

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever been the victim of favoritism? How does it make you feel?
2. Some mistake impartiality as tolerance. What are the distinctions?
3. What is favoritism according to James?
4. How is the book of James like the sermon on the mount in Matthew 5-7?
5. Why do you think favoritism is described as such an evil by James?
6. What is the logical and biblical argument against favoritism?
7. Looking at the practical steps, which are you going to implement in your life?

Answers to fill in the blanks:
 THE BIG PICTURE 1) GENUINE 2) DOERS
 1. AS DOERS, WE MUST STOP PLAYING FAVORITES 1) IMPARTIALITY 2) EXTERNAL
 2. REAL LIFE EXAMPLE - FAVORITISM AT CHURCH 1) a. PERSONAL b. FINANCIAL
 c. DEVALUATION
 3. REASON FAVORITISM IS WRONG #1 - ILLOGICAL 1) POOR 2) SPIRITUAL
 4. REASON FAVORITISM IS WRONG #2 - UNBIBLICAL 1) UNFULFILLED 2) EVERYONE
 5. THE BIBLE TRUMPS CULTURE

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SERMON NOTES

THE FAVORITE MESSAGE

James 2:1-13

THE BIG PICTURE

1. The book of James is all about faith that works and the only faith that really works is _____ faith in Jesus Christ!
2. The test of our faith’s authenticity is whether we are _____ of God’s Word.

1. AS DOERS, WE MUST STOP

James 2:1 (CSB)

¹ My brothers and sisters, **DO NOT** show favoritism as you hold on to the faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ.

1) Forgotten attribute of God - _____

Deuteronomy 10:17 (CSB)

¹⁷ For the LORD your God is the God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, mighty, and awe-inspiring God, showing no partiality and taking no bribe.

Romans 2:11 (CSB)

¹¹ For there is no favoritism with God.
 (2 Chronicles 19:7, Proverbs 22:2, 24:23, Acts 10:34, Ephesians 6:9, Colossians 3:25)

2) Favoritism is showing favor to persons on account of _____ factors such as appearance, position, wealth, or power.

1 Samuel 16:7 (CSB)

⁷ But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or his stature because I have rejected him. Humans do not see what the LORD sees, for humans see what is visible, but the LORD sees the heart.”

SERMON NOTES CONTINUED

2. REAL LIFE EXAMPLE – FAVORITISM AT _____

James 2:2–4 (CSB)

² For if someone comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and dressed in fine clothes, and a poor person dressed in filthy clothes also comes in, ³ if you look with favor on the one wearing the fine clothes and say, “Sit here in a good place,” and yet you say to the poor person, “Stand over there,” or “Sit here on the floor by my footstool,” ⁴ haven’t you made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

- 1) What are the evil thoughts behind favoritism?
 - a. _____ Gain (Influence, Power, Prestige)
 - b. _____ Gain (Lack of Faith, Worldly Goals)
 - c. The _____ of the Soul
- 2) Favoritism is a _____ evil that hurts others and undermines the very purpose of gathering as a church. (Romans 15:5-7)

3. REASON FAVORITISM IS WRONG #1 - _____

James 2:5–7 (CSB)

⁵ Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Didn’t God choose the poor in this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? ⁶ Yet you have dishonored the poor. Don’t the rich oppress you and drag you into court? ⁷ Don’t they blaspheme the good name that was invoked over you?

- 1) The vast majority of the early Christians were _____ or became so because of their faith in Christ.
- 2) Being rich or poor is really an attitude of the heart reflecting our _____ condition. (Matthew 19:16-26)

Matthew 5:3 (CSB)

³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

SERMON NOTES CONTINUED

4. REASON FAVORITISM IS WRONG #2 - _____

James 2:8–11 (CSB)

⁸ Indeed, if you fulfill the royal law prescribed in the Scripture, **Love your neighbor as yourself**, you are doing well. ⁹ If, however, you show favoritism, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰ For whoever keeps the entire law, and yet stumbles at one point, is guilty of breaking it all. ¹¹ For he who said, **Do not commit adultery**, also said, **Do not murder**. So if you do not commit adultery, but you murder, you are a lawbreaker.

- 1) It’s called the royal law because only Jesus Christ our King has ever _____ it! (Romans 13:8-10, Galatians 5:14)

Matthew 22:37–40 (CSB)

³⁷ He said to him, “**Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.** ³⁸ This is the greatest and most important command. ³⁹ The second is like it: **Love your neighbor as yourself.** ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commands.”

- 2) Favoritism ignores the fact that _____ falls short of God’s glory and are saved by God’s grace, not by our worthiness!

5. THE BIBLE _____ CULTURE

James 2:12–13 (CSB)

¹² Speak and act as those who are to be judged by the law of freedom. ¹³ For judgment is without mercy to the one who has not shown mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

Practical Steps:

- 1) Pray that God will give you a love for others like His love.
- 2) Avoid cliques, speak to someone new between services.
- 3) Invite someone new to your small group or bible study.
- 4) Treat everyone with the same respect and honor you desire.
- 5) Don’t show favoritism at church, work, or at home.
- 6) Do a personal study on God’s impartiality.
- 7) Teach your children about what God says concerning favoritism.
- 8) Make the book of James a regular part of your Bible reading.