

“Partiality”

James 2:1-13

Introduction

If a man walks into church in tattered clothing and receives less favorable treatment than a man wearing a nice suit, the sin of partiality has just taken place. Partiality is illegitimate distinction between individuals or different groups of people. The root of partiality comes from a spirit of elitism – when someone thinks more of themselves than they ought to. This self-centered view can cause unrighteous discrimination against people, resulting in evil. Partiality is a sin which is especially dangerous in the church because it affects how believers function in relationship with each other.

Partiality is flawed thinking and the result of a flawed spiritual value system. It results in division socially, politically, racially and regarding gender. Partiality does not emanate from God but from culture and results in a false thinking, a false view of other people and ultimately a flawed ministry system. You cannot minister with the heart of God when you are simultaneously attempting to include the standards of culture.

Because the believer must correct unrighteous partiality, it is important to remember God’s view of dealing with people. First, remember the royal law of Scripture: Scripture must reign supreme. God’s Word commands us to love people and to treat them without impartiality. Second, remember the author of Scripture. Scripture is not just about rules and regulations. The Word is given to us by a God who loved all people enough to send His son to die for their sins. Third, partiality is corrected by remembering the judgment of Scripture. The sin of partiality will not be permitted without judgment. God will judge those who do not obey Him and do not operate according to His Word. Then, how should a believer operate when it comes to treating people correctly? A believer should love people and show mercy to those who cannot do anything in return.

Getting Started

1. What are some examples of partiality in our world today?
2. In what settings (office, school, church, etc.) have you witnessed partiality?

Let's Get Personal

1. When have you personally participated in the sin of partiality? How has it affected you and those around you?
2. When have you used man's value system rather than God's value system to view people? How has that affected your relationships with people? With God?
3. How has the royal law of Scripture corrected you as you have operated in the sin of partiality?

Take the Next Step

1. How can you live your life differently remembering the judgment of Scripture regarding the sin of partiality?
2. After hearing this week's message, are you convicted of showing partiality to a certain person or group of people? How will you operate differently this week as a result?
3. Want to go deeper? Take time to look at the following passages: 1 Peter 1:6-9; Hebrews 10:35-39; 2 Corinthians 1:3-11; Isaiah 43:1-2; John 16:33; Romans 12:12; 1 Peter 5:10; 1 Thessalonians 5:18; Romans 5:3-5; 2 Corinthians 11:3,13-15; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Peter 2:9; Psalm 50:15; Genesis 39:6-18; Matthew 4:1-11, 6:13, 26:41; Luke 8:13; 1 Corinthians 7:5; Genesis 3:1-6; 1 Peter 2:1-2; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18; Psalm 139:23-24; 1 John 3:16-18; Luke 10:25-37; Romans 7:22; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 5:11-14; John 8:31-32; Luke 8:4-15; Galatians 2:11-20, 3:28-29; John 4:1-42; Numbers 12:1-16; Ephesians 2:11-22; 1 Corinthians 1:26; Romans 12:16; Malachi 2:9; Acts 10:34; Deuteronomy 24:19; 2 Chronicles 19:7; Romans 10:12; Mathew 23:1-12; Acts 6:1-6; Romans 14:1-12

Renew Your Mind

"⁹But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the Law as violators. ¹⁰For whoever keeps the whole Law, yet stumbles in one point, has become guilty of all."

James 2:9-10
