

James 2:1-9: 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 & fine clothing comes into your assembly, & a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, ³ & if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing & 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 & 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 & heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him? ⁶ But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, & 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 & are convicted by the law as transgressors.

Intro: We are thinking specifically about racial or ethnic justice and harmony today. Abortion (last week) and racism this week. Two of the United States' greatest sins. And no matter where you stand on current cultural debates about racism in the United States, this much is clear: you reap what you sow: **Galatians 6:7:** Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.

The United States has done a lot of sowing of sin & wickedness & fleshly, selfish, prideful, persistent partiality (racism) in the past (slavery; Jim crow; segregation; racial hatred and bigotry), & so she is reaping now what she has sown: much hatred, anger, disunity, & more racial partiality now.

There has been a great deal of hatred and partiality shown toward Asian Americans these days. Just this week: **News Article:** The widely shared video shows the attackers verbally & physically assaulting a teenage male freshman from Central High School. A female senior student who appears to be Asian or Asian American then comes into the shot & attempts to stop the assault, but she immediately becomes the next target. One of the attackers lunges at her, hitting her head against the train doors in the process. Other members of the assailant group follow suit & begin kicking & punching her as she lies on the ground. The attack caught on video follows an incident that happened on an express train in Olney on Tuesday. The same assailants reportedly poured a smoothie on a group of Asian male students & called them racial slurs. SEPTA police launched an investigation & are reportedly working with the Philadelphia Police Department & the school in the area. Police have identified the assailants in the video & found other victims – one female victim & three male victims in total – from Central High School as well as two more suspects. The four female suspects in the video, aged 13-16, await charges, including ethnic intimidation, aggravated assault, simple assault, recklessly endangering another person, & terroristic threats, SEPTA Transit Police Chief Thomas Nestel said at a press conference . . . While Nestel added that the attack was based on "ethnicity" & "ethnic slurs" were hurled at the victims, the incident was "unprovoked." . . . The mother of one of the suspects turned her daughter in after seeing the video go viral.

What does the Bible say?

1. The Command: As Christians Show No Partiality

James 2:1: My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory.

a. This is a command for Christians: "My brothers" – They hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ
Christians can do some messed up stuff! GOSPEL Question; We fight sin as those forgiven! Thanksgiving!

b. What is partiality?: Webster 1828: Inclination to favor one party or one side of a question more than the other; an undue bias of mind towards one party or side, which is apt to warp the judgment. Partiality springs from the will and affections, rather than from a love of truth and justice. (Being bias; showing favoritism; being prejudice; treating one person better than another; discrimination) Racism is a form of partiality!

- **Pastor:** Partiality means that you base your treatment of someone – or your attitude toward someone – on something that should not be the basis of how you treat them.

Moo: The Greek word [for partiality] literally means “receiving face.” The word was apparently invented by NT writers as a literal rendering of a Hebrew word for partiality. To “receive the face” means to make judgments about people based on external appearance. James applies this principle to differences in dress that reflect contrasting social/economic situations. But the Greek word here is plural – “acts of favoritism/[partiality]” – and this makes clear that the prohibition has wide-ranging application. We are not to make decisions about people based on any external factor – whether it be dress, color of skin, or general physical appearance. The OT repeatedly stresses that God himself is impartial, looking at the heart rather than the outside of a person, and God’s people are to imitate him in this respect. (1 Sam 16:7: For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.)

c. We are commanded to show no partiality: Followers of Jesus Christ are commanded by the Holy Spirit of God to show no partiality. We are commanded not to favor one party or person more than another. We are not to show favoritism; we are not to be prejudice. We are commanded to make decisions about others based on God’s truth and God’s justice.

d. Jesus is the Lord of glory: H. A. N. D. S. - Honors; Attributes; Names; Deeds; Seat

One of the honors: Glory: Psalm 29:1-2: Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. ² Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name

- **Titus 2:13:** waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ

R. C. Sproul: If there is anyone who has the right to turn His face away from sinners like us it is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory!

Thanksgiving: 2 Corinthians 8:9: For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.

Philippians 2:3-11: Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. ⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

2. We See An Illustration Of The Evil Of Partiality

James 2:2-4: For if a man wearing a gold ring & fine clothing comes into your assembly, & a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, ³ & if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing & 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 & become judges with evil thoughts?

Rich, well-dressed man & a poor, shabbily dressed man

You give the rich man special attention; You segregate them; You treat the poor man as lesser (sit at my feet)

You have made distinctions and have become judges with evil thoughts

- **Deut. 10:17-19:** For the LORD your God is God of gods & Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, & the awesome God, **who is not partial** & takes no bribe. He executes justice for the fatherless & the widow, & loves the sojourner, giving him food & clothing. Love the sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.

