

## Living Under the Law of Liberty (Partiality, James 2:1-13)

Ian Smith, Vine & Branch Community Church 4/30/23

James in his letter sets out to teach us that faith **works** – faith results in action. Real faith inside of every believer should bear fruit – should come out in a way that's visible. In other words – we will do what we truly believe. He encourages us to take joy in trials, because this faith that we have grows in steadfastness – and we become more complete.

Partiality, favoritism or “bias” is antithetical to the Lord of Glory. It is ungodly, unmerciful, unjust, and evil.

***My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory.***

(James 2:1)

James' Example: Rich guest, Poor guest.

1. The rich man is honored, is perceived as beneficial
2. The poor man is dishonored, perceived as unable to provide any benefit

Proper deference and honor does have its place, *but partiality is a sinful, evil judgment:*

***v4 have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?***

The sin of partiality is making an unwarranted distinction; driven by the self-serving motives. It is a demonstration of unfaithfulness. It is a sin for these reasons:

1. *IM*partiality is a character trait of God. (*Rom 2:11, 1 Sam 16:7, Eph 6:9*)
2. *IM*partiality is a Law of God. (*Lev 19:15, Deut 16:19*)
3. Partiality goes against the LORD OF GLORY'S missions. (*Luke 4:18*)

The DIRECTIVE, or CHARGE given to us by James:

***SO SPEAK and SO ACT as those who are to be judged under the LAW OF LIBERTY.*** (James 1:12)

The Law of Liberty:

- is Jesus' redemptive law of love that Christians live by
- is the love of God and others, fulfilled by FAITH working through LOVE
- requires the Holy Spirit's power
- is merciful and liberating

***“For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.”***

Partiality, being corrupt, ungodly judgment, is *merciless*.

- Those with **false faith** or **dead faith** are in danger of merciless judgment.
- Those outside the faith will not have the benefit of any mercy on judgment day. In other words: if Jesus is not your savior, you will receive no mercy from God! (*Parable of the Unforgiving Servant, Matthew 18.*)

***Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful. (Luke 6:37)***

***Mercy triumphs over judgment.*** God in His mercy fulfilled justice by transferring judgment for sin onto to Jesus.

1. Live as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty: Love God, Love others
2. Put aside partiality, which is unfaithful and unloving.
3. Treat everyone as Jesus would, with mercy; born from **faith working through love.**