



Life Group Sermon Study Notes

“Faith-Based DEI”

November 16th, 2025

Warm Up (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer or ask another. No right or wrong answers.

Can you think of a time when someone made you feel welcomed or included right away?
What stood out?

What’s one way you’ve seen kindness or fairness change the tone of a situation?

What is the most unique dish you’ve seen at a thanksgiving dinner?

Have you started listening to Christmas music already?

Word (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at www.kingdomchurchmemphis.org

James 2:1–13. (ESV)

My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, “You sit here in a good place,” while you say to the poor man, “You stand over there,” or, “Sit down at my feet,” have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which

he has promised to those who love him? But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called?

If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it. For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

What does this text teach us about God? About us?

James, the brother of Jesus, writes this letter to early Christians in order to help them live truly wise and authentic lives in Jesus. James talks about how to deal with suffering, what it means to live by faith, the importance of patience, why it is important to have a godly heart toward money and, most controversially, he talks about the relationship between faith and works. On this point, many believe he and the apostle Paul contradict each other, but a close examination of their writings reveals that James and Paul complement each other to provide us a robust understanding of how faith and works are concomitant to one another. James's letter is filled with godly instruction to help followers of Jesus live lives completely submitted to God's will so that we can experience the godly promises James's letter reveals.

At the start of chapter 2, James starts addressing the sin within the church to help them reflect the heart of Jesus toward newcomers and each other. James instructs believers in Jesus to lead with merciful eyes and hearts to all people regardless of financial status. Pastor Steve highlighted that mercy levels the church, makes no judgments based on what we see, and lifts the overlooked. Treating rich people favorably and poor people as if they are inferior is not just unfair, it is sinful. Pastor Steve also reminded us that we cannot preach grace and rank people at the same time. Doing so reveals a lack of understanding of the spiritual economy of the gospel. In 2 Corinthians 8 Paul writes, "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ: Though he was rich, for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich." God's judgment on our sin declared us guilty and deserving of death. In verse 13 of our passage James writes "Mercy triumphs over judgment." So though we deserved to be eternally separated from God because of our sin, Jesus became poor by taking on human flesh and living the way we should have. On the cross he died a merciless, unjust death so that we would not have to and rose from the grave giving all who would repent and believe in him the chance to enter into his eternal mercy and receive power to be merciful to everyone they encounter.

Discussion (10-15 minutes)

In his sermon, Pastor Steve pointed out James's use of the phrase "My brothers" throughout his letter. What is the significance of this phrase the two times James uses it in our passage?

Why is it important to have mercy on newcomers, especially when we notice something unique about their appearance?

Pastor Steve said "How we treat people reveals our faith." Read Mark 12:28-34 and discuss how mercy applies to verse 31.

Application

Dr. Bryan Loritts said "Biblical love is inconveniencing yourself for the convenience of others." What inhibits you from overcoming inconvenience in order to show up for others?

Pastor Steve taught us that the Bible dignifies who the culture devalues. Is there a type of person or group of people you tend to devalue? If so, how can the gospel help you be more merciful toward them?

How can meditating on God's mercy toward you impact your [SPIRITUAL FORMATION](#) individually and relationally?

Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Pray for any of the following, as well as other requests you may have.

Pray for merciful eyes and a merciful heart toward others.