

James 2.1-7 The Gospel of No Partiality

Partiality Opposes the Gospel, v. 1-4

- I. What does faith in the Lord Jesus Christ look like in practice?
 - A. Partiality is a sign of favoritism toward someone based on outward or physical circumstances contrary to the teachings of Jesus (Matt. 10.27-28).
 1. Jesus showed no partiality (John 19.11; Luke 6.35-36) toward sinners, lepers, the sick, the dead, the unclean & the noble (Matt. 9.13; 18-34; 8.1-13; John 11.38-44) because he knew the heart (John 2.24-25).
 - B. By being partial, have we not made distinctions, discriminating and dividing the body of Christ?
 1. One hand washes the other ??? What if the other hand can't wash back? John 13.1-20
 - C. Does the "Christian work ethic" always lead to success? Matt. 25.14-29??? This may lead us to think evil thoughts of those in need.
 1. Thinking this way may be symptomatic of a person elevating themselves to become like God making distinctions among the body and making themselves out to be judges with evil thoughts. Matt. 6.5; 1 Cor. 5.5
 - a) Is this how the Lord Jesus deliberated before he saved us? Matt. 9.13 It opposes the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Partiality Oppresses the Heirs of the Kingdom, v. 5-6

- I. He references the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5.3; Luke 6.20).
 - A. He is not saying that we should mistreat the rich and favor the poor, but the kingdom of heaven is for the needy.
 1. The poor are those who see their need and who are not satisfied with the riches of this world.
 - a) If we are partial toward anyone in the church, we are dishonoring a child of God.
 - (1) We are oppressing that person by withholding fellowship, thinking like the world.
- II. Their circumstances may not be the same as ours, but the principle still remains.

- A. We are thinking like the unbelieving world when we make these sorts of judgments (Matt. 10.16-17; Gal. 3.28).
 1. Whenever we withhold love that is due to another in the church, we are siding with the world and saying it is ok to oppress God's people. Which one of us is worthy? 1 Cor. 12-13. Partiality oppresses and it shows neither love nor mercy.

Partiality Dishonors the Name of Jesus, v. 7

- I. Since they unite themselves with oppressors, they become oppressors themselves, blaspheming the name of Jesus.
 - A. This was the common treatment of Christians during that time, since the rich were able to persecute at a much higher level.
 1. This is a call to show no partiality and favoritism toward anyone who possesses any sort of advantage over another. Consider James 1.11.
- II. Application.
 - A. What if God showed partiality toward us when he called us? What if he truly held each one of our sins against us? Matt. 7.1-6
 - B. How have we broken up or divided the church in our thoughts? How often do we think, "who does he think he is?" We would be placing ourselves on the throne as judges of souls and gossips wanting to be worshiped.
 1. What is proper attire? What if someone walked into our assembly who hasn't showered in days or weeks because they couldn't? What if someone walked into our assembly who was rich according to the world? Would we have thoughts of disgust or distaste which leads to discrimination and separation?
 - a) How well do we do with diversity? Name the category. What if the *type* of person that you do not like, walks in? Would you receive them?
 - C. Consider who Christ called into fellowship with him.
 1. Consider when Christ called us, what mess we were in. Consider ourselves now, what mess we are in now. Yet, he promises to cleanse us.
 - a) Consider the gospel call is for both rich and poor, slave and free, whoever would receive it with joy. Can we accept and receive the truth that the body of Christ is one and catholic and yet it is diverse? Or are we making ourselves to be judges with evil thoughts?