

## Life Group Homework

### Pride and Prejudice

#### James 2:1-13

##### Let's Get Started

Begin this week by carefully reading **James 2:1-13**. After reading this, what do you think is the central theme of the text?

James begins in 2:1 with this statement, "***My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory.***" Did you grow up with stereotypes or prejudices against certain groups of people?

What do you think are the root causes of stereotypes and prejudices?

##### Let's Go Deeper

The word "favoritism" comes from two words in the original text.

- a. Prosopon - "face, visage, countenance."
- b. Lambano - "to receive"

Taken together, they mean "receiving someone based on their outward appearance."

What do the following Scriptures tell us about how God views partiality?

**1 Timothy 5:21**

**Galatians 3:27-28**

**Romans 2:11**

**2 Chronicles 19:6-7**

In light of **1 John 2:2**, what value does God place on every human being, regardless of race or economic status?

As the atoning sacrifice for our sins against him, was there anyone beyond the reach or love of Jesus?

Is there anyone beyond your reach or your capacity to love? (**Note: This is not a group discussion question. It is for personal examination of our individual hearts.**)

## **Tattoos**

There was a time when some of us might have looked at a person with a tattoo and questioned if they could be a Christian. We might have pointed to **Leviticus 19:28** or **1 Corinthians 6:19-20** as our guide. However, today, tattoos have become socially acceptable, even among many Christians, church leaders, and even pastors.

What do you think? Is there a possibility that some of us were guilty of showing partiality towards those who had tattoos?

## **Motives**

**James 2:4** says, "***Have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil motives?***"

Do you and I have the right to judge a person's heart or motive?

Is it possible that judging other people's motives could fall under the category of "becoming judges with evil motives?"

**Consider some of these potential pitfalls that can result from judging a person's motives:**

- It's usually arrogant. It's easy to fall into the trap of thinking that yours is the only viable position a logical person could take, and so any disagreement with how you feel or think must be due to the other person's wrong motives.
- It attacks the person rather than the argument. How does **Ephesians 4:29** speak to this issue?
- It's often hypocritical. When we're tempted to judge another's motives, we need to examine our own motives to make sure we don't want their motives to be bad, so we'll feel better about ourselves and look better in some way. How does **Matthew 7:3-5** speak to this issue?

## **Let's Live It Out Together**

***“For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.” -James 2:13***

In his book, *Surprised by Joy*, C.S. Lewis said, "The hardness of God is kinder than the softness of men, and his compulsion [to be merciful] is our liberation."

The mercy of God calls the disciple of Jesus to hold back the condemnation and criticism someone may justly deserve. As Christians, most of us wouldn't dream of committing adultery or bowing down to an idol. Why? Because that would be a blatant breaking of a commandment of God—one of the big ten! Right?

But, how about letting an attitude of judgment instead of mercy cause us to justify a judgemental or critical spirit about someone? Is that a "lesser" sin?

How does **James 2:10** speak to this issue?

Remember **James 1:22-25** (below) as we take the opportunity this week to examine our own hearts and allow the Lord to show us where we need a repentant attitude of humility regarding pride and prejudice.

***“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.” -James 1:22-25***

*Don't forget to pray for one another this week and pray for a revival of the hearts of believers for such a time as this!*