

STUDY NOTES

JAMES: A FAITH THAT ENDURES

a series at New City Church

www.newcityphx.com/sermons

The following content is based on the message "Mercy Triumphs Over Judgment" on 2/17/19 at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. The following is not meant to be a full synopsis but rather a brief look at the main ideas. To use this Study Guide effectively you must listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

Leaders using these study notes for group study and reflection should read the Biblical text thoroughly before beginning, using this resource as assistance and not relying solely on this material for insight. We encourage all leaders to pray and ask the Spirit for revelation as they lead their respective community groups.

PRAYER

Pray and ask God to lead the discussion as everyone gets to share.

SCRIPTURE: JAMES 2:1-13

ONLY PART OF THE PICTURE

James commands us not to show partiality toward people. Malcolm Gladwell describes partiality as "the ability to find patterns in events based only on 'thin slices', or narrow windows, of experience. The term means making very quick inferences about the state, characteristics or details of an individual or situation with minimal amounts of information."

Believers must never mix faith with partiality. People show partiality toward others in many different ways, but James uses the example of how people treat poor and rich people.

- *What is your experience with someone showing partiality against you?*
- *Who have you shown partiality toward? How did you realize that you were showing partiality toward that person?*

ACTING IN PARTIALITY

There are two overarching ways that we act in partiality. First, we act in partiality by serving ourselves. For example, people want to be around those with money, education, status, and power. Why do we do that? Because it makes **me** look good.

We also act in partiality by enslaving other people. We enslave other people because we try to use them for our own gain.

Any act done for selfish gain will not be rewarded by God.

- *How is acting in partiality fundamentally selfish?*

A KINGDOM LENS

The kingdom of God puts everyone on a level playing field. There is no partiality in the eyes of God. We are all guilty in need of a Savior. He sent Jesus to pay for the sin of all. Everyone can experience the grace of Jesus. For that reason, that is how we should look at people.

Everyone is your neighbor, and Jesus tells you to love your neighbor as yourself.

- *Jesus says that we love others as we love ourselves. Why is it important to be able to love yourself in a healthy way?*

Everyone will be judged by God, but those who believe in Jesus will be judged mercifully by being given the righteousness of Jesus. For that reason, we should speak and act like we were judged under the law of mercy.

- *What does it mean to you when you hear that we should "judge others under the law of mercy?"*
- *When is it merciful to point out sin? How should that be done?*
- *Pray with each other to view others the way God views you.*