



## Lesson 4: Spiritual Snobbery (2:1-12)

There is the place of worship where they were regularly meeting. As they gathered week to week some would take the good seats and some the lower seats. One day a rich man enters all embroidered with gold and heavily laden with jeweled rings. The regular attendees welcome this obviously well-off man and lead him up to the best seats in the house. Soon after, a poor man enters who is likewise a stranger to the regular church goers. He is dressed in squalid garb and appears to be rough around the edges. With some contempt of gesture or tone one of the church members points this dirty man to a remote place in the building or bids him to sit below the rich man's stool on the ground. In this way the early church was doing homage to the pomp and wealth of the world as they despised the poor.

The Spirit of God allows what James has seen to bring us a message for our day. God is simply saying in this text that all people are \_\_\_\_\_ to Him. The plague of \_\_\_\_\_ has swept across the culture like a tsunami and even the church is being influenced. In the wake of this tragedy we must take a stand and remember that because people matter to God you should avoid the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

### FAVORITISM IS \_\_\_\_\_ WITH THE CHRISTIAN'S FAITH

James uses two key thoughts to demonstrate the inconsistency of partiality:

- " \_\_\_\_\_ " – speaks of the equality of our position
- " \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ " – speaks of the excellence of Christ's person

#### A. Favoritism is inconsistent with the \_\_\_\_\_ we enjoy in Christ (2:1)

One great function of Christianity is to create a sphere in which there are no walls that separate and divide groups of people. "All are \_\_\_\_\_ within God's house." The *equality* that James advocates for as he opens this chapter is the foundation of the admonition with which he will spend the next 10 verses elaborating on.

#### B. Favoritism is inconsistent with the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ (2:1)

In comparison with the glory and weightiness of Christ we are all but wretches. A true pure faith in the "Lord of Glory" is \_\_\_\_\_ with the entire spirit of snobbery that is the "norm" in most churches.

### FAVORITISM IS \_\_\_\_\_ WITH THE CHRISTIAN'S CALLING

"Of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." (Acts 10:34)

#### A. It is illogical when we consider what God is doing \_\_\_\_\_ (2:5)

God chose the poor rather than the rich to possess spiritual means in His kingdom. From the beginning the message of Christianity has always been a message to the poor. Even Christ said in Luke 4:18 "*He has anointed me to preach the good news to the \_\_\_\_\_.*" How disgraceful is it then to put down one that God would promote, or exalt one that God would put down.

#### B. It is illogical when we consider how \_\_\_\_\_ has responded to God's grace (2:6-7)

It is contrary to "the spirit of sound mind" to court the rich. To do so shows a deficiency of common sense. It indicates a lack of self-respect. And, above all, it was disloyal to the blessed Name.

### FAVORITISM IS AN \_\_\_\_\_ OF THE CHRISTIAN'S CHARACTER

Being a respecter of person's is so absolutely illogical that James – who pulls no punches – says it's an indictment that should never be taken lightly.

#### A. The spiritual snob has no \_\_\_\_\_ (2:8-9)

For Christians, one law controls our treatment of other men and James calls this law the "Royal Law." It is the law of love, and those who break this law have no love. We are to love our neighbor, *i.e.*, any one to whom we have it within our power to become helpful, even though it be a \_\_\_\_\_.

#### B. The spiritual snob breaks the whole \_\_\_\_\_ (2:10-12)

Even this! The most " \_\_\_\_\_ " sin breaks the whole law of God. All sins become important in light of God's expectations for his people. There are no "socially acceptable" sins.

We all know well this statement from the Declaration of Independence:

*"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal and endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights."*

The Christian could should make this his declaration:

*"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created \_\_\_\_\_ and endowed by their creator with a \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ value."*

The most significant ministry you will have today is the ministry of reaching out and touching someone for eternity.