

- I) V1-4 INTRO: My brethren do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ the Lord of
In this section James deals with a problem existing in the church
THE PROBLEM
- II) Catering to rich members of the congregation at the expense of the poor
- III) He had already alluded to this problem in ch 1:9-11
He encouraged the poor **to glory** in their exaltation
And he encouraged the rich **to glory** in their humiliation
- IV) The **poor** glory in the blessing of being saved and inheriting eternal glory
The **rich** glory in the voluntary humility shown by receiving of Jesus as their Savior
- V) In this portion James continues **with that thought** and develops it further
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT
- VI) We need to remember that God's intention for the church is **unity** of the spirit
Unity is something that is built on **love for God** and **love for others**
- VII) **Unity** is so important that Jesus prayed that we might have it
Jn 17:20-21 I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me
through their word; that they all **may be one**, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that
they also **may be one in Us**, that the world may believe that You sent Me.
- VIII) He didn't pray that the church would just agree with one another about everything
The church could be united, but be **wrong** about what they were **united around**
- IX) The church was to be one with **Jesus and the Father**
The things that they agreed with one another about needed to center **on Him**
The church needed to agree on **truth**, not what is **popularly accepted** as truth
- X) The unity of the church, **built** on and **living out** the gospel, was to attract the world
This could encourage the world to believe that God sent Jesus as Savior
FROM THE BEGINNING
- XI) **Unity in Jesus** was the earmark of the early church
- XII) **After the day of Pentecost**, the believers began to meet together, regularly
Ac 2:42 They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the
breaking of bread, and in prayers

- I) This **love** and **fellowship** was built on the **teachings** of Jesus, which united them
This was the result of what Jesus had prayed for: believers working together
WITH THIS IN MIND
- II) **Salvation** was not offered **only** to those who were financially well off but to all
THE FACT IS
- III) The early church was primarily made up of those **who were anything but rich**
1 Co 1:26 For you see your calling, brethren, that not many **wise** (learned; philosophers) according to **the flesh** (human standards), not many **mighty** (holding positions of power), not many **noble** (high born), are called.
- IV) In the early days, the church began having members who were in financial need
Ac 2:44-47 All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give **to anyone who had need**. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.
- V) It isn't that there **were no rich believers**, but that **there were very few**
- VI) The natural thing was for people to treat the wealthy differently than the poor
James makes it clear: favoring **the rich** over the poor is wrong and divisive
This was happening in the church and it needs to be addressed and dealt with
NOTICE HOW HE BRINGS CORRECTION
- VII) He begins by reminding them they are **brethren** (Lit, from the same womb)
This highlights **their unity in Christ**, which is founded on love for one another
LET ME DEVELOP THIS FOR A MOMENT
- VIII) **Again**: Unity in Jesus is something that should be carefully **safeguarded**
This is because Satan desires to drive a wedge between the family of God
- IX) If he succeeds in doing so, he undermines the work God intends to accomplish
Mk 3:25 And if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand.
- X) Because of this, **unity** is something that the church is commanded to **safeguard**
Eph 4:1-3 *I, therefore*, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep **the unity of the Spirit** in the bond of peace.

- I) When you are saved God becomes your Father, and *all* Christians are family
By believing the gospel and through the Spirit, we have become the church
1 Co 12:13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into **one body**--whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free--and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.
- II) Through salvation we are brought into a *spiritual* community: The Church
Because we are family, we are to love one another and respect one another
OBVIOUSLY
- III) In Christ **there are to be** no barriers: Financial, racial, cultural, or gender
As family we belong to each other, and are to love one another
Showing preference **always destroys** unity and produce strife
- IV) This kind of thing was happening in the church, and James addresses it
HE BEGINS
- V) V1 Do not hold **the faith** of our Lord Jesus Christ the Lord of glory **with partiality**
FIRST
- VI) Notice how James says do not hold **the faith** of our Lord Jesus Christ
The faith of the Lord Jesus Christ speaks of what **faith in Jesus** is to produce
HIS POINT
- VII) Trusting in Jesus does not produce favoritism or preference for certain people
NOTICE
- VIII) James says **our Lord Jesus Christ** because we all need Him as Savior
In writing this, James who **is Jesus' brother** is showing humility
If correction it is not with humility it is considered **criticism**, and may be rejected
- IX) **Correction** must be done with humility and love for the one needing correction
Gal 6:1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, you who are spiritual, restore such an one **in the spirit of meekness**; considering yourself, lest you also be tempted.
- X) By saying Jesus was also **his Lord**, he revealed a humble attitude to his readers
- XI) V1 Notice how he also refers to Jesus as the **Lord of Glory**
- XII) This reminds them of the Glory that filled the Tabernacle in the Wilderness
Ex 40:34-35 Then the cloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tabernacle of meeting, because the cloud rested above it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle

