

Faith That Works
“The Sin of Snobbery”
James 2:1-13

Introduction- Discrimination is one of the great social tensions of our times. We have discrimination based on race; religion; social status; gender. It is not surprising that such conduct is happening in a sinful and selfish world. Yes, what is surprising, and sad; is that it's not uncommon to find this *sin of snobbery* in the Christian church.

So James commands the Christians of his day (chp. 21) or the New English Bible, “*My brothers believing as you do in our Lord Jesus Christ, who reigns in glory, you must never show snobbery.*”

James is saying you cannot be a believer in Jesus Christ and at the same time practice partiality. True faith that is centered in Jesus Christ transcends social distinctions. One of the best test of the reality of our faith is how you treat people.

If you are a mature Christian you will:

1. Be patient in the testings of life.
2. Stand firm in the face of temptations.
3. Be a doer of the Word, not hearers only.
4. You will not show partiality.

I. A Command to Forsake Partiality, vs. 1

James is saying here that partiality and faith in Christ are mutually exclusive. However, the tense of the verb in the original suggest that these believers were trying to follow Jesus, yet at the same time showing acts of partiality.

Ask, *what is respect of persons?* It's from two Greek words *face* and *receive*. It's paying special attention to someone because of outward appearance? It's showing favor to persons on account of external advantages such as, position; possessions; power; or popularity.

Why did James mention Jesus?

- He's the object of our faith!
- He's the “Glory”.

Jesus did not show “respect of persons.” Even his enemies admitted that He was no respecter of persons, Luke 20:21.

Jesus didn't look at the outward appearance; He looked at the heart.

- Illus.:
- The poor widow who gave her mite (Luke 20).
 - The sinful woman at the well of Sychar.
 - The rich Zacchaeus

Even Jesus himself was misjudged.

The religious experts in Christ's day judged Him by their human standards, and they rejected Him. He came to the wrong city, Nazareth of Galilee. He was not a graduate of their accepted schools. He did not have the official approval of the people in power. He had no wealth. His followers were a nondescript mob and included publicans and sinners. Yet He was the very glory of God! No wonder Jesus warned the religious leaders, "*Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgement*" (John 7:24NIV).

So we need to look at others through the eyes of Jesus!

If a person is a Christian, "*Christ lives in them.*"

If a person is not a Christian, "*Christ died for them.*"

II. An Illustration of Partiality, vv. 24

"*For if there came unto your assembly*" it's a hypothetical case!

Note verse 4, the application, (two things).

- Illus.:
- 1739, the church in England, John Wesley.
 - 100 years later, William Booth.
 - Calvary Chapel's Chuck Smith, no bare feet!
 - Story of woman who wanted to join a church.
 - CCSB

Why do we find favoritism in the church?

- 1. We are carnal.**
- 2. We believe the rich can help our cause.**
- 3. We want the world's standard of success.**
- 4. We falsely assume that the rich person is smarter, more disciplined, or just a superior person.**

James says that's "evil reasoning" (vs. 4).

Proverbs 28:21, “To show partiality is not good.”

Proverbs 22:2, “Rich and poor have this in common; the Lord is the maker of them all.”

III. The Arguments Against Partiality, vv. 5-13

Five reasons not to commit the sin of snobbery.

1. It’s inconsistent with faith in Christ (vs. 1).

2. It’s inconsistent with God’s action (vs. 5).

- a. God has chosen the poor of the this world
- b. “Rich in faith”
- c. Heirs of the kingdom

James is saying God does not discriminate against the poor.

“A class church is not a church that magnifies the grace of God,” Warren Wiersbe.

3. It’s inappropriate in view of the rich man’s actions (vv. 6-7).

4. It’s breaking God’s law (vv. 8-11).

Why the royal law?

- a. It comes from the King.
- b. It controls all other laws.
- c. It sets you free.

5. We shall be judged (vv. 12-13)

The doctrines that form the foundation for how I should treat people:

1. The Deity of Christ (vs. 1).

2. The Grace of God (vs. 5)

3. The Word of God (vs. 8)

4. The Judgement of God (vv. 12-13).

Salvation. God sees the real you!

