

Partiality Has No Place

[Jas 2:1-7 ESV] 1 My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. 2 For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, 3 and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, "You sit here in a good place," while you say to the poor man, "You stand over there," or, "Sit down at my feet," 4 have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? 5 Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him? 6 But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? 7 Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called?

I. Intro

- A. This week I'll read the entire passage, but focus on the first half, and finish the second half next week.
- B. The topic of partiality in the church comes back around, and rather than stating "don't do that" this week we see the wickedness that is the root of sin.
- C. We will be made aware that to prefer someone because of their outward appearance is to judge with evil thoughts.
- D. This comes off the teaching of being doers of the word and not hearers only.
 1. So doing the right thing, at the right time, for the right reason is valued in faith
 2. And doing so without partiality is highlighted this week.
- E. As Joel reminded everyone last week, James focuses on "FAITH IS DEMONSTRATED BY OBEDIENCE TO JESUS."

II. Text

- A. Verse 1
 1. My brothers: bringing the audience in personally
 2. Show no partiality: straight to the point, reiterating a previous statement: [Jas 1:9-11 ESV] 9 Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, 10 and the rich in his humiliation, because like a flower of the grass he will pass away. 11 For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits.
 3. As you hold the faith:
 - a) We have a sacred trust given to us by HOLY GOD
 - b) Hold the faith, its our responsibility
 4. In our Lord Jesus Christ:
 5. The Lord of glory:
- B. Verses 2-3
 1. Wealth has importance, but does not make you more important in the kingdom
 2. Value is placed on every person because they are created bearing the image of God
- C. Verse 4
 1. This gets to the heart of the matter
 2. The wickedness in our heart manifests itself in the most devious ways.

III. Points

- A. Show No Partiality
 1. Model Jesus in this
 2. Jesus did not value the false religion of the Jewish leadership, but valued the true religion of the faithful heart.
 3. The important people in the world, and the lowly people in the world were all equally redeemed by the sacrifice of Christ.
 4. We are all equally valuable to kingdom work: These things do not require wealth or position of influence:
 - a) Serve where you are planted

- b) Bless people with the gifts God has given you
 - c) Glorify God in all things
 - 5. Those who are important in this world as expected to glorify God with the influence and platform you have been given
 - 6. Those who are seemingly less important in this world, are also expected to use their platform to reach those around them.
 - 7. Your ministry and mine will look very different, but one is not more important than the other.
 - 8. SO, conclusion here:
 - a) Don't show partiality
 - b) Because you HOLD FAITH in the Lord
 - c) Because all are valued in the kingdom
 - d) Because all of us are in the ministry of the LORD of GLORY
 - B. Partiality is the response of the flesh
 - 1. The FLESH will lead us down a path that is dishonoring to God.
 - 2. [1Jo 2:15-17 ESV] 15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world--the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life--is not from the Father but is from the world. 17 And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.
 - a) The Great contrast presented here: Love of the world vs. Love for God
 - b) This is the battle we have in the flesh, and the flesh will always lead us astray.
 - 3. Do not deceive yourself, own this truth and walk in this truth.
 - 4. Battle the culture we live in that gives prominence to some, and devalues others.
 - 5. Illustration: Highest paid state employees in Texas:
 - a) Who would you think? Governor? Director of Teachers Retirement System? Nope...
 - b) Mike Elko, Head coach at Texas A&M, 7 million a year
 - c) Steve Sarkisian, Head coach at University of Texas, 10.3 million per year
 - d) Teachers in Texas make between 37 and 94k per year.
 - e) It would seem that we value things that are less important than we do things that are ultra important.
 - 6. Conclusion, be aware of your misplaced value on things that don't matter for eternity.
 - C. The flesh produces evil thoughts
 - 1. [Jer 17:7-10 ESV] 7 "Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD. 8 He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit." 9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it? 10 "I the LORD search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds."
 - 2. Be warned about becoming a judge, and know the battle of the flesh
 - 3. Being DOERS of the WORD and not HEARERS only hits different when James, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, speaks to our own evil desires of partiality.
 - 4. Our ministry should be marked by the acceptance of other humans by the value God has placed on them, and He created all of us for His glory!
- IV. Close
- A. Know your value
 - B. Know why you are valued
 - C. Know others are valued as well
 - D. Its for the sake of the gospel!