

Series: James
Lesson #4
Title: Respect of Persons
Scripture: James 2: 1-13
Date: January 24, 2010
Place: SGBC, NJ

James 2: 1: My brethren,
James is writing to those who have faith.

James 2: 1: My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, [*the Lord*] of glory, with respect of persons.

I. OUR GOD IS NO RESPECTOR OF PERSONS

Notice, this phrase "faith of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Some translations may read, faith 'IN' the Lord Jesus Christ. But brethren, especially when speaking of respect of persons, we need to remember that righteousness and faith is from the FAITH OF CHRIST, OF GLORY.

Romans 3: 21: But now the righteousness OF GOD without the law is manifested, [The righteousness of who? OF GOD] being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22: Even the righteousness OF GOD [the righteousness of who? OF GOD] *which is* by FAITH OF JESUS CHRIST [by faith of who? OF JESUS CHRIST]

Galatians 2:16: Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith OF JESUS CHRIST, we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the FAITH OF CHRIST, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Notice this phrase "of glory."

James reminds us of where our Lord Jesus Christ is now.

Hebrews 1: 3:...when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty ON HIGH.

Where does James remind us that every good and every perfect gift comes to the believer?

James 1: 17: Every good gift and every perfect gift is FROM ABOVE, and cometh DOWN FROM the Father of lights,

But James says FAITH OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, OF GLORY?

Ephesians 4: 8: Wherefore he saith, When he ascended UP ON HIGH, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 7: But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift OF CHRIST.

Paul begins his epistles with "grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

The Believer's Faith is From the Lord Jesus Christ Of Glory

Jude gives a good definition of respect of persons.: "*having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.*" (VI6)

Now, brethren, how do you have this faith from our Lord Jesus Christ of glory? Was it because he respected your person? Did God see something in us that would give him some advantage?

Ephesians 2: 8: For BY GRACE are ye saved through faith; and that not OF YOURSELVES: *it is* THE GIFT OF GOD: 9: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Romans 9: 11 (For *the children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)...15: For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. 16: So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

Hoshea 14:4: I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely:

Romans 3:24: Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

James 1: 18: OF HIS OWN WILL begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

Psalms 133: 3: If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? 4: But *there is* forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.

If there is one thing above all else that you and I should rejoice in it is that God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ is no respecter of persons. Now, that we are reminded that we have received faith as a free gift from our Father above, from our Lord Jesus Christ in glory, who lived and died to freely redeem us, lets read verse 1 again.

James 2: 1: My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, [*the Lord*] of glory, with respect of persons.

II. THE ILLUSTRATION

James 1: 2: For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; 3: And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: 4: Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?

I can find no evidence that James is addressing any particular occurrence. It appears he is giving an example to warn them against such partiality. We know it was James who came to Antioch when Peter got