
Wisdom for Living: Treat People Right

James 2:1-13

- *An empty faith will show itself in times of trials*
- *An empty faith will show itself in relationships with others*

Show courtesy to everyone (2:1-4)

Partiality – favoritism; respect of persons; a biased judgment which gives respect to rank, position, or circumstances instead of considering the inner nature, quality, or condition of a person. The word denotes making distinctions among people based on their rank or influence.

Partiality takes on many forms:

- National partiality (White vs. Black)
- Political partiality (Democrat vs. Republican)
- Economic partiality (Wealthy vs. Poor)
- Social partiality (Famous vs. Ordinary)
- Gender partiality (Male vs. Female)

Pictures of Partiality:

- Between parents and children – Isaac loved Esau, but Rebekah loved Jacob (Gen. 25:28)
- Between brothers – Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children (Gen. 37:3)
- Between ethnic/national groups – There arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution (Acts 6:1)

Partiality is diametrically opposed to the way God operates (Acts 10:34-35: *Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.*

Give consideration in everything (2:5-9)

- When we show partiality, we refuse those whom God has accepted. Has God not chosen the poor of this world?
- When we show partiality, we favor those who might treat us unfavorably given the same circumstances. Do not the rich oppress you?
- When we show partiality, we are being partial to people who may be enemies of our faith. *Do they not blaspheme that noble name?*
- When we show partiality, we commit sin, and we transgress the law.
 - **Sin** – not conforming to the will of God or a failure to meet His standard.
 - **Transgression** – the breaking of a known law
 - *Certain acts are sinful because they are basically and inherently wrong, but they become transgressions when there is a specific law which forbids them.*
 - (Lev. 19:18 – *You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord.*

Be consistent in every way (2:12-13)

- Speak and do – make your profession match your practice.
- Submit to the standard – The law of liberty is the standard of divine love which is the Christian's ultimate standard of conduct
- Show *mercy* – extend compassion, kindness, and beneficence.

“Treat people right before you know who they are.” – Dr. D’Ann Johnson

Assignment: Take the Partiality Test at <https://newcov.org/partiality-test/>