

Small Group/Sermon Notes for James Part 5: No Favoritism

Remember, small groups are primarily for growing closer relationships with other believers. We can learn wonderful things in this environment but keep relationships first.

- Make sure everyone knows each other's names. Have everyone share a little about themselves and how life is going right now.
- **James Part 5: No Favoritism**
- James has a problem with worldly hierarchies being imposed on spiritual relationships.
- **James 2:1-11.**
 - So, we don't get to play favorites. Not at work, at home, at church, never.
 - Fairness is a huge part of the Gospel and God's character.
 - Did you know the "break one part break it all" was a reference to favoritism?
 - This means don't take favoritism lightly.
 - What is favoritism? Giving unfair preferential treatment to one person/group at the expense of another.
 - Play favorites for what reasons? Money, talent, popularity, relative, friend, etc.
 - How many have had unpleasant experiences with favoritism?
- How do we deal with the worldly hierarchies vs the spiritual ones?
- **James 1:9-11.**
 - Of course the poor man will fade away too, but he isn't trusting in his poverty!
 - Perspective: this life is only a small piece of the puzzle. Do you struggle keeping perspective?
 - False Dichotomy: Good life now or good afterlife...but can't have both.
 - You can have both (sometimes) after you have conquered selfishness and pride.
 - Which is more important, this life or the next? Short term comfort or God's eternal plan?
 - So, if we have to sacrifice one for the other which do we choose?
- James seems to be singling out rich people. You haven't seen anything yet:
- **James 5:1-6.**
 - Very harsh. What happened to **Proverbs 14:20**?
 - There are two kinds of rich people:
 - The James 5:1-6 types of rich people. Willing to hurt anyone for their own gain.
 - The Job types of rich people. **Job 1:1-2.** Good people who are living life to the fullest.
 - James is not opposed to that kind of rich person. **James 5:11.**
 - What did the Lord finally bring about? **Job 42:12-17.**
 - Being rich isn't the problem. The problem is unfairly exploiting your advantage and harming others for personal gain.
- Does God treat everyone equally?
 - **Matthew 25:28-29.**
 - Is that fair? It is the **Romans 2:6-11** kind of fair.
 - How does that work with God's unmerited favor?
 - What is favoritism? Giving unfair preferential treatment to one person/group at the expense of another.
 - God's favor to you (or anyone) is never at the expense of another!
 - Be the type of person that God's unmerited favor rests on!
- Bottom Line:
 - Do not play favorites with bad people because they have a worldly advantage.
 - That type of corruption ruins the church. (businesses, families, etc)
 - AND it fools the "favorites" into thinking they are set when they aren't.
 - Don't do that to your kids or anyone else you care about.
- Pray for each other before you finish up!