

PLAYING FAVORITES, LIVING INCONSISTENTLY

James 2:5-7

MAIN IDEA: When you show partiality, you are living inconsistently.

3/5/17

An Overview of the Book of James:

- *Pressing Problems for the Believer's Concern (James 1:1-18)*
- *Practical Principles for the Believer's Conduct (James 1:19-4:18)*
 - Concerning Obedience (1:19-27)
 - Concerning Partiality (2:1-13)
 - ✓ *The Command Concerning Partiality (2:1)*
 - ✓ *The Illustration Concerning Partiality (2:2-4)*
 - ✓ *The Reasons Against Partiality (2:5-13)*
 - ❖ *The Impartiality of God (2:5-6a)*
 - ❖ *The Importance of the Inner Spiritual Condition (2:5-6a)*
 - ❖ *The Inconsistency of Partial Behavior (2:6b-7)*

A Rebuke Delivered . . .

- *The _____: given in _____ ("my beloved brethren") (Jas. 2:5a)*
- *The _____: conveyed through _____ (Jas. 2:4-7)*

I. PARTIALITY EXPOSED: IT'S NOT LIKE _____ (James 2:5-6a).

The first reason why partiality is wrong: the _____ of God (2:5-6a)

- A. *God is not _____: He is _____ and _____ in all His judgments and dealings (cp. Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11; Eph. 6:9; Col. 3:25; I Pet. 1:17).*
- B. *God's impartiality is demonstrated by His choice of the _____ (2:5): He does not choose on the basis of _____ considerations (cp. I Cor. 1:26-29).*
 - *God does not choose on the basis of _____ in us, but strictly on the basis of His _____.*
 - *God has chosen the _____ impartially.*
 - ✓ *In the realm of the _____, he is _____ poor.*
 - ✓ *In the realm of _____, he is _____ rich.*
 - ✓ *In regard to the _____, he is an _____ (cp. Rom. 8:17).*
- C. *Man's _____ stands in contrast to God's _____: the poor whom God has _____, man has _____ (2:6a).*

II. PARTIALITY EXPOSED: IT'S ALL ON THE _____ (James 2:5-6a).

The second reason why partiality is wrong: the _____ of the inner spiritual condition (2:5-6a)

- A. *The important consideration in looking at people is the _____ condition, not the _____ characteristics (2:5).*
 - *The emphasis is not on the material _____.*
 - *The emphasis is on the spiritual _____.*
- B. *Look beyond the _____ characteristics, and see people as _____ sees them (I Sam. 16:7).*
 - *If the person is a _____, see him/her as a _____ or _____ in Christ.*
 - *If the person is an _____, see him/her as lost in desperate _____ of Christ.*

III. PARTIALITY EXPOSED: IT'S NOT _____ (James 2:6b-7).

The third reason why partiality is wrong: the *inconsistency* of partial behavior (2:6b-7)

- A. *Partiality _____ on the basis of outward considerations, but _____ other considerations.*

B. Partiality is often _____ and _____ (2:6b-7; cp. 2:3).

- _____ treatment toward the rich (2:3)
 - ✓ The preferential treatment is given simply because he is _____.
 - ✓ They have looked at the outward characteristic of his _____ but not at the outward characteristic of his _____.
- _____ actions of the rich (2:6b-7)
 - ✓ The rich are _____ them.
 - ✓ The rich are _____ them to court.
 - ✓ The rich are _____ the good name by which they are called (cp. Acts 13:45; 18:6; 26:11; I Tim. 1:13).

To remove partiality from your life, take three good looks . . .

- A good look at _____: He is impartial, and He expects you to be impartial also.
- A good look at the _____: focus on his spiritual condition instead of his outward characteristics.
- A good look at _____: realize how inconsistent and illogical you are when you display partiality.

QUESTIONS TO PONDER AND DISCUSS:

- Do you see any evidences of partiality in your life? In viewing people, do you tend to judge them on the basis of outward characteristics? How would God look at them differently?
- How do God and man view people differently? How does He view men in their differences (rich vs. poor, famous vs. unknown, lovely vs. unlovely, educated vs. uneducated, black vs. white, etc.) differently than man would view them?
- Do you view people from an outward perspective? What would happen in your relationship with them if you began viewing them as God sees them (cp. Matt. 9:36)? How would this change the way you treat them and interact with them?
- Look at I Samuel 16:1-13. How does this passage in James 2 relate to God's choice of a king for Israel? How did man's selection differ from God's selection? How does this expose man's partiality and God's impartiality? On what basis did God chose in contrast to man's basis?
- Does this passage change the way that you have looked at the rich and the poor? How would it change the way you look at people in regard to other outward characteristics (such as race, appearance, intelligence, and popularity)?
- How does evaluating and "judging" people from a spiritual perspective differ from evaluating them from a physical, external perspective? Are there times when we should judge people from a spiritual perspective? Consider this from the examples of who a person should date and marry (cp. II Cor. 6:14-18) and how a man should be chosen for church leadership (cp. I Tim. 3).
- Evaluate partiality in your own life or in the lives of others: how is it inconsistent and illogical?

