

TO GO

1. Have you ever been on the short side of another person's favoritism? How did it make you feel? What do you wish could have been different about the situation?
2. Read James 2:1–4. What specifically does James prohibit and what can we infer about the situation in the local church that warranted his instruction?
3. What does James infer in v4 about the origin of favoritism? How does this come into conflict with what people might often consider a “lesser” sin?
4. Read James 2:5–7. How is the church in these verses functioning like a country club? What reasons does James provide for why this should not be so?
5. Specifically, what does he say about the poor? Who are they and what about them makes James suggest they should be protected from dishonor and oppression?
6. What does he say about the rich? Who are they and what about them makes James suggest they should not be the recipients of favoritism?
7. Read James 2:8–11. What standard (v8) does James offer as the baseline for his prohibition? How does he demonstrate the severity of committing the sin of favoritism (vv9–11)? What does he compare it to? How might this be jarring to the original audience? How do you receive it?
8. Read James 2:12–13. How does James warn his audience about showing favoritism? Why is the issue of favoritism so critical to the testimony of the church? How does the last statement in v13 encourage you?
9. Consider how you treat people that are different than you? Ask the Lord if there is anything from which you need to repent. If there is, bring it to him and ask him to help you love your neighbor as yourself in all things, including people who are different than you.