

SERMON OUTLINE James 2:1-7

Show No Partiality

LOVE IN DISCIPLESHIP

SHOW NO PARTIALITY

Not Showing Partiality Is Part of What it Means to Have Faith in Jesus (1)

The Desire to Show Partiality Comes from Evil Thoughts (4)

We Must Not Show Partiality Because God Does Not Show Partiality (5)

Showing Partiality Is Dishonorable to Lowly People (6a)

We Must Not Show Partiality Because It Makes No Sense (6b)

We Must Not Show Partiality Because Those You Are Favoring Are Blaspheming God (7)

SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

MAIN POINT

At least some of James's readers were tempted to favor the rich and James wanted to put a stop to it. Because James loved them and wanted them to love one another well, he commanded them, "Show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ...". To help his readers obey, he also shared six reasons why they must not play favorites.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What were your thoughts on the text/sermon? What most stood out? How was it helpful? Confusing?
2. Have you thought much about what love is? What do you think of the definition that Pastor Dave gave in the sermon ("The affectionate pursuit of that which is best (God) for another")?
3. Is it easy for you to see the importance God's Word places on love for Christians? Is it easy to see why that is the case? Is it easy for you to love others? When is it hardest?
4. What would you do if some type of celebrity, rich person, or person of significant influence started attending Grace? What if it were your athletic, musical, or even theological hero? Would you treat them any differently than you treat a "shabbier" looking visitor from town? In other words, are you ever tempted to show favoritism to someone or some group of people? If so, why?
5. Does the idea of "receiving face" help you understand what it means to be partial/impartial?
6. Which of James's six reasons Christians ought not show favoritism stands out to you the most and why ((1) Because it is part of what it means to hold the faith in Jesus, (2) Because the desire to do so comes from evil thoughts, (3) Because God does not show partiality, (4) it is dishonorable to lowly people, (5) Because it makes no sense, and (6) Because those you are favoring blaspheme God)?
7. In what way do you most clearly see the greatness of God in this passage?

AREAS OF APPLICATION

8. Spend some time in the Bible, identifying specific ways God has called you to love the people in your life.
9. Find one new way to give someone something that is best for them (love them) this week. Consider specifically sharing the gospel with someone who is in a difficult spot.
10. Find a specific way to care for someone who might be described as "shabby" this week? Perhaps have someone over for a meal or out for coffee.
11. Spend some time reflecting on the impartiality of God and its implications for Christians and non-Christians.
12. Create something that honors God's impartiality and reminds you to imitate Him in it.
13. What is one specific thing you mean to do differently in the power of the Spirit as a result of the things you saw or heard in this text or sermon?

PRAYER POINTS

14. Adoration. Praise God for being impartial. Praise God for judging perfectly in all things.
15. Confession. Confess favoritism you've shown. Confess ways that you've failed to be loving. Confess indifference to the poor.
16. Thanksgiving. Thank God for making you rich in heaven. Thank God for our perfect example in Jesus. Thank God for a church that helps you know what love is and helps you live it out.
17. Supplication. Ask God to make us a more impartial church—with one another and the world around us. Ask God to help the poor and hurting. Ask God to bless our missionaries as many of them deal with the "shabby".