

As we “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Pet 3:18), it’s important for us to remember that we’ve been called to follow a very specific example.

For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. (1 Pet 2:21-23)

So what will it look like and sound like to follow that example, treating people like Jesus treated people? James can help us a great deal on that front.

In James 2:1-13, he warns us about treating people differently simply based on the way they dress, or the amount of money they may have...

My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, “You sit here in a good place,” while you say to the poor man, “You stand over there,” or, “Sit down at my feet,” have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? (2:1-4)

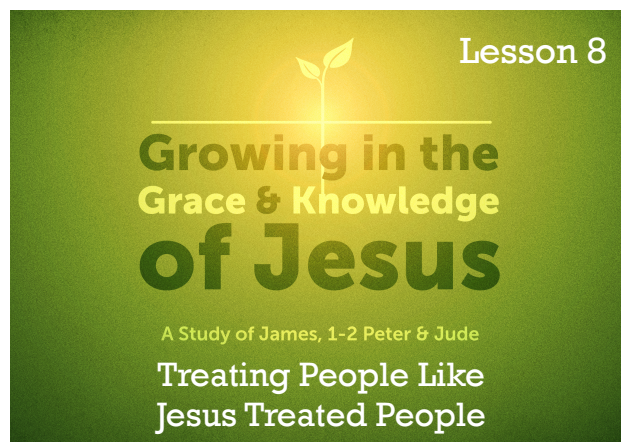
Loving our neighbors as ourselves is how we “fulfill the royal law” (2:8). But we’re going to need wisdom—“wisdom that comes down from above” if we’re going to treat people like Jesus treated people.

But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. (3:17)

Without that wisdom, just listen to the ugly things that can easily come out of our hearts...

- Bitter jealousy (3:14)
- Selfish ambition (3:14)
- “This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic” (3:15)
- Every vile practice (3:16)
- Quarrels and fights (4:1)
- “...your passions are at war within you” (4:1)
- “You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel” (4:2)

Jesus wasn’t like that. Jesus treated people better than that. And Jesus is the example we’ve been called to imitate. He’s left us the steps to follow. **Let’s talk about them...**



For Class & Family Discussion:

- In your own words, what does it mean to “show partiality” (James 2:1) in a way that “makes distinctions” between people as I’m really “judging with evil thoughts” (2:4)?
- Think about your peers. On what basis do we sometimes “show partiality” and “make distinctions” between ourselves?
- Of all the things the Holy Spirit could warn us about as we seek to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus, why this? What’s the big deal? Why have we been so sternly warned about it that “sin” is brought into the discussion (2:9)?
- In order to live differently and be described as having the “good conduct” our heavenly Father is looking for, we need “the wisdom that comes down from above” (3:13-15). But how can I get it? What can we learn from James 1:5-11?
- Let’s use James 3:17-18 and think specifically about the way Jesus treated people. Can you think of any examples from his life when he treated someone with...
 - Purity?
 - Peaceableness?
 - Gentleness?
 - Openness to reason?
 - Mercy?
 - Impartiality?
 - Sincerity?
 - A desire to make peace?
- What’s it going to take for *me* to treat people like that this week?