

We tend to surround ourselves with people who look like us and think like us; it's just easier that way. This may even mean gravitating towards people with similar melanin levels (aka: skin color). Through the years, that subtle mentality has played out in dramatic ways leading to racism, hate, and division. There is something much more powerful that can unite us regardless of our race, ethnicity, or culture... the love of God. In this study, we will discuss the partiality that we have experienced or held, and how we can overcome these prejudices to see people the way God does.

What Do You Think?

- What do the people you surround yourself with look like and act like? Are they similar to you or different?
 - Why do most people develop relationships with people similar to themselves? What are some of the pros and cons of relationships like this?
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“So Peter opened his mouth and said: “Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, ³⁵ but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.” Acts 10:34-35 (ESV)

What Does God Say?

- **Read Acts 10:34-35 and Luke 6:27.** God does not show partiality. Why is this and why do we have such a hard time with it?
- **Read Matthew 22:16.** Jesus was known for being impartial, but it certainly wasn't easy. God tells us to rise up and go! What are some of the challenges a person may have to face because of diverse relationships? Why should we be willing to do that?

“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.”

1 Corinthians 12:12-13 (ESV)

- **Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-20.** Although it may be easier to associate ourselves with similar people, by doing so, we miss the depth of life and partnership intended by God in creating diversity. As Mike said, we should value differences in people. What are some of the values and practices you appreciate in other cultures that you think could enrich your life and ministry?
- **Read James 2:1-9.** The scriptural instruction to us is to treat people equally. Discuss practical examples of what this would look like in your world.

What Will You Do?

- What mentalities do you need to overcome in order to be impartial? What will you do to overcome them?
- What relationships are you going to be intentional about developing?
- Is there something you can do to infuse more diversity in to your group? What value would that add?