

James 2:1-13 **Avoid Partiality**

Partiality toward the rich

¹ My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality. 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, ³ 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," ⁴ have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?

God Has Chosen the Poor

⁵ Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him? ⁶ But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts? ⁷ Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called?

Partiality and the Law

⁸ If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well; ⁹ but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.

Offend in one point – Guilty of All

¹⁰ For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. ¹¹ For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.

¹² So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. ¹³ For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

NKJV

Facts Revealed:

Partiality toward the rich [James 2:1-4]

- ✚ My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality.
- ✧ James is writing to Jews dispersed among the nations of the world.
- ✧ The subject is the common faith of the Believers.
- ✧ James goes a step beyond the common reference to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah of Israel, and identifies Jesus as the Lord of Glory, placing the understanding on the divine side and His place in Glory seated at the right hand of God on His throne in Heaven.
- ✧ In living our faith, believers are commanded not to show partiality to the rich.
- ✧ The illustration presented is the contrast between the well dressed rich man invited to a place of honor, and the poor man in (cheap or shabby) clothing placed in an inferior humble place.
- ✧ By showing partiality to the rich we have become judges with evil thoughts.

God Has Chosen the Poor [James 2:5-7]

- ✚ James then points out that God has chosen the **poor of this world** to be **rich in faith** and **heirs of the Kingdom** promised to **those who love Him**.
- ✧ The poor and needy were the focus of much of the Lord's ministry. [Isaiah 61:1-2, Matthew 11:4-6, Luke 4:18-19, Luke 7:22-23]

- ✧ The poor who stand in faith have equal inheritance in the Kingdom of God. [[Matthew 5:3, 21:31-32, Luke 6:20](#)]
- ✧ Showing partiality to the rich, you have dishonored the poor man.
- ✧ James points out that it is the rich who oppress the people and drag them into court.
- ✧ The wicked rich blaspheme the noble Name of the Lord by which we are called.

Partiality and the Law [[James 2:8-9](#)]

- ✧ James identifies the guiding commandment as the Royal Law: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."
- ✧ If we keep that law we will do well, for as Jesus said; "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." [[Matthew 22:37-40](#)]
- ✧ James then makes the sin connection, if we show partiality we commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.

Offend in one point – Guilty of All [[James 2:10-13](#)]

- ✧ For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.
- ✧ James is following the relationship with the law that Jesus taught, by tightening the law so tight that it is impossible for anyone to feel that they are innocent of sin.
- ✧ Jesus did the same thing in His Sermon on the mount. [[Matthew chapters 5-7](#)]
- ✧ For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.
- ✧ Then like Paul, James said these instructions are to be taught and followed.
- ✧ We are to act as ones who will be judged by the law of liberty.
- ✧ James has been making the point that the Royal Law of Love prevails with impartiality as the law of Liberty by which we are judged. [[James 2:12, Matthew 25:31-46](#)]
- ✧ Judgment is without mercy to those who show no mercy.
- ✧ Praise God, Mercy triumphs over judgment.