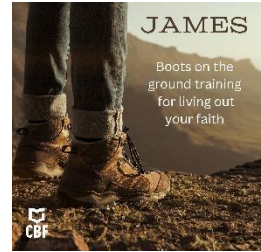


James 2:1-13 - Don't Play Favorites



1. "Partiality" defined (2:1-3)

- a. Partiality is an unfair bias in favor of one thing or person compared with another based on outward appearance (wealth, dress, influence, etc.)
- b. HOW do we see this today?
 - social, political, spiritual
- c. Example – rich v. poor (v.2-3)
 - Why is the rich man treated better in this example?
 - * It's easy to favor the one you secretly hope to benefit from!
 - * The rich often draw positive attention while the poor often go unnoticed or unwanted.

2. Results of showing partiality (v.4-13)

- a. We make ourselves a "judge" over them – tainted with sin (v.4)
 - Psalm 7:11 – God is the only judge who is not tainted by sin.
- b. Human partiality rarely agrees with God's view. (v. 5-7)
 - The Bible makes it clear that the poor and needy often respond to God more quickly than the wealthy and influential. (Matthew 9:24)
 - God has a different view than we do. (1 Samuel 16:7)
- c. We are disobeying one of the "greatest commands." (v. 8-13)
 - "Love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:36-39)
 - To disobey one aspect of the law makes us a law breaker just as much as someone who breaks all of the laws! We are guilty!
 - We have all have violated God's law and are guilty of sin. (Romans 3:23)
 - "...as judged under the law of liberty" (see James 1:25) – A believers, we are to live according to God's Word.
 - "Mercy" = kindness or good will towards the miserable and the afflicted, joined with a desire to help them

Thoughts to Ponder:

1. Why do we feel the need to show partiality, "play favorites"?
2. For a believer, God has shown us great mercy by forgiving our sin through Jesus' death and resurrection. How can His mercy help us show mercy instead of partiality to others?