creation.
- **Hospitality:** Ask the Holy Spirit to help our church family go above and beyond to welcome newcomers and make them feel loved.
- **Mercy:** Pray that we will extend mercy to others just as God has shown mercy to us.

#### Memory Verse:

“My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with partiality. <sup>2</sup> For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes, <sup>3</sup> and you <sup>1</sup>pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, “You sit here in a good place,” and say to the poor man, “You stand there,” or, “Sit here at my footstool,” <sup>4</sup> have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?” **James 2:1-4 (NKJV)**

## Key Takeaway:

At the foot of the cross we are all equal. True faith does not play favorites, but shows love and mercy to everyone.