

How to Live With Others, Part 2

Study Guide for Small Group Discussion and Personal Application
Lynn Haven UMC – October 4, 2020 – Pastor Craig Carter

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This week we continue in our sermon series titled “**How to Live**” based on the New Testament Letter of James. Last week we investigated how Christians are to live with other people, both inside and outside the community of believers, and today is part two of the same topic. As a congregation we are following a reading plan through James and studying selected passages. Check out mylhumc.net/grow for more information.

The Bible makes it clear there will one day be a Day of Reckoning, a “final exam” of sorts. In Matthew 25 we read that the great multitude of humanity will be divided into two groups before the judgment seat of God – sheep on the right, goats on the left. What determines who is in each group?

Then the King will say to those on his right, “Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.” (Matthew 25:34-36 NLT)

Then the King will turn to those on the left and say, “Away with you, you cursed ones, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his demons. For I was hungry, and you didn’t feed me. I was thirsty, and you didn’t give me a drink. I was a stranger, and you didn’t invite me into your home. I was naked, and you didn’t give me clothing. I was sick and in prison, and you didn’t visit me.” (Matthew 25:41-43 NLT)

As the people of God, it is very important how we treat other people, especially those with challenging life circumstances.

How to Live with Others

James begins chapter 2 with this question: “*My dear brothers and sisters, how can you claim to have faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ if you favor some people over others?*” (James 2:1 NLT)

He goes on to give an example of how favoritism, or showing bias to some people, might occur. (see James 2:2-6)

The genuineness of our faith is most evident in the way we treat others, especially those persons that others overlook and neglect. God expects us to give them special care and attention.

Three things to keep in mind about how to live with others:

1) Have Awareness

⇒ Do you notice people? Are you aware of how others in our community are suffering? If you have lived here for a while, do you even notice signs of economic disparity and suffering?

2) Pay Attention

Be intentional about noticing people and interacting with them. Be willing to consider some of your own implicit biases.

⇒ Do you have friends or acquaintances who are very different from you – by race, nationality, religion, economic class, etc.? If not, what do you need to do to reach out and begin to hear and understand the stories of those who are different from you?

3) Take Action

We must actually do something about the needs we discover. God calls us to help others.

Don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. (James 1:22a NLT)

What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone? Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, and you say, "Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well" – but then you don't give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do? Faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless. - James 2:14-17 NLT

⇒ What is one good deed you could do this week that will put your Christian faith into action?

⇒ Lynn Haven UMC offers many opportunities to engage with others who are in need. What ministry are you participating in? Do you need to find a place to serve? Email Katie@mylhumc.net for a list of opportunities!