



Conversations On Who We Are Becoming

Week 3: Conversations about mercy before judgment

Opening Questions

1. Did you grow up in a multicultural setting or did you grow up around people who were just like you?
2. How are you feeling today? To what degree do you carry in your own emotional life the emotions of those around you?

Opening Prayer

God and Father of us all, we are the children of your household and the sheep of your pasture. Give us a daily supply of your mercy that we might become people known by the mercy we extend to others. Guide us in our conversation today. May all that we say be to the praise of your name and for the profit of each of us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Scripture

Read James 2:8-17 slowly and out loud. Read it twice if that is helpful.

You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. For the one who said, "You shall not commit adultery," also said, "You shall not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery but if you murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty. For

judgment will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill," and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

Reflection Questions

1. What word, phrase, or image stands out to you?
2. Why do you think James refers to loving your neighbor as yourself as the "royal law"?
3. Showing "partiality" is to discriminate between people. What can we do to become free and healed from the sin of discrimination?
4. Why should we choose mercy over judgment in how we treat people who are different than us?
5. If what we believe doesn't translate into how we live, what kind of people do we become?
6. Consider the following statement: *We are not what we do, but what we do reveals who we are.* What is the connection between the character of our heart and the actions that people see?

Final Questions

1. Where do you sense God at work at this moment? What is God inviting you into? What is God whispering to you? What is God nudging you to do?
2. What steps can you take this week to reject a judgmental attitude and adopt the attitude of mercy?