- **Deut. 16:18-20:** You shall appoint judges and officers in all your towns that the LORD your God is giving you, according to your tribes, and they shall judge the people with righteous judgment. ¹⁹ You shall **not pervert justice**.

You shall **not show partiality**, and you shall not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and subverts the cause of the righteous. ²⁰ Justice, and only justice, you shall follow, that you may live and inherit the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

- **Psalm 82:2-4:** How long will you judge unjustly and show **partiality** to the wicked? Selah ³ Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute. ⁴ Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.

- **Acts 10:34-35:** So Peter opened his mouth and said: "Truly I understand that **God shows no partiality**, ³⁵ but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him."

- **1 Peter 1:17-19:** And if you call on him as **Father who judges impartially** according to each one's deeds, **conduct yourselves with fear** throughout the time of your exile, ¹⁸ knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

We should not show partiality with regard to race or ethnicity. Which is exactly what Richard Allen faced: paper.

3. We See The Spiritual Riches Of The Poor

James 2:5-6: Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith & heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him? ⁶ But you have dishonored the poor man.

a. This does not mean that God doesn't save rich people: Abraham: Genesis 13:2: Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold; **Isaac: Genesis 26:12-14:** And Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold. The LORD blessed him, and the man became rich, and gained more and more until he became very wealthy. He had possessions of flocks and herds and many servants, so that the Philistines envied him. **Job; Joseph; Joseph of Arimathea: Matthew 27:57:** When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus; **Zacchaeus; Obviously there are rich people coming to the church James is addressing! Paul gives instructions for the rich: 1 Timothy 6:17-19:** As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

But it's hard for the rich to make it to heaven! Mark 10:23: 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!"

b. It does mean God has chosen a lot of poor people to be saved: 1) God has chosen: Thanksgiving!

God is not obligated to choose anyone! He would be right, just, good, & impartial to send everyone to hell!

- **Ephesians 1:3-6:** Blessed be the God & Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ even as **he chose us in him** before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy & blameless before him. In love ⁵ **he predestined us for adoption** through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

- **Romans 8:29-30:** For those whom **he foreknew he also predestined** to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰ And **those whom he predestined** he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

2) God chooses lots of poor people: 1 Corinthians 1:26-29: 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. 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; God chose what is low & despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.

Since God has chosen lots of poor people & loves them as His very own, you better be careful how you treat God's children!!!

Moo: Your attitude stands in contradiction to God's own evaluation, who honors the poor.

Since God has chosen lots of people from other nations who look different than you, you better be careful how you treat God's children from other ethnicities!!!

God has chosen you! What lavish love, service, and kindness should flow out of our hearts and lives to others!

4. We See The Spiritual Poverty Of The Rich People Who Are Oppressing Others

James 2:6-7: Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, & the ones who drag you into court? ⁷ Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called?

The Holy Spirit doesn't mean here that we should not love our enemies. But He does mean that the very ones who are being given preferential treatment here are the very ones who oppress and abuse and blaspheme God!

Moo: Favoritism toward the rich betrays a fawning, servile mentality – for rich people are the very ones who are persecuting the Christian community.

5. We See Partiality Contradicts The Second Greatest Commandment

James 2:8-9: 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 & are convicted by the law as transgressors.

Moo: Discrimination against the poor violates the demand of love for neighbor.

Leviticus 19:15-18: You shall do no injustice in court. You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor. You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, & you shall not stand up against the life of your neighbor: I am the LORD. You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but you shall reason frankly with your neighbor, lest you incur sin because of him. 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.

Luke 20:21: So they asked him, "Teacher, we know that you speak and teach rightly, and show no **partiality**, but truly teach the way of God."

Sinclair Ferguson: When I was helpless, Christ died for me.

When I was poor, He enriched me.

When I was tainted by sin, He threw His arms around me.

When I was unloved, He kissed me in His grace.

When I was naked, He clothed me in His garments.

When I was an orphan, He brought me to His own Father.

When I had no friends, He gave me His whole family.

When earth left me starving, He fed me with bread from heaven.

When nothing would satisfy my thirst, He gave me living water.

When I was in darkness, He gave me the light of life.

When I was lost, He found me.

When I was a stranger, He took me in.

When I was without hope, He gave me the hope of glory.

When I had nothing to give Him, He gave me everything He had.

And when I die, He will let me live with Him forever.

Christ Jesus Loves All And Shows No Partiality
Cares, Serves, And Gives With All Liberality
Saves From All Nations In Universality
Suffered God's Wrath And Took Our Fatality
Then Rose Up Alive Killing Death With Finality
So Trust In The Son Who Saves In Totality
He Makes Us All One From Each Nationality
In Christ Alone We Have Immortality
Empowered To Love In Truth And Vitality
So Put Others First With Impartiality
All For The King Who Is All Our Centrality
Our LORD And Our God Over All Principality!