



MAIN POINT	MAIN BIBLE VERSE
Faith in Jesus changes how we see people – so we don't show favoritism.	James 2:1-13
Students will understand that following Jesus reshapes how they assign value to people, especially in environments shaped by popularity, reputation, influence, and social status.	
Teaching Script / Guide	

HOOK:

- **Have you ever walked into a room and immediately started trying to figure out where you fit?**
 - Not just where do I sit in the lunch room, but...
 - Where do I belong?
 - Who do I already know here?
 - Who do I want to know here?
 - Who do I *not* want to sit near?
- High school students do this constantly:
 - Lunch tables
 - Practice fields
 - Group chats
 - Friend circles
 - Classrooms
 - Church rooms like this one
 - And most of the time, we don't even realize we're doing it, because we naturally, intentionally, or unintentionally sort people.
 - Sometimes based on:
 - Popularity
 - Confidence
 - Appearance
 - Athletics
 - Social influence
 - Whether they help or hurt our reputation
 - We think this is just a high-school thing, but it's not.
- James saw this happening in the early church too.
 - And he says something really direct: Real faith doesn't play favorites.
 - James is writing to Christians who believed the right things about Jesus, but their relationships still looked shaped by the same value system as the world around them. So James lovingly confronts them.
- Because faith in Jesus changes more than what we believe. It changes how we see people.

BIBLE:

- **Either read, summarize, or invite a student to come up and read James 2:1-13.**
 - Walk through and highlight anything that stands out and supports where the rest of the message is headed.
- James is talking about this issue of favoritism and he is giving a scenario that would have felt normal in their culture.
 - Two people walk into church.
 - One looks wealthy.
 - Confident
 - Respected
 - Connected
 - Important
 - The other looks poor.
 - Easy to overlook
 - Socially invisible
 - Unimpressive
 - Low status
 - Then James asks the question:
 - Who gets your attention?
 - Who gets your respect?
 - Who gets your time?
 - And his answer is clear: **My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism.** (James 2:1)
- Favoritism means assigning value to someone based on what they have...or what they can do for you. And James says: That doesn't belong in the life of someone following Jesus. Because followers of Jesus live by a different value system.

WHY THIS MATTERS

- Before Jesus reshapes our hearts, we tend to evaluate people using categories like:
 - Popularity
 - Style
 - Confidence
 - Friend group
 - Influence
 - Athletic ability
 - Social reputation
 - But the longer you walk with Jesus... the less those categories define how you see people.
 - Instead, something shifts. You begin seeing people the way God sees them.
 - Every person you meet:
 - was created by God
 - is loved by God
 - and carries the image of God
 - That means they have value before they ever prove anything to you.
 - Favoritism says: "You matter more than they do." Jesus says: "Everyone matters."
 - Think about your school for a second. Who is someone most people overlook. Don't say their name out loud. Just picture them.
 - Now imagine this: If Jesus showed up at your school during lunch tomorrow... who do you think He would walk toward? Because when we read the Gospels...that's exactly the kind of person He always moves toward.
 - That's how Jesus lived, and James is inviting us to live the same way.
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APPLICATION/SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION SET UP:

- Real faith changes how we treat everyone—but especially:
 - **The unnoticed**
 - People outside your circle
 - People sitting alone
 - People nobody introduces themselves to
 - Sometimes faith looks like choosing presence.
 - **The different**
 - Different background
 - Different interests
 - Different personality
 - Different reputation
 - Faith refuses to build identity around similarity.
 - **The inconvenient**
 - People who don't benefit your image
 - People who can't improve your status
 - People others quietly avoid
 - Faith follows Jesus toward people others walk past.

GOSPEL MOMENT/CLOSE:

- Here's the deeper reason favoritism comes so naturally to us: We live in a world that constantly ranks people.
 - Who matters most
 - Who belongs most
 - Who deserves attention most
 - But Jesus never ranked you that way. He didn't choose you because of your value. He gave you value by choosing you. And when His love reshapes your heart, you stop measuring people the same way the world does. That's what inside-out faith looks like.
 - **Real faith doesn't show favoritism, because Jesus never showed favoritism toward you.**
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