

Lessons From James

No Partiality

(Ja 2:1-13)

INTRODUCTION

1. Good Morning
 - a. Greeting...
2. Series on "Lessons From James."
 - a. We finished chapter 1 last week.
 - b. We are starting chapter 2 this week.
3. What to keep in mind when studying James.
 - a. Context
 - i. Written to Jewish Christians outside of Palestine.
 - ii. Keep in mind the hardships that comes with this reality, being a Jewish Christian.
 - b. Content
 - i. Written to these Christians to give them the tools needed to grow from an immaturity to a maturity in Christianity.
4. Let us examine our text for this morning.

I. God Is No Respecters Of Persons

A. What this doesn't mean first

1. Some have used this to say there is no such thing as providence.

- i. How it is portrayed..."if God shows no partiality then God could not providentially help any one person because that would show partiality."

a. Proof text given.

1. **Mt 5:45** "that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."¹
2. **Ac 10:34** "Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality."
3. **Ro 2:11** "For God shows no partiality." (ESV)
 - i. "God treats everyone the same." (NIRV)

ii. However this idea is false when compared to clear passages.

a. Notice providence is clearly taught.

1. **Ro 8:28** "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."
2. **Pm 15-16** "For perhaps he departed for a while for this purpose, that you might receive him forever, 16 no longer as a slave but more than a slave—a beloved brother, especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord."

¹ All Scriptures are taken from the NKJV unless otherwise noted.

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- b. Also notice God does show favoritism towards some and not others, in a sense.
 - 1. **Ep 1:3** "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ"
 - i. Non-Christians do not have every spiritual blessing only Christians thus partiality.
 - 2. **Ja 1:5-6** "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind."
 - i. First who is the "you" & "us" who lacks wisdom...Christians.
 - ii. Second we see this pray is for Christians only because it is to be done in faith, which James defines later, which can only be applied to Christians because it is belief plus obedience.
 - iii. Thus God only gives wisdom to Christians who ask for it, not everybody.
- 2. Some have used this to say there is no hell or no human will be sent to hell.
 - i. This is simply one of those crazy things people say to try and get more money from people, as far as I'm concerned.
 - a. It goes like this, "If God is no respecter of persons then He cannot send anyone to hell or there is no hell because of this fact."
 - b. Same proof texts as before.
 - ii. This is so lacking in logic it makes no sense but I will point out a couple of verses to debunk it.
 - a. **Mt 10:28** "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."
 - b. **Mt 7:21-23** "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"

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3. Some have used this to say there are no role distinctions between male & female in or out of the church.
 - i. Goes like this, "Since God shows no partiality then He could not same to men do one thing and women the other because that would being partial to one group over another and not equality between the two."
 - a. Proof text for this
 1. **Ga 2:6** "But from those who seemed to be something—whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man—for those who seemed to be something added nothing to me."
 2. **Ga 3:28** "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."
 - ii. Like usual this doesn't fly when compared to scripture. God does have roles for men and women but that has nothing to do with partiality.
 - a. Men are to be the leaders, and thus in authority, in everything based on creation & Eves sin.
 1. **I Co 11:3** "But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God."
 2. **I Ti 2:12-14** "And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. 13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve. 14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression."

B. What this does mean

1. It means that God loves every person the same.
 - i. **Jn 3:16** "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."
 - ii. **Ro 5:8** "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."
2. It means God gives everyone the same opportunity to go to heaven.
 - i. **Ti 2:11** "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men"
3. It means God does not discriminate based on physical traits. Notice every time God not showing partiality is based on physical traits not spiritual ones.
 - i. **Lk 20:21** – No distinction between upper class Jews and lower class as far as education goes.
 - ii. **Ac 10:34** – No distinction between heritage, Jew or Gentile.
 - iii. **Ro 2:11** – No distinction between heritage again, Jew or Greek.
 - iv. **Ga 2:6** – No distinction between those that seem influential or those that are not influential in the church ie perception.
 - v. **Ep 6:9** – No distinction between the master and slave.
 - vi. **Co 3:25** – Same as above.

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vii. **Ja 2:1, 9** – No distinction between rich and poor.

C. How this benefits us

1. It benefits us in that we will be equally judged by God not based on our outward but our inward.
 - i. Once again this is no license to dress in an unlawful (**Ga 6:2**) way, ie immodest, not respectful...
2. What a blessing to have a God that looks at us in a complete way.

II. Falling Short Of The Royal Law Is Transgression

A. What is the "royal law"

1. This is the law of Christ.
 - i. I like what Harper & Coffman said here, ""God has chosen the poor to be heirs of the kingdom (Jas 2:5), therefore, the royal law is for those of God's kingdom." Christ the King in his kingdom sanctioned and made binding this law upon all who would follow him; therefore, it is the royal law." (from Coffman's Bible Commentary, Copyright © 1971-1993 by ACU Press, Abilene Christian University. All rights reserved.)
2. The royal law is also call the law of liberty in verse 12.

