



# Sermon Study Guide

The Disease of Prejudice – James 2:1-13

February 27 & 28, 2016

## Opening Question

Can you think of an occasion when you've been the subject of discrimination, favouritism or prejudice? What happened? How did it make you feel?

## Read Together

Read **James 2:1-13** as a group.

## Big Idea

**As followers of Christ, we must rid our lives of the disease of favouritism.**

## Discussion Questions

The English word “prejudice” stems from a Latin word that means to “prejudge” someone. It’s referring to times when we form an opinion without knowing the facts. We quickly form our conclusions, ignoring the facts, and we’re well on our way to a wrong kind of thinking - thinking that produces a poisonous attitude that says, “Don’t bother me with the truth. My mind’s already made up.” James writes what he does in James 2:1-13 to diffuse this kind of thinking. Having read through verses 1-13, take some time to probe the spirit of prejudice. Why is it that favouritism causes a clash between the following?

- Faith and favouritism (verse 1)
- The wealthy and the poor (verses 2-7)
- Self and neighbour (verses 8-11)
- Mercy and judgment (verses 12-13)

1. Read verses 1-3. What would be a modern day equivalent of this taking place in our church or lives at home or work?
2. How does God feel about the poor? (verses 5-7)
3. What were the rich doing that was so heinous according to verses 5-7?
4. What would the Royal Law of verse 8 say to those who are doing what James brings up in verses 2 and 3?
5. How does God look at and relate to people? (John 3:16, Acts 10:34-35, Romans 2:9-11 and 1 Timothy 2:3-6 might help)
6. Do you ever see this sin of prejudice and favouritism appearing in your life? How? What do you need to do about it?
7. How do you see this sin creeping into the Church at large? In the RockPointe community? What could you do to influence change?
8. Think about your world for a minute - the world you live in everyday. What prejudices have you seen operating in your world? Which one hits you most hard?
9. What steps could you plan to take the next time you recognize personal prejudice or favouritism? How might you respond differently?

## Challenge

This week, ask God for His eyesight. Ask Him to help you see people the way He sees people. When we spot the sin of favouritism or prejudice in our lives, let’s immediately confess and ask God to give us His eyesight as our own. Keep track of how this goes and come prepared to share with the group next week how things went for you.

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## Prayer

Have each group member talk about one area of their world where prejudice or favouritism is alive and well and they would like to influence change. Pray for one another in this regard.

## Next Step

A great resource you may want to read on this topic is an old classic written by Ron Sider called "*Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*". In this 35 year old book, which was recently updated and revised, the author calls Christ-followers to work diligently to live simply in order to give liberally to those less fortunate all over the world. A worthy read that has influenced thousands of people.