

Just Like Jesus

2025-12-28 • PASTOR MATT ROSE



James 2:1-9

FOR THE LEADER

These questions help you run the conversation. They are not your study. Get into the passage yourself first, because your group needs what God taught you, not just a list of questions. These also lean on Sunday's message, so a few will not land for anyone who missed it. Watch it before you lead.

WHAT THE MESSAGE WAS ABOUT

On the last Sunday of the year, Pastor Matt set the theme for 2026 in five words: to be just like Jesus. A simplified life wills one thing, and this is the one thing. Working across the Gospels, he showed three moves Jesus makes over and over: he teaches, he rebukes, and he redeems. And the rebuke is never contempt. It is a checkpoint on the way to redemption. Along the way, Pastor Matt pressed hard on one specific habit that does not look like Jesus at all: judging people by their appearance, the exact thing James calls out with the visitor wearing a gold ring.

To get started

- What is one thing from this past year you would want to carry into the next one?

Looking back at the message

A year-end message invites review. Give people space to actually review.

- 1 A simplified life wills one thing. If you are honest, what has your life been willing lately?
- 2 Jesus's rebukes are checkpoints on the way to redemption, never contempt. How does that match the way you have experienced correction?
- 3 Pastor Matt said God does not usually interrupt at convenient times. When has God interrupted you inconveniently? OPTIONAL

Looking at the passage

Read James 2:1-9 and Matthew 6:33 aloud. Both are short.

- 4 Read James 2:1-4. What situation does James describe, and what harsh name does he give it?
- 5 Read James 2:8-9. James names a royal law and a verdict for breaking it. What are they?
- 6 Read Matthew 6:33. Seek first, and the rest is added. What does first actually mean in a normal week?
- 7 Jesus ate with the people the religious leaders objected to. How does his guest list strengthen what James is saying? OPTIONAL

Bringing it home

He told a story about someone leaving a group over how people looked. Do not soften it.

- 8 Pastor Matt repeated what someone once told him about leaving a group because of how the people in it looked. What was your gut reaction to hearing that?
- 9 Where do you catch yourself sizing people up before you know anything about them?
- 10 If being like Jesus were your single aim this year, what is the first thing that would have to change?
- 11 What part of your life have you been treating as too small for God to interrupt? OPTIONAL

The group together

One theme for a year is easier to keep with other people.

- 12 What would it take for this group to keep one aim in front of it all year long?
- 13 How can this group correct each other in a way that feels like a checkpoint and not contempt?
- 14 Who is not in the room who would be welcome here, and what would make them actually feel it?

BEFORE YOU FINISH

If you had to name one thing you want true of you by the end of this year, what would it be?

You might pray about

- For a single aim rather than a long list
- For those we have quietly sorted by appearance
- For correction that leads somewhere good
- For openness when God interrupts at a bad time