



Session 4 - James 2:1-13

Welcome! – Reflect on your week with your group. Did you make space for God this week? **Intro question** - Who's the most famous person you've ever met? How did this happen? How did you react to this person?

Main Point This Session - Sometimes we grant special attention to people who are “socially superior” to us while neglecting those who are “lower” on the social scale. But such distinctions are arbitrary to God and ought to be arbitrary to followers of Jesus. Session 4 challenges us to avoid showing favoritism by putting the “royal law” into action.

Engaging God's Word – Open your bible to James 2:1-13. We will read once all together, then ask someone who is willing to read this passage again to your group. Follow along in your own bible.

Discussion Questions:

1). Read James 2:1-4. What is the precise problem going on within the community to which James is writing? Suppose the

scene in verses 2-3 were to happen this week here at Fellowship, what do you think would happen? How would we treat the two people differently? Why would we do that? From a practical perspective, what benefits would a rich person attending and giving at Fellowship Church have for our ministry? Why isn't James considering this argument?

2). Read James 2:5-7. What does James say about the rich and the poor? Do you think the poor are rich in faith? Why would James say that? How does this connect with the previous point about favoritism? Is Jesus promoting a “reverse favoritism”, in which we welcome and honor the poor more than the rich?

3). Read James 2:8-11. What is the “royal law” James mentions in verse 8? How does showing favoritism break that law? According to verses 10–12, how would James respond to someone who said, “I've kept seven of the Ten Commandments. That's a passing grade, right?”

4). Read James 2:12-13. In James 2:12, James speaks again of the “law of liberty” (see 1:25). But his previous comments seem to be more restrictive, forcing us to keep every point in the law. How does the law give us freedom? Two key words appear in verse 13. Let's define them. What is judgment? What is mercy? How does the idea of mercy bring us back to the matter of showing favoritism?

Applying God's Word - 1). Are there any areas in your life where you are showing favoritism or neglect based on another person's social status? 2). How can our church guard against showing favoritism and partiality? What are some practical ways we can show love to one another without distinction or preferential treatment?

Your Group's Outreach/Missions Project

Prayer Time: Think of this as a time for people to really share and receive prayer for what is going on in their lives.

Live It Out

Reflect: Learn the Beatitudes. Matthew 5:3–12 or Luke 6:20–26. In a succinct way, these describe the reordering of the world from God's perspective.

Seek counsel: If you have been working hard to keep God's rules, and you're troubled by this assertion that breaking even one command makes you a lawbreaker, you can talk with Mack, one of the staff, or someone you respect spiritually and ask them how to unpack the idea of God's "mercy."

Evaluation: Evaluate the Fellowship's response to guests who attend our worship services or ministry events— not just the stated policies, but the actual behaviors. Is favoritism shown? If so, what can you do about it?

Serving: How can your group get involved in a ministry to the poor and homeless in your community? Many such ministries need volunteers and financial support.

Daily Time with God

Spend a few minutes each day reviewing and reflecting on our session, the verses from the book of James, and your group discussion. Also, reflect on the verses below and their application to your life. Make sure you take a few moments to be praying about your relationship with God, others (leaders, family, friends, those in your group) and spend a few moments just being silent and listening to God.

Day 1 – Read James 12:1-13 and reflect on what you've learned.

Day 2 – Luke 7:36-50

Day 3 – Luke 14:7-11

Day 4 – Acts 10:34-35

Day 5 – 1 Timothy 6:6-10/17-19

Day 6 – Matthew 19:16-26

Day 7 – Matthew 5:3-12/Luke 6:20-26

