

James 2:1-13
A Social Gospel

Re-Read:

Re-read this section of James (2:1-13). Have you ever been the recipient of being overlooked in a social setting because of your social class? How is this inconsistent with the message of the gospel in the church?

Review:

Outline from Sunday's Sermon

- I. Principle (v. 1)
- II. Picture (vv. 2-4)
- III. Principles (vv. 5-11)
 - A. God does not show partiality (vv. 5-6a)
 - B. The rich do show partiality (vv. 6b-7)
 - C. The law does not show partiality (vv. 8-11)
- IV. Promise (vv. 12-13)
 - A. Future judgment
 - B. Future mercy

Respond:

- 1) James has been focusing our attention on trials in life in the first chapter. Here, he changes direction and looks more at the behavior in the church. Why do you think the sin of partiality follows his discussion on trials? What do you think the link is between this section (2:1-13) and the idea of being "unstained" (1:27)?
- 2) How does God *not* show partiality? See Deuteronomy 1:7; Proverbs 24:23; John 1:12-13; and Romans 2:9-11.
- 3) How would you define "partiality" per this section?
- 4) Why was there preference shown to the rich person in the illustration? What does this say about our perception of the poor, the rich, and ourselves?
- 5) Read Matthew 5:3 in relationship to James 2:5-6. How do you define "poor in spirit"?
- 6) How do the rich take advantage of the poor in our society?
- 7) Why do you think James goes to the Law in vv. 8-11? What point is he making?
- 8) Why does James end this section the way he does in vv. 12-13?

Reflect:

Of all of the sins we consider in our lives, it is likely that the sin of partiality is rather low on the list. Jerry Bridges called sins like this "respectable sins." They typically go unnoticed and, thus, they are not eliminated from our lives and our churches.

Take some time this week and allow the Holy Spirit to search your heart and show you ways in which you show partiality to social classes of people. How will this be corrected?