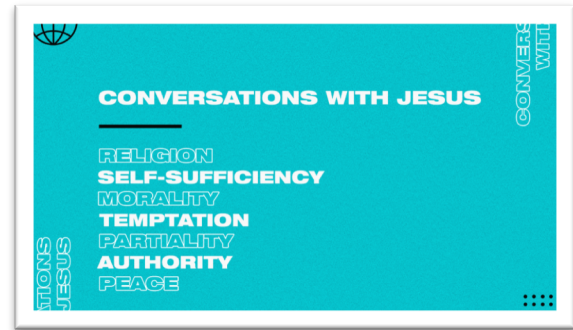


# A CONVERSATION ABOUT PARTIALITY

MATTHEW 9:9-13 // PASTOR TODD DUGARD  
MAY 17, 2020



**All partiality and prejudice must be eliminated if the gospel is to be believed.**

- **Call *everyone* to life in Christ (9:9)**
- **Enjoy friendship and fellowship with all (9:10)**
- **Admit that I may be oblivious to my own prejudices (9:11)**
- **Advocate for those who are discriminated against (9:12-13)**

## GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Have you ever thought that prejudice could be a key issue keeping you from sharing the gospel with others? What do you think after hearing this sermon?

For Peter, who was mentioned in the sermon, it seems he feared that interacting with a “sinner” would limit his own righteousness. In truth, partiality was limiting his ministry! What did God want Peter to learn about people who were outside of Peter’s religious comfort zone (Acts 10:12-17a, 28-29)?

Why does James warn believers to avoid showing partiality? (James 2:1-13) How does favouring one type of person over others undermine the church’s testimony? Who might you need to be less concerned about impressing in order to honour James warning?

How has your life been negatively affected by the prejudice of others? How do you respond to prejudice in ways that keep the door open to presenting the gospel?

Do you feel that your active friendships betray any partialities to a particular culture or economic class? How do you know the difference between a reasonable comfort with people who are familiar and an unreasonable judgment concerning people who are different?

In our church there are opportunities to become friends with people from all over the world. Have you made efforts to get to know people who haven't integrated into main stream church culture? Why or why not?

Since Jesus asked to have dinner with Matthew, we can see that he doesn't expect the marginalized to adapt to us. We can adapt in order to reach out. In fact, Jesus left his place with God to reach the ones he wanted to save who were far from God (Philemon 2:5-8). Are there any specific challenges to address as you consider interacting with people to whom religious groups have shown hostility? Why is sharing a meal together able to lower hostilities in these cases?

Todd presented a strategy that could help us advocate for people who are currently marginalized or outlawed from our personal sense of church due to partiality and prejudices. There were five aspects to this strategy. 1- Listen to the stories, 2 – Learn from others' experiences, 3 – Lament over the pain and sin that exists, 4 – Lift your voice against injustice, and 5 – Lend your time and energy to making a difference. Which of these will come easiest to you? What will not? How will repentance look for you as you engage the harder steps?

*If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are committing sin...  
James 2:8-9*