

James
Small Group Guide
Week 2: Friends Along the Way

In this series we will walk through the book of James and see how it tells students to prepare for the challenges of life ahead of them. We will look at 12 teachings about wholehearted devotion to Jesus and how we can mature our faith into wholeness.

Our memory verse for this series is James 1:2-3

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.

BACKGROUND

- 1) James 1:27 "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world."
- 2) There is an Internal and External Focus to James 1:27. Each week of this series we will switch between teachings around our internal life and our external life.
- 3) This week is External.
 - a. Favoritism vs Love (2:1-13)
 - b. Patience and Endurance (5:7-11)
 - c. Restoring Others (5:19-20)

POINT 1: FAVORITISM VS LOVE

- 1) Our relationships within the church should be marked by Love not favoritism.
- 2) The world seeks to take scripture and skew it
- 3) The world seeks to take God's focus on "caring for those in need" and turning it into "showing favoritism to those in need."

POINT 2: PATIENCE AND ENDURANCE

- 1) We can have friends without showing favoritism.
- 2) Our relationships within the church should reflect God's love not cliques.
- 3) Avoid gossip and slander, be patient and endure those around us.

POINT 3 RESTORING OTHERS

- 1) Love, patience and endurance are not abandonment.
- 2) We don't abandon those around us to their sin and self-destruction.
- 3) God's Good, not their imagined good

CLOSING

Let us have relationships marked by:

- 1) Love not favoritism
- 2) Patience and Endurance not grumbling, cliques and gossip.
- 3) God's good for them not their imagined good

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Small Group Questions: Below are some topics to guide your discussion and sample questions. You know your students best. What questions can guide them through these ideas to a better understanding of God and a clear next step for themselves?

POINT 1: FAVORITISM VS LOVE

- 1) *How does God demonstrate love without showing partiality or favoritism?*
- 2) *From an evangelical standpoint, how should Christians treat others without letting personal biases influence their actions?*
- 3) *In what ways does Jesus exemplify unconditional love in the Gospels, and how does that contrast with human favoritism?*
- 4) *How can believers actively promote a culture of love and inclusivity instead of favoritism?*
- 5) *What are some ways that the world wants us to show favoritism instead of love?*

POINT 2: PATIENCE AND ENDURANCE

- 1) *Why do you think James needs to tell the church to practice patience and endurance?*
- 2) *What's an example of something/someone that tries your patience (sibling?)*
- 3) *How can we show patience to those who try our patience?*
- 4) *How do we distinguish between showing patience to someone and getting bullied?*
- 5) *How does God demonstrate His love to you through his patience and endurance?*

POINT 3 RESTORING OTHERS

- 1) *Why do you think it's important to talk about restoring others after talking about showing love, patience and endurance?*
- 2) *In what ways does the world encourage us to abandon people to their sin and self-destructive choices?*
- 3) *Have you ever had a friend that was going down a bad path?*
- 4) *Did anyone stop or help them?*
- 5) *What are some ways that we can intercede for others?*
- 6) *How is God's good for someone sometimes different than what they think is their good?*