B. What does it mean "fails at one point"

1. In other words if one sins once he/she is guilty of breaking the whole law of Christ.
 - i. The law of Christ teaches us...
 - a. **Ti 2:11-12** "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, 12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age"
 - ii. The law also says about breaking the law of Christ...
 - a. **Ro 6:23** "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."
 - iii. The law also says about keeping the law of Christ...
 - a. **I Jn 1:7** "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."
 - b. **I Jn 1:9** "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

C. How does this benefit us concerning this knowledge on the law of Christ

1. What we learn from the law of Christ is this, that though one sin keeps us from heaven because it causes us to break the whole law if we are striving to be perfect for Christ, He will continue to keep us unspotted from the world if we, when we break the law, repent and come back.

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III. Mercy Triumphs Over Judgment

A. Mercy defined

1. This is manifested idea of God not quickly giving us what we deserve when we sin.
 - i. What I mean by that is God gives everyone who has sinned an opportunity to obey Him.
 - a. **II Pt 3:9** "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."
 - b. **I Jn 1:8-10** "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us."
2. This is not saying that God will not give us over to our own desires and thus judge us on such.
 - i. **Ja 1:14-15** "But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. 15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death."
 - ii. **II Th 2:11-12** "And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, 12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness."
3. Thus God's mercy allows opportunity where we don't deserve it.
 - i. Vines describes it thusly, "is the outward manifestation of pity; it assumes need on the part of him who receives it, and **resources adequate to meet the need on the part of him who shows it.**" (Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W. (1996). Vol. 2: Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words (403). Nashville, TN: T. Nelson.) (emphasis mine)

B. Judgment defined

1. This the idea of passing sentence on someone, not acknowledging an action of someone.
 - i. For example we can view someone's actions and deem them righteous or sinful based on the scriptures but we cannot sentence them to hell or heaven based on what we see.
 - ii. This doesn't mean we can't say someone's actions won't lead them to hell or heaven, as that is clearly taught in scripture, but we cannot send them to either place.
 - a. **Mt 7:1-2** "Judge not, that you be not judged. 2 For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you."
 - b. **Mt 7:5, 15** "Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly **to remove the speck from your brother's eye...** 15 **"Beware of false prophets..."** (emphasis mine)

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- C. Glories against/over defined
 - 1. Some translations say triumphs, some say glorieth, some say rejoiceth.
 - i. The actual Greek word is "κατακαυχάομαι" or "katakauchaomai"
 - a. "to have greater power or potential than—'to be more powerful than, to triumph over.'" (Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). Vol. 1: Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament : Based on semantic domains (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition.) (675). New York: United Bible societies.)
 - b. "to exult against (i.e. over):—boast (against), glory, rejoice against." (Strong, J., S.T.D., LL.D. (2009). Vol. 1: A Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Greek Testament and The Hebrew Bible (40). Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.)
 - ii. Thus the idea is to be over or more powerful than, in this case mercy is over or more powerful than judgment.
 - 2. This is not saying that mercy will replace judgment.
- D. What does all that mean
 - 1. It means that mercy is more powerful than judgment.
 - 2. That doesn't mean mercy will replace judgment.
 - i. God will still judge everyone according to his/her deeds.
 - a. **Ro 2:6** "who "will render to each one according to his deeds""
 - ii. God will judge by being merciful on those that were merciful.
 - a. **Ja 2:13** "For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment."
 - iii. Thus God will mercifully judge, notice still judge, those that showed mercy.

CONCLUSION

- 1. We must make sure we do not sentence someone based on their economic condition but rather based on their spiritual condition. Physical does not trump spiritual.
- 2. Question: Do we judge other Christians based on their physical or spiritual?
 - a. If physical let us reexamine ourselves, repent and come back to God.
 - b. If spiritual let us continue to be merciful toward each other not sentencing but rather encouraging one another to get to heaven with purity of heart in the Lord.
- 3. Invitation
 - a. God's Plan of Salvation
 - i. Hear/Study **Rom 10:17; II Tim 2:15**
 - ii. Believe Jesus Is The Christ **Jn 3:16; 8:24**
 - iii. Repent/Turn To God **Ac 17:30; Lk 24:47**
 - iv. Confess Jesus As Lord **Mt 10:32; Rom 10:9**
 - v. Immersed For The Forgiveness of Sins **Ac 2:38; 22:16; I Pt 3:21**
 - vi. Live A Faithful Life **I Jn 1:7; Eph 5:8**