

APPLYING THIS BIBLE PASSAGE TO OUR LIVES:

The sin of partiality is not just rich over poor. It can be partiality toward education or lack, ethnic similarities or differences, or even those who have experienced similar abuse or addictions versus those who have not. Partiality can even be playing favourites with those who are just more agreeable and enjoyable to be around.

1. How have you proven that you love yourself this week? What have you done/indulged in that makes self-love very obvious?
2. How can your actions toward others change beginning today, knowing that God's mercy triumphs over the judgment you deserve?

PRAYER REQUESTS/PRAISES FOR THIS WEEK:

(Missionary of the Week: Hitz Family to PNG)

JAMES:

A SERVANT OF GOD

*Connection Point Groups
Week #2*

CONNECTION POINT GROUPS PURPOSE STATEMENT:

Developing lifelong relationships that influence others to live and love like Jesus.

TONIGHT'S TEXT: JAMES 2:8-13 *"If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment."*

INTRODUCTION: Understanding social dynamics does not require a degree in sociology. All it takes is witnessing lunch hour in a local high school.

The football team, cheerleaders, and the drama club kids, all gather together with their kind and it's no mystery why. Everyone feels the need to belong, according to their interest and talents. The unfortunate side is, there are rules to who's in and out. If you don't wear the right clothes, make straight A's, perform on the field, or listen to the right music, you're



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excluded. Later, in adult life, the rules may change, but the dynamics remain. You're either in, or you're out. But the church, James says, is a family where partiality is a sin.

In response to judgment, our hearts can be self-justifying. "I may not be perfect, but in the end, God will weigh the good and the bad." The problem is, if we break one law we have broken them all.

The one unifying factor in the Kingdom of God is all Christians have received mercy from God in Christ. Social hierarchies of rich and poor, black and white, those with status and those with none no longer apply in the family of God.

Our response to others through the power of the Holy Spirit is impartiality and mercy. Through Jesus, mercy triumphs over judgment.

DIGGING DEEPER INTO THE TEXT:

1. What is the royal law? Why does James mention it here (reference James 2:1-7)? What is his intent in writing this passage to his original readers?
2. James describes those who show partiality in two ways (v.9). How does he describe them?
3. Underline each time James uses the word "mercy" (v.13). What is mercy? How does James relate mercy to judgment?

INTERPRETATION OF THE TEXT:

1. Simply, what is the law mentioned in verse 9-11? Referencing Matthew 22:37-40, how does this law differ from the royal law?
2. Which law was James' audience more concerned over or more likely to live by?
3. In verse 10, James writes of the "whole law." Is it possible to keep only part of the law and why do we think we can?
4. In the context of James 2:8-13, what is the law of liberty and who embodies it? How are we to speak and act under the law of liberty? And how does that relate to the royal law and partiality?
5. Mark the following words in James 2:8-13: "law," "transgressors," "judgment," and "mercy." How does this passage explain and inform us of the gospel?