

The Book of James:  
Ancient Wisdom for Modern-Day Times  
Week Four: March 10, 2024

### **Why do we judge?**

My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism. Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, “Here’s a good seat for you,” but say to the poor man, “You stand there” or “Sit on the floor by my feet,” have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? (James 2:1-4)

1. We are naturally judgmental because of our upbringing.
2. We are naturally judgmental because of our relationships.
3. We are naturally judgmental because of our selfishness.

### **How can we judge as followers of Jesus?**

Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong? If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing right. But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. For he who said, “You shall not commit adultery,” also said, “You shall not murder.” If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker. (James 2:5-11)

1. Followers of Jesus judge through love.

And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God’s love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God’s love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

(Romans 8:38-39)

2. Followers of Jesus judge through servicing one another.
3. Followers of Jesus judge by the fruit of others.

### **How do followers of Jesus respond to those who judge us?**

Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment. (James 2:12-13)

1. LOOK inward.
2. FORGIVE outward.

For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins. (Matthew 6:14-15)

3. God's activity is RELEASED upward.

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,” (Matthew 5:43-44).

### **Small Group Discussion Questions**

1. Out of the three reasons we are naturally judgmental, which one do you default to the most? Share a story.
2. Out of the three ways followers of Jesus respond to judgement, which one is the hardest for you? Why?
3. When others judge you, how can you apply the words of James in your journey with Jesus?

#### **News and Notes**

March 10, Baptism class at 1:30pm (in main auditorium). ENGLISH VERSION.

March 16, Sanctuary Course: Mental Health Well-Being. 8-week class (7-9pm). See Sharon Lim for details.

March 17, Baptism class at 1:30pm (in main auditorium). CANTONESE VERSION.

March 29, Good Friday Service at 10:30am.

March 30, Easter Brunch Event at 10:00am-1:00pm. Invite your friends + family.

March 31, Easter Services (with water baptism).

Mentoring Moments this Tuesday with Pastor Andy POSTPONED due to a VCPC staff planning day.