- I) **THOUGHT**: Jesus is the **Shekinah Glory** of God, made visible to man
Jn 1:14 And the Word became flesh and *dwelt among us*, and **we beheld His glory**, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.
- II) James is contrasting **the glory of man** (represented by **wealth**) to **the glory of God**
- III) **True glory** is not wealth or **all that money can buy** because **it is temporary** (V9-11)
1 Pe 1:24 because All flesh *is* as grass, and all the *glory of man* as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and its flower falls away
- IV) Man's **natural glory** is not eternal, and over time fades away
True glory is eternal and is something that we will have through Jesus
Ro 8:17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.
2 Co 3:18 we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from **glory to glory**, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.
- V) **Wealth** encourages false judgment, because it is based on **the external**, not internal
WITH THIS SAID
- VI) V1 We are not to hold the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ **with partiality** (favoritism)
We are not to favor **one person** over another, but care for others the same
Phil 2:3-4 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others **better (superior) than himself**. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.
Ro 12:10 *Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another*
NOTICE
- VII) He illustrates this by speaking of a rich man and a poor man entering into **church**
He refers to their congregation by using the word **assembly** (synagogue)
This reveals the Jewish origin as well as how the early church saw itself
- VIII) V2-4 For if there **should come** into your **assembly** (synagogue) a man with gold
He uses the word synagogue, the only time this speaks of a congregation
- IX) He says if **there should come** into your assembly (as a visitor)
HIS POINT

- I) You are showing preference to an unbeliever and disregarding a believer
Notice how he describes the rich man: **he is impeccably dressed**
- II) The very rich wore many expensive rings, and dressed in bright (gorgeous) colors
He wears a **Stuart Hughes Diamond Edition** Suit (\$778,290)
His **dress shirt** is a Brunello Cucinelli, valued at \$1,100.00
He is wearing a **Title of Work** tie that costs \$1,500.00
His **t-shirt** is a Louis Vuitton **designer t-shirt**, costing \$1,185.00
His watch is a **Patek Philippe** which starts at \$20,000 up to \$31 million
His **boxers** are (Neece) **Nice Laundry** cashmere, costing \$1,400.00
His socks are Brunello Cucinelli Cashmere Rib Knit, at \$580.00
His shoes are **Pimlico Unlined** \$1,590.00
- III) V2 The poor man comes in wearing **filthy** clothes
The word **filthy** is a Greek word that is translated foul, shabby
- IV) This illustrates how they treat **visitors** as well as how they treat **believers**
THE PRACTICAL QUESTION
- V) How we treat people?
- VI) **Often** the value someone ascribes to somebody else is built on outer appearances
By using **this** comparison, he encourages them not to be enamored **with wealth**
- VII) The fact is that God shows no partiality
Ps 62:9 Human beings are all like a puff of breath; great and small alike are worthless. Put them on the scales, and they weigh nothing; they are lighter than a mere breath.
- VIII) The rich and the poor have something in common: they both die
1 Ti 6:7 For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.
- IX) **Partiality** to the rich in opposition to the poor is to be rejected
Some churches sell VIP parking and seating for large donors
- X) James tells them not to allow their faith to be associated with such ungodliness
This kind of practice is sinful and to be rejected

- I) V3 You **pay attention** to the one wearing fine clothes and say **to him** You sit here in
The rich were being ushered to **preferred seating**
The usher found a comfortable place for the rich, and disrespected the poor
- II) This was something Jesus pointed out about the scribes and Pharisees
Mt 23:6 they love the place of honor at banquets and **the most important seats** in
the synagogues
- III) **Rich visitors** were given preferred seats but the poor were told to stand in the back
They were not given seats but were told to sit on the floor
HIS POINT
- IV) Don't cater to them simply because they may benefit you!
- V) We are not to *cater* to the rich, but we are not to **envy** and **resent** them either
- VI) It's wrong to treat **wealthy people** with disrespect simply because they have money
They inherited, earned, or invested and gained wealth: do not hate them for this
- VII) The key is to simply treat every one with **equal** consideration and respect
- VIII) V4 have you not shown partiality among yourselves and become judges with evil
What does he mean when he says judges with **evil thoughts**?
This speaks of judges **who reason wickedly**
- IX) These are Judges who say we will favor the rich, because they can benefit us
We will neglect the poor, because they cannot help us, nor can they hurt us
- X) I recently read of a woman who has been in congress for 38 years
Her salary is \$174,000.00 a year but today her net worth is \$413 million
- XI) God forbids preferential judgment
Lev 19:15 You shall do no injustice in judgment. You shall not be **partial to the poor** nor honor **the person of the mighty**. In righteousness you shall judge your neighbor
- XII) Justice is to be equal for all, both rich and poor and must be impartial
2 Chron. 19:7 Now let the fear of the LORD be upon you. Judge carefully, for with
the LORD our God there is no injustice or partiality or bribery.

