

Study Guide #3

Virtual Study of James – James 2:1-13

Bellevue Church of Christ – Summer 2020

Continued discussion from Chapter 1:19-17...Another example of how to practically apply the Word of Truth (v. 1:22)

I. The Prohibition (01-04)

These two concepts are inconsistent with each other

Hypothetical Illustration

What is the **PERCEIVED** distinction between the rich and the poor described here?

Two Arguments why Partiality should be Avoided:

What are some ways in which we show favoritism?

II. The Social Argument (05-07)

- Mark 10:17-27
- I Cor 1:26-29

(7) If we show partiality to the "rich" - what action are we supporting?

What qualities make us ineffective judges?

1. We are flawed
2. Our sight is limited

III. The Moral Argument (08-13)

(8) Why is this the "royal law?"

What is the **TRUE** distinction between the rich and the poor described here?

Three questions about the "rich?"

- Lev 19:18
- Matt 22:36-40
- Rom 13:8-10

¹ My brothers, **show no partiality** as you **hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ**, the Lord of glory.

² **For** if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your **assembly**, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in,

³ and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, "You sit here in a good place," while you say to the poor man, "You stand over there," or, "Sit down at my feet,"

⁴ *have you not then* made distinctions among yourselves and **become judges with evil thoughts?**

⁵ Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are **poor in the world** to be rich in faith and **heirs of the kingdom**, which he has promised to those who love him?

Matt 25:31-46

⁶ But you have *dishonored* the poor man. Are not **the rich** the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court?

⁷ Are they not the ones who **blaspheme the honorable name** by which you were called?

⁸ If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "**You shall love your neighbor as yourself**," you are doing well.

⁹ But if you show partiality, you are committing **sin** and are convicted by the law as transgressors.

¹⁰ **For** whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it.

¹¹ **For** he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.

¹² **So** speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty.

¹³ **For** judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

Hyperbole to make a point...

What does this say about the weight of sin?

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Questions for Discussion

The Condemnation of Partiality

What prohibition does James give to begin chapter 2? How is partiality inconsistent with having faith in Jesus? (v. 1)

What hypothetical situation does James use as an illustration? How do their appearances differ? Their treatment? In what way does showing partiality cause us to become judges with evil thoughts? (vv. 2-4)

Does this type of activity happen today within the church? Within our daily lives? What are some specific ways in which we show favoritism? (vv. 2-4)

The Social Argument - (vv. 5-7; Mark 10:17-27; Matt 25:31-46; I Cor 1:26-29)

Why has God chosen the “poor in the world” to be “rich in faith?” (vv. 5-6)

Does this mean that all who are poor are “heirs of the kingdom?” (vv. 5-6)

In what ways can material wealth be a hindrance to faith? (vv. 6-7)

Why is this an effective argument against showing favoritism? (vv. 5-7)

The Moral Argument – (vv. 8-11)

Why is the command “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” described as the “royal law?” (vv. 8; Lev 19:18; Matt 22:36-40; Rom 13:8-10)

In what way does showing partiality violate the “royal law”? Why does this make one guilty of violating the entire law? How does he illustrate this point? (vv. 9-11)

Why is this an effective argument against showing favoritism? (vv. 8-11)

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The Prohibition

James 1:22 (ESV)

²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

The Social Argument

Mark 10:17-27 (ESV)

¹⁷ And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” ¹⁸ And Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. ¹⁹ You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and mother.’ ” ²⁰ And he said to him, “Teacher, all these I have kept from my youth.” ²¹ And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.” ²² Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. ²³ And Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How difficult it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!” ²⁴ And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said to them again, “Children, how difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.” ²⁶ And they were exceedingly astonished, and said to him, “Then who can be saved?” ²⁷ Jesus looked at them and said, “With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God.”

1 Corinthians 1:26-29 (ESV)

²⁶ For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, ²⁹ so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.

Matthew 25:31-46 (ESV)

³¹ “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. ³² Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. ³⁴ Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸ And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? ³⁹ And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ ⁴⁰ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’ ⁴¹ “Then he will say to those on his left,

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‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ ⁴⁴ Then they also will answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?’ ⁴⁵ Then he will answer them, saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ ⁴⁶ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

The Moral Argument

Leviticus 19:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.

Matthew 22:36-40 (ESV)

³⁶ “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” ³⁷ And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰ On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

Romans 13:8-10 (ESV)

⁸ Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹ For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁰ Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.