



Revealing Words Bible Study

"Sermon Before the Sermon"

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It was a brisk Sunday morning, and the congregation of Grace Fellowship Church bustled toward the sanctuary, eager to hear the weekly message. At the entrance sat a man cloaked in layers of worn clothing, his face hidden beneath a tattered scarf and a weathered hat. His presence was impossible to ignore, yet no one stopped. Some offered glances of pity, others quickened their pace, and a few whispered assumptions—"He must've made poor choices," "Why is he here?" "Someone should help him."

Inside, the worship team played softly as the service was about to begin. Just then, the homeless man stood up and walked into the sanctuary. Murmurs rippled through the crowd as he made his way—not to the back—but to the front. He climbed the steps to the pulpit, removed his scarf, and then his hat.

Gasps filled the room.

It was Pastor James.

He looked out over the stunned congregation and said, "I think my sermon is complete."

Silence fell. Conviction settled.

That morning, no scripture was read aloud, no songs were sung after. But the message was clear: compassion without action is incomplete. The church had looked upon a man with pity but failed to extend love. They had judged without knowing. They had missed the opportunity to be Christ to a stranger.

Later, Pastor James shared, "I wanted to show you how easy it is to overlook someone when we don't know their story. We are called to love—not just those we know—but especially those we don't."

From that day forward, the church changed. They began to ask questions, offer prayers, and extend invitations. They learned that behind every face was a story—and behind every story, a soul longing to be seen.

Compassion and Action

1. Read Luke 10:25–37 (The Parable of the Good Samaritan). How does this story challenge your understanding of who your “neighbor” is?
2. What does James 2:15–17 say about faith without deeds? How does this apply to the story of Pastor James?
3. Can you recall a time when you felt compassion but didn’t act? What held you back?

Bias and Assumptions

4. Read 1 Samuel 16:7. How does God’s perspective differ from yours when it comes to appearances?
5. What assumptions do you find yourself making about people based on their looks, status, or behavior?
6. What can you do to remind yourself to pause and seek someone’s backstory before forming opinions?

Seeing the Image of God in Others

7. Genesis 1:27 says we are all made in the image of God. How should this truth shape the way you treat others?
8. How can you cultivate empathy for people you don't know or understand?
9. What practical steps can you take to show love to someone who seems "different" or "difficult"?

Being a Blessing

10. In what ways have you been blessed by someone you initially misjudged?
11. Think of someone you've overlooked or avoided. What might happen if you reached out to them this week?
12. How can you create a culture—in your church, school, or workplace—where people feel seen and valued?