STUDY QUESTIONS FOR NEXT WEEK:

Study James 2:8-11.

- How does displaying partiality demonstrate a lack of love? How does living impartially communicate love for your neighbor?
- James quotes the command from Lev. 19:18 to "love your neighbor as yourself." Study the nine references in the New Testament to this command (Matt. 5:43; 19:19; 22:39; Mark 12:31, 33; Luke 10:27; Rom. 13:9; Gal. 5:14; Jas. 2:8). What does each reference communicate about loving your neighbor?
- Who would you identify as your "neighbor"? How does Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan broaden the definition of one's neighbor (cp. Luke 10:25-37)?
- How does verse 9 directly identify partiality? How is partiality characterized in that verse?
- What does verse 10 declare about God's standard? How does it relate to man's need for salvation? How does it declare the impossibility of anyone being saved by obeying the Law (cp. Gal. 3:10)? How does this show the true purpose of the Law (cp. Rom. 3:19-20)?
- How does James 2:8-11 illustrate the principle of replacement (putting off partiality, putting on love)? How does this principle show how you can have deliverance from partiality?

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 - ❖ *The Inconsistency of Partial Behavior (2:6b-7)*

A Rebuke Delivered . . .

- *The motive: given in love ("my beloved brethren") (Jas. 2:5a)*
- *The means: conveyed through questions (Jas. 2:4-7)*

I. PARTIALITY EXPOSED: IT'S NOT LIKE GOD (James 2:5-6a).

The first reason why partiality is wrong: the *impartiality* of God (2:5-6a)

- A. *God is not partial: He is fair and just in all His judgments and dealings (cp. Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11; Eph. 6:9; Col. 3:25; 1 Pet. 1:17).*
- B. *God's impartiality is demonstrated by His choice of the poor (2:5): He does not choose on the basis of outward considerations (cp. 1 Cor. 1:26-29).*
 - God does not choose on the basis of *anything* in us, but strictly on the basis of His *grace*.
 - God has chosen the *poor* impartially.
 - ✓ *In the realm of the world, he is materially poor.*
 - ✓ *In the realm of faith, he is spiritually rich.*
 - ✓ *In regard to the kingdom, he is an heir (cp. Rom. 8:17).*
- C. *Man's partiality stands in contrast to God's impartiality: the poor whom God has chosen, man has dishonored (2:6a).*

II. PARTIALITY EXPOSED: IT'S ALL ON THE SURFACE (James 2:5-6a).

The second reason why partiality is wrong: the *importance* of the inner spiritual condition (2:5-6a)

- A. *The important consideration in looking at people is the inner spiritual condition, not the outward characteristics (2:5).*
 - The emphasis is not on the material *poverty*.
 - The emphasis is on the spiritual *riches*.
- B. *Look beyond the outward characteristics, and see people as God sees them (1 Sam. 16:7).*
 - If the person is a *believer*, see him/her as a *brother* or *sister* in Christ.
 - If the person is an *unbeliever*, see him/her as lost in desperate *need* of Christ.

III. PARTIALITY EXPOSED: IT'S NOT CONSISTENT (James 2:6b-7).

The third reason why partiality is wrong: the *inconsistency* of partial behavior (2:6b-7)

- A. *Partiality judges on the basis of outward considerations, but ignores other considerations.*

B. Partiality is often illogical and contradictory (2:6b-7; cp. 2:3).

- Preferred treatment toward the rich (2:3)
 - ✓ The preferential treatment is given simply because he is rich.
 - ✓ They have looked at the outward characteristic of his wealth, but not at the outward characteristic of his actions.
- Oppressive actions of the rich (2:6b-7)
 - ✓ The rich are oppressing them.
 - ✓ The rich are dragging them to court.
 - ✓ The rich are blaspheming the good name by which they are called (cp. Acts 13:45; 18:6; 26:11; I Tim. 1:13).

To remove partiality from your life, take three good looks . . .

- A good look at God: He is impartial, and He expects you to be impartial also.
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- A good look at yourself: realize how inconsistent and illogical you are when you display partiality.

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