- I) V5 Listen my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be
He is not exalting poverty over financial wealth
OBVIOUSLY
- II) Not every rich man is unsaved, and not every poor man is saved
The poor being spoken of is speaking of **Christians**, not the poor in general
- III) This is a contrast to make a point
The world generally chooses the wealthy, but God chooses the rich **in faith**
- IV) V5 James is not ignoring the reality of poverty, and that the poor have real needs
He is attacking the world's value system and worship of materialism and greed
Pr 13:7 There is one who makes himself rich, yet has nothing; and one who makes himself poor, yet has great riches.
FACT
- V) The poor Christian understands what it means to trust God for their **daily bread**
- VI) V5 And heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him
This is how our faith is visibly revealed: we look beyond what we have now
Ps 9:18 For the needy shall not always be forgotten; The expectation of the poor shall **not perish forever**.
- VII) V6 But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag
Dishonored: Insult; to treat with contempt and disdain
The poor believers were being taken to court by rich people, lording it over them
HIS REBUKE
- VIII) These are the kind of people that you are choosing to honor?
You honor popular singers who blaspheme Jesus and ridicule your faith
You honor actors who hate your values and rich people who openly hate you
FIRST
- IX) V6 They oppress you! They mistreat those who cannot defend themselves
Ps 10:2-3 The wicked in his pride persecutes the poor; Let them be caught in the plots which they have devised. For the wicked boasts of his heart's desire. He blesses the greedy and renounces the Lord
SECOND
- X) They drag the poor the poor into court to collect when they can't pay their debts
Pr 22:7: The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.

- I) V7 Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called
THIRD
- II) They consider Jesus to be worthless and faith in Him to be ridiculous
Since this is so, why in the world do you desire to be like them?
- III) V8-9 If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scriptures **You shall love your**
The royal law: An excellent and inspiring law given to us by King Jesus
Mt 22:35-40 Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."
- IV) **This command** is repeated six times in scripture (Lev 19:18)
HIS POINT
- V) Favoritism would not exist if you were truly loving one another as Christ loved you
Jn 15:12-13 This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.
- VI) In showing favoritism, you are breaking God's law
Ro 13:10 Love **does no harm** to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law
HE IS WRITING PRIMARILY TO BELIEVING JEWS
- VII) VI0-11 For whoever shall keep **the whole law** and yet stumble in one point he is
To break one precept is to defy God, who gave **all the precepts** of the Law
Gal 3:10 All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do **everything** written in the Book of the Law.
- VIII) You cannot excuse one sin by pointing to hundreds of acts of goodness
Why? Because the law of Moses is a unit, not individual commandments
- IX) It reveals and identifies sin, our sinful condition, and its penalty
Ro 7:7 What shall we say then? Is the law sinful? Certainly not! Nevertheless, I would not have known *what sin was* had it not been for the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, **You shall not covet**
Ro 6:23 For the wages of sin is death

- I) It only takes **one sin** to justify God's judgment upon you
This is why it is important to receive forgiveness for your sins
Heb 9:27-28 Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.
- II) V12 So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty
He used the term law of liberty in 1:25, another way of speaking of the gospel
- III) This speaks of God granting us His perfect love by saving us
The gospel reveals this love to us, and because of it we live in freedom
Jn 8:32 You shall know the truth and the truth will set you free!
PAUL WROTE THE CORINTHIANS
- IV) 2 Co 3:17 The Lord **is the Spirit** and where the Spirit of the Lord is, **there is freedom**
- V) Being judged by **the law of liberty** speaks of rejecting the freedom offered by Jesus
It is rejecting the gospel, and in doing so rejecting **forgiveness**
- VI) V13 For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy
Since Christians have experienced God's mercy, we are to extend it to other
If we do not, it reveals that we have not fully understood mercy shown to us
- VII) Mercy triumphs over judgment, meaning it has gained a victory over it
- VIII) We who have experienced God's mercy must learn to extend it to others
Mt 5:7 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy