

October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Undivided Devotion: The Letter of James

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### **James 2:1-13: Playing Favorites**

*“My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory.”*

(James 2:1)

#### **1. Recognize the Pull of Favoritism (vv. 2-4)**

#### **2. Resist the Pull of Favoritism (vv. 5-13)**

- **By living in light of Christ’s Reversal (vv. 5-7)**

- **By living under Christ’s Rule (vv. 8-13)**

**Getting Started:**

1. What was helpful to you in this week's sermon? What didn't you understand?

**Going Deeper:**

2. In verse 1, James echoes Leviticus 19:15, saying we must not show favoritism or partiality. God instructed the Israelites to both (a) be impartial in judgment, and (b) show special concern for the vulnerable. How do we square these commands? What does this reveal about our tendency towards favoritism?
3. What, according to James, is the fundamental problem with favoritism (v. 4)?
4. In his argument against favoritism, James says that God has chosen the poor to be rich in faith (v. 5). Does this mean that only the poor can be saved (see James 1:9-11; 2:2-4)? If not, then what is James' point (see Luke 6:20; 1 Corinthians 1:26-28)? By contrast, who are the "*rich*" James is referring to here (see also James 5:1-6)? How should the dynamics of Christ's Kingdom reshape our view of the "*rich*" and "*poor*"?
5. In verses 8-13, James grounds his argument against favoritism in the teaching of Jesus. How does favoritism violate Christ's law of love (vv. 8-9)? How does favoritism (a divided view of people) reveal a divided view of God's law (vv. 10-11)? Why will those who live in light of Christ's coming judgment resist favoritism, and display mercy (vv. 12-13; see Matthew 5:7; 18:32-35; Luke 6:36)?

**Application:**

6. How did James' readers show favoritism (vv. 2-4)? Why would they act in this way? Jeff listed a number of the subtle ways we can show favoritism to others. Which of these stood out to you? Why? Can you think of other ways you discriminate or show partiality?
7. Jeff noted that resisting the pull of favoritism requires us to proactively seek out the vulnerable and disadvantaged. Why is this the case? What are some ways you currently do this? How would like to grow in this area?
8. What's one thing from this week's sermon that you can apply to your life?