

During Jesus’ earthly ministry, many Jews struggled to believe that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, the Son of God. This included James, Jesus’ half-brother. But after Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection, Jesus appeared to James, and at last James believed. James later became the leader of the church in Jerusalem—a vital role in the early, growing church.

The early church was comprised mostly of Jewish believers. That makes sense because of the church’s origin in Israel but also because that was the mission Jesus gave: start with the Jews and spread out from there. James wrote a letter to these Jewish believers who were scattered around the region, helping them understand how their new faith in Jesus should frame how they live.

James told his fellow believers that one way they could live out the gospel was by not showing favoritism. James used an example of how a church might show favoritism to a wealthy man over a poor man who came to a meeting.

The natural response might be to treat the wealthy man better, but James told the believers that God does not show favoritism. God has treated all people—rich and poor—the same: generously with the gospel. God’s kindness toward us should cause us to want to treat others with similar love, generosity, and equality.

**When believers in the early church treated some people as better than others, James told them they were wrong. He reminded them that Jesus commanded believers to love one another. Because He has shown great mercy to us, we can show mercy to others.**

This week’s session is a great follow-up to last week’s. Your kids may think that being united is just a matter of getting along with one another and not fighting. But God’s heart is for us to be united far more deeply. Help your kids see that the gospel should compel them to treat one another in the same way—with the same love, mercy, and grace shown to us by Jesus.

Check this session’s Activity Page and Big Picture Card as well as the Gospel Project for Kids Family App for ways to interact with the Bible content this week.

FAMILY STARTING POINTS

* + ● **Babies and Toddlers**
  + ○ God helps us obey Him.
  + ○ James wrote a letter to the believers.
  + ○ James said to treat all people with kindness.
  + ○ Jesus loves us so we can love others.
  + ● **Preschool**
  + ○ Why does God want us to obey Him? We obey because God loves us.
  + ○ James tells us to love others because Jesus loves us.
  + ● **Kids**
  + ○ Why does God want us to obey Him? Obedience is our response to God’s love for us.
  + ○ James calls us to treat people with mercy because Jesus shows us mercy.

UNIT KEY PASSAGE

● **Galatians 2:20**