

# JAMES STUDY

## CHAPTER 2:1-4

MEDIA REFERENCE NUMBER SM-301 JUNE 21, 1998

### THE TITLE OF THE MESSAGE:

“The Folly of Favoritism”

### THE THEME OF THE BOOK:

James 1:22

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only,  
- deceiving yourselves.

**INTRODUCTION: The Reading of The Text**

**vv. 1-4**

James 2:1-4

My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality. <sup>2</sup> For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes, <sup>3</sup> and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, "You sit here in a good place," and say to the poor man, "You stand there," or, "Sit here at my footstool," <sup>4</sup> have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?

### The Summation of the Text

James here boldly confronts us regarding a real and dangerous poison that exists in the human heart: Favoritism! He reminds us that we are brethren one of another and the calling that the Lord has given unto us is that we should “Love One Another” - the fact is that where favoritism is, love is being neglected.

All of us have suffered or are currently suffering from the pain and isolation that favoritism brings when we are the ones who are being neglected by it.

Favoritism breeds cliques, groups, and acceptance standards which are opposite to the teaching of the Bible...

Cliques are evil, selfish, wrong and hurtful  
The Illustration of the Beautiful Church

## (The woman, the pastor, and Jesus)

1 Corinthians 11:18a

For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions (clicks) among you,

Choosing sides on the playground to deciding who will you be eating dinner with

## James Gives us a Command in Verse 1 and an Illustration in Verses 2-4

### 1.) The Dangers of Showing Partiality

vv. 1

James 2:1

**My brethren**, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, **with partiality**.

### The Dangers of Showing Partiality

#### 1a.) Partiality Undermines **The** Faith of Christ

vv.1a

**My brethren**, do not hold **the** faith of our Lord Jesus Christ,

### “The Faith”

The Greek definite article ‘**THE**’ is here, NOT YOUR faith, but **THE** faith

\* **the** faith                      grk    3588   ho (ho);  
the def. article; the. This very one, that one of ones,  
‘the’ making the noun the very most important

**The** Faith **that** God Gives  
to all those who have trusted in Christ

Ephesians 2:8

For by grace you have been saved through faith,  
and that not of yourselves; it is **the** gift of God, -- the gift being Faith

How Can We Hold **THE** faith with a Favoritism when it is **THE** gift?

The instruction is, we tend to hold faith with partiality

\* do not **hold** grk 3361 me (may);  
**STOP HOLDING IT** -- James is under the understanding that favoritism is imbedded in the heart.

# Favoritism / Partiality

Challenges - **THE** faith of our Lord Jesus Christ

THE faith, is not partial - STOP being Partial

John 6:37

"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

**This is a serious problem in life,  
with Christians - and it's killing churches**

Jesus Warned

Mark 12:38-39

Then He said to them in His teaching, "Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, love greetings in the marketplaces, <sup>39</sup> "the best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts,

Because Selfishness is Christlessness

James 1:22

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only,  
deceiving yourselves.

Romans 2:13

(for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified;

The Dangers of Showing Partiality

1b.) Partiality Robs **The** Glory which is Christ

vv. 1b

Do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory,

## our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory,

**Matthew 25:31**

"When the Son of Man comes in **His glory**, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of **His glory**."

**John 1:14**

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, **the glory** as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

**2 Corinthians 4:6-7**

For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of **the glory** of God in the face of Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup> But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.

**Colossians 1:27**

To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

## Partiality Robs Christ of His Glory and Focuses it upon Another

**Hebrews 1:1-3a**

God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup> has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; <sup>3</sup> who being the brightness of **His glory** and the express image of His person...

## Jesus is The Glory

When we show favoritism, giving glory to another, we are stealing from Him

Jesus is The Hope • Jesus is The Way • Jesus  
is The Truth • Jesus is The Life •  
Jesus is the Glory

To hold THE faith (say you're Christian) and be a respector of persons is to bring the THE faith into question and to steal from Jesus Christ

### The Dangers of Showing Partiality

1c.) Partiality Hides **The** Truth from the Christian

vv. 1c

Do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory,  
**with partiality.** - respect to persons

## O' How Refreshing Christianity is to Be

\* **with partiality** grk 4382 prosopolepsia (pros-o-pol-ape-see'-ah);  
to pick and choose based upon the face. To select based upon appearance. Favoritism: to respect of the right face or looks

### In the plural sense

(NIV)

My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ,  
**don't show favoritism.**

(NAS)

My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with  
**{an attitude of} personal favoritism.**

## To Accept a Person based Upon How they Look

This is what we fight against - We Do This, says James

### Peter Caught On

**Peter at Cornelius' House**

Acts 10:34-35

34 Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "**In truth I perceive** that God shows no partiality. 35 "But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.

The Fact is  
Partiality Hides **The** Truth from the Christian

Deuteronomy 1:17

'You shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small as well as the great; you shall not be afraid in any man's presence, for the judgment is God's.

## 2.) Partiality and The Damage it Causes

vv. 2

For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes, <sup>3</sup> and you **pay attention** to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, "You sit here in a good place," and say to the poor man, "You stand there," or, "Sit here at my footstool," <sup>4</sup> have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?

### Partiality and the Damage it Causes

#### 2a.) Appearance, It Effects the Things We See

vv. 2

<sup>2</sup> For if there should come into your **assembly** a man with **gold rings**, in fine **apparel**, and there should also come in a poor man in **filthy** clothes

The early church was mainly  
made up of slaves and dispersed Jews  
Most were poor and destitute

#### 1 Corinthians 1:24-26

but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.  
25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. 26 For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not **many** mighty, not many noble, are called.

#### Verse 2

a man with gold rings, in fine apparel,

\* gold rings grk 5554 chrusodaktulios (khroo-sod-ak-too'-lee-os);  
having golden fingers. More than one. Golden joints  
the rings of nobility or the wealthy

The term, "costume jewelry" has its origin in Rome.  
You could rent jewelry to be worn if you wanted to impress  
people at a function

## Verse 2

in fine apparel

- \* in fine apparel grk 2986 lampros (lam-pros');  
radiant; magnificent or sumptuous (in appearance):  
bright, gorgeous.

1 Peter 3:3

Do not let your adornment be merely outward-- arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel--

Let Me Say,

If a poor man treats a wealthy man evil because of his envy or jealousy -  
that poor man is guilty

The Point is:

To God, whatever gold or silver we do wear - it's all costume jewelry to Him

### Partiality and The Damage it Causes

2b.) Attitude, It Demonstrates who we Really are vv. 3

<sup>3</sup> and you **pay attention** to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, "You sit here in a good place," and say to the poor man, "You stand there," or, "Sit here at my footstool,"

- \* **pay attention** grk to look upon with envy. To be in awe of their clothing

1 Samuel 16:7

But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

## What do you wear to Worship?

The point is: don't come to church if you want people to  
notice your apparel

## Attitude

### Verse 3

and say to the poor man, "You stand there," or, "Sit here at my footstool,"

Ushers, where do the smelly people sit?  
Church, where does the gang member or the prostitute sit?

**THEIR BREATH SMELLS / CLOTHES STINK**

## What's your attitude?

### Partiality and The Damage it Causes

2c.) Accountability, What is Our Reaction

vv. 4c

<sup>4</sup> have you not shown **partiality** among yourselves,  
and become judges with **evil thoughts**?

\* **partiality**      **grk** 1252 diakrino (dee-ak-ree'-no);  
to separate from, to withdraw from, to discriminate, to hesitate

\* **evil thoughts**      **grk** repulsive, injurious thoughts

**To Hesitate, then to Form a Distinction,  
group, or click**

He's a jock - he's a skater - he's a surfer  
She's a prep - she's a goth - she's a punk

Who's Going to be the one to reach the surfer,  
the goth, the prep?

Christian,



We work with the people we do  
because He wants us to reach them

Christian,  
We go to school with the people we do  
because he wants us to reach them

Christian,  
We bump into the people we do  
because he wants us to reach them

## A Personal Story of Mine

All my life, I stuttered when I tried to speak  
It was truly a handicap

I cannot be laughed at any more...  
I cannot be put to shame any more

Hebrews 12:2-3

looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. <sup>3</sup>  
For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.

## How do we reach them?

1 Corinthians 9:22

to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.