



The Problem With Partiality

James 2:1-13

August 23, 2026

Pastor Vaughn

1. The prohibition against partiality (v.1)

- Partiality illustrated (v.v. 2-3)

2. The evil of partiality explained (v.v. 4-11)

- Partiality is evil because it replaces what matters to God with our own admiration of worldliness
- Partiality is evil because it dishonors those among the poor who God has chosen to be rich in faith and heirs of His kingdom
- Partiality is evil because it violates the royal law

3. The plan for being rid of partiality (v.v. 12-13)

James 2:1 My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism.

2 For if a man comes into your assembly with a gold ring and dressed in fine clothes, and there also comes in a poor man in dirty clothes,

3 and you pay special attention to the one who is wearing the fine clothes, and say, "You sit here in a good place," and you say to the poor man, "You stand over there, or sit down by my footstool,"

4 have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil motives?

5 Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?

6 But you have dishonored the poor man. Is it not the rich who oppress you and personally drag you into court?

7 Do they not blaspheme the fair name by which you have been called?

8 If, however, you are fulfilling 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 and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.

11 For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not commit murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but do commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.

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

13 For judgment will be merciless to one who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.

Application Questions

These questions are provided for your further study and application of today's sermon. Thoughtfully writing out the answers to these questions will help to drive home the point of today's study. It is also helpful when you are able to discuss your answers with others. For more information about Koinonia Groups at Heritage Church that utilize these questions as the basis for their discussion, please see Pastor Vaughn or e-mail Vaughn@hcgj.org.

1. In the message, Pastor Vaughn noted that James refers to Jesus as "our Lord Jesus Christ - the Glory." What does James's title for Jesus tell us about who He is?

Why is it significant in the context of the passage?

2. How would you define partiality?
3. Impartiality is part of God's character. Why is that important for us?
4. Thinking back on the message, what makes partiality a sin?
5. In what ways can partiality negatively impact the local church?
6. As we examine James's example of partiality in v.v. 2-3, the sin in view does not seem to be that the rich man was treated with honor, but rather that the poor man was not accorded the very same dignified treatment. Do you agree or disagree? Why?
7. What partiality is acceptable in the Lord's church? Before you answer, read Philippians 2:3

Here are some resources that may assist you in a deeper study of the truths presented in today's sermon. While Pastor Vaughn cannot endorse every concept presented in each book, he does believe these resources will be helpful in profitably thinking through today's topic.

Blomberg, Craig L. and Miriam J. Kawell. **Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament V 16**. Zondervan 2008.
Hughes, Kent R. **James, Faith That Works**. Crossway, 1991.
Lenski, Richard C.H., **The Interpretation to the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Epistle of James**. Augsburg Fortress, 1946, 2008.
MacArthur, John. **The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: James**. Moody Publishers, 1998.
Moo, Douglas J. **The Letter of James**. Intervarsity, 1985.
Varner, William. **The Book of James, A New Perspective**. Kress, 2010.
Zodihates, Spires. **The Work of Faith**. Eerdmans 1959.

Streaming of both the audio and video of today's sermon is available on the Heritage website (HCGJ.org) and App (Heritage GJ). The App can also be found on YouTube, RokuTV, AppleTV, GoogleTV, FireTV, and CarPlay. Podcasts for Heritage Church can also be found on your favorite provider.