

F. REFLECTION

God instructs us to love one another as He loves us. Read the following Scriptures on the incredible depth of God's lovingkindness towards you and reflect on how you would share God's love with other people.

"The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion, and sin..." Exodus 34:6-7 (NIV)

"The Lord leads with unfailing love and faithfulness all who keep His covenant and obey His demands." Psalm 25:19 (NLT)

"For the mountains may move and the hills disappear, but even then, my faithful love for you will remain. My covenant of blessing will never be broken," says the Lord, who has mercy on you." Isaiah 54:10 (NLT)

"O Lord, you are so good, so ready to forgive, so full of unfailing love for all who ask for your help." Psalm 86:5 (NLT)

"Because of the Lord's great love, we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." Lamentations 3:22-23 (NIV)

"Your unfailing love is better than life itself; how I praise you!" Psalm 63:3 (NLT)

"God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. his is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins" 1 John 4:9-10 (NLT)

"Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? 38 And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:35, 38-39 (NLT)



HOW TO TREAT PEOPLE BETTER

JAMES: PRACTICAL GRACE-FILLED LIVING Series – Part 3 of 10

James 2:1-13 | Week of May 22, 2022 | Pastor Mike Prah

SERMON OVERVIEW:

The issue of prejudice, favoritism and discrimination causes dreadful social problems. We will discuss how to get along with people from James 2:1-3. Key concepts are Acceptance, Appreciation, and Affirmation.

A. OPEN YOUR SESSION WITH PRAYER

B. ICE BREAKER: Take some time to share what is going on in your life, testimonies, and upcoming events. Recognize birthdays, anniversaries, or special occasions of your group members. Pick 1 item from the Icebreaker list to discuss to know each other better.

C. BIBLE DISCUSSION: PICK A FEW POINTS FROM EACH SECTION TO DISCUSS

SECTION 1: REVIEWING SERMON MESSAGE

- (a). What fresh insight did you learn from the sermon? OR
- (b). What Bible verse cited in the message stands out to you the most? Why?

SECTION 2: PERSONALIZING SERMON MESSAGE

- (a). What did you hear that encouraged or reassured you?
- (b). How did the message increase your love for God or Jesus Christ?

SECTION 3: ENCOURAGING APPLICATION OF THE SERMON

- (a). If we diligently apply the message, what effect would it have on your personal lives and walk with Christ?

D: DIGGING DEEPER

I. THE PRINCIPLE: DON'T SHOW FAVORITISM

"My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism" James 2:1 (NIV)

- According to James 2:1, what must we not do as believers?
- What does it mean to show favoritism or partiality? Briefly describe a time when you felt unwelcome at a place. What did it feel like, and did you respond?

"Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there," or "Sit on the floor by my feet," have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?" James 2:2-4 (NIV)

- In James 2:2-4, how were the people James addresses discriminating between rich and poor?
- What clues did they focus on? Are these clues always reliable? Why or why not?
- What motivates a person or group to treat rich people better than poor ones?

II. THE PROBLEM WITH SHOWING FAVORITISM

1. FAVORITISM IS UNGODLY

Peter: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right." Acts 10:34-25 (NIV)

"The person who does wrong will be paid back for the wrong he has done. God does not play favorites." Colossians 3:25 (GW)

- According to Acts 10:34-35 and Colossians 3:25, what's God's view of favoritism?
- Pastor Mike mentioned that it is ungodly to show favoritism or discrimination because that is not who our Father is. What does this teaching mean to you?

2. FAVORITISM IS UNLOVING

"If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right." James 2:8 (NIV)

"For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Galatians 5:14 (NIV)

- According to James 2:8, what is the "royal law found in Scripture"?
- Why is it royal? (see Galatians 5:14)
- Why is showing favoritism or discrimination a violation of this law?

"Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen." 1 John 4:20 (NIV)

- What does 1 John 4:20 mean to you?

III. THE PRESCRIPTION: HOW TO TREAT PEOPLE BETTER

Three steps: Acceptance | Appreciation | Appreciation

1. ACCEPT EVERYBODY.

"Accept each other just as Christ has accepted you so that God will be given glory." Romans 15:7 (NLT)

- In Romans 15:7, how should we accept people? (Hint: "just as Christ ...")
- In Romans 15:7, why should we accept others? (Hint: "so that God ...")
- Pastor Mike mentioned that people have a hard time accepting others because they confuse acceptance with approval. There's a big difference between acceptance and approval. You can accept somebody without approving of their lifestyle. They may be doing something wrong, but you can accept them as a person without approving of the sin they're involved in. What does this teaching mean to you?

"After this, I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from EVERY nation, tribe, people, and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." Revelation 7:9-10 (NIV)

- How does this vision of heaven in Revelation 12:9-10 encourage you to accept people?

2. APPRECIATE EVERYBODY

"Don't be selfish ... Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had." Philippians 2:3-5 (NLT)

- According to Philippians 2:3-5, there are at least 4 reasons to treat people better by appreciating them. Describe some of them?
- Pastor Mike mentioned appreciating people goes beyond accepting them. It is finding something you can like about them and taking an interest in them, which may require some creativity. Briefly describe how you were able to get along with someone who is not easily loveable.
- What does this teaching mean to you?

3. AFFIRM EVERYBODY

"Encourage one another and build each other up" 1 Thessalonians 5:11 (NIV)

- What are some of the practical steps you can take to be more accepting, appreciative, of affirming (encouraging) of others so that people can feel God's love and acceptance through your actions?"

"For there will be no mercy to those who have shown no mercy. But if you have been merciful, then God's mercy toward you will win out over His judgment against you" James 2:13 (LB)

- According to James 2:13, the person that accepts, appreciates, and affirms others is the person God blesses. How does this Scripture promise encourage you to treat people better?

E. PRAYER POINTS

1. Pray for each LifeGroup member to respond positively to this message and follow through on the application. Pray for a divine, positive impact as God's people apply this Word to everyday living.
2. Ask for individual prayer requests and pray for your group's individual needs.
3. Closing Prayer

PLEASE REACH OUT TO ANYONE WHO DID NOT MAKE IT TO YOUR LIFEGROUP MEETING & CHECK ON ANYONE SICK OR IN NEED IN YOUR GROUP