

Lake Merced Church of Christ

Home Groups

Give Yourself Away - To The Poor

Ice Breaker

If you could have coffee with any person in the world, who would it be and why? Have you ever run into or had the chance to meet somebody famous, maybe even someone you were a huge fan of? How did you react?

Opening Prayer

Spend some time following up on your discussions from last week about how we love our enemies. What did God call you to do this week in order to bring restoration and mercy to a strained or broken relationship?

Discussion

Read James 2:1-13 together out loud as a group. Briefly discuss the words that stood out to you as you read.

1. James first significant section of his text deals with the cultural treatment of the rich and the poor, recognizing that we tend to treat the rich with honor, while the poor are often cast aside as being worth less. Where do you see examples of this VIP treatment in our culture today? Is this inequity still part of our world? What do you think?
2. Read verse 5 carefully together. What do you think James means when he says God chose the poor to be rich in faith? What do you think it means to be "rich in faith?"
3. This James text is very heavily influenced by Leviticus 19, the chapter that famously and discreetly gives us the second of the greatest commandments, to love our neighbor as ourselves. James says in verse 4 that when we do *not* do that and we show favoritism, we are actually *discriminating* among ourselves. How do you think we are discriminating against ourselves, simply by treating the rich and influential differently?
4. How do you personally feel when you are confronted with someone who is panhandling, or begging, or sick, or in need? How would you describe your flesh and gut-reaction to those moments in your life?
5. In Sunday's message, Josh encouraged us to consider how we behave when someone falls overboard in a raft, that priority number one is to help that person, regardless of who they are or whether they deserve it. Our job is to Extend Your Paddle, to help those in need back into the boat, into a place of safety. What do you think it looks like to Extend Your Paddle to the poor, mentally ill, or needy among us?
6. How is God challenging you, personally, to use your resources to help someone who's hurting?

Closing Prayer

As you close your Home Group tonight, be open about some of the ways that God might be calling you to help a person in need. Is there a specific person or situation where you can be used to help someone out of the rapids and back into a place of safety? Ask the Holy Spirit to be present and show your group how to serve Him.