



Sermon Study Guide

5/27/2018

God's grace growing in us, and through us, bringing the fullness of Jesus Christ to all of life.

Series Theme

Faith: Some Assembly Required

Sermon Title

Faith and Favoritism

Key Sermon Points

- Life is like a piece of Ikea furniture. It's easy to get ahead of yourself. We do it on our own and, then, wonder why it doesn't work and parts are left over.
- Faith looks at instruction manual (Scripture). James in his letter gives us some very specific instructions on how life gets put together. James shows us how to live a complete faith life.
- Jesus Christ alone is worthy of honor and glory. We are all His servants (as James says about himself in this letter).
- Because of this, genuine faith is always without favoritism (which is favoring one over another based on external personal preferences). Favoritism creates a separatist mindset. Distinctions are made on personal preference
- We must not show favoritism (James 2:1)
- Favoritism creates a false sense of superiority that is the opposite of the gospel.
- What are our motives for favoritism:
 1. Trying to buy safety
 2. Trying to put ourselves in the good seat
- We end up serving the pride in ourselves
- We place ourselves on throne of our own hearts (not Jesus)
- We are all broken; we are all low. When we recognize ourselves as low, it creates an acute understanding of our own sin. We are all in the same "sin class". We have all been saved by the same savior.
- We choose to honor others. Jesus chose to honor others not because they deserved it but because He is honorable.

- We choose to look past weakness to draw out the anointing (God's favor) on others
- Jesus choose those who were dishonorable (this include you and me):
 1. I choose to live an honorable life – I choose to love and honor all others because I am deeply acquainted with His mercy for me
 2. This leaves no room for favoritism

Scripture: James 2:1-6, John 17:21, Acts 10:34, Romans 2:11, John 3:16

Personal Application

- 1) Where in your life have you shown favoritism? How can you move to a place of giving honor to others?
- 2) Do a personal Bible study on Romans 2:11. How does judge our actions?

Discussion Questions

1. What is favoritism? How is favoritism demonstrated in our culture?
2. Name some ways you have personally experienced favoritism.
3. How did it make you feel?
4. Did Jesus show favoritism? Why or why not?
5. Where does our tendency toward favoritism come from?
6. How can it be countered?
7. What is honor? What does honoring a person do for and in them?

Life Groups

Use the discussion questions above (and other as you are led) to consider the issue of favoritism. Discuss some practical ways that you and your group can demonstrate honor to others.

Children & Families

Discuss with your children the reality of groups and cliques in school and other places. Let them share their personal experiences and feelings. Ask them what they can do to help others feel included and honored.

Other Resources

Kindness Manifesto by Kelly Rae Roberts

Living a life of gratitude is one of the kindest gifts we can give the world. We are all connected and kindness is the voice that softly says, "I see you. I honor you. And you are not alone."

Favoritism: An Action Sought; A Sin That Destroys by Laura C. Brown

As a leader, have you ever faced the decision of who you should choose for a position and what criteria you should use to make the selection? Have you ever been pressured to select someone because of his or her status or some other condition not related to the job qualifications? Or, are you a person who has diligently prepared yourself for a position and see yourself as one who would be an asset to a team, yet

continue to be denied opportunities to display your talents? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then this book is for you. Favoritism: An Action Sought; A Sin That Destroys is a book that exposes the sin of biased favoritism. It provides scripture references that reveal God's perception of favoritism, what it may look like as an action sought and an action extended. More importantly, this book provides encouragement for those who have found themselves to be victims of unfair favoritism and guidance for leaders on how favoritism should be handled in ethical ways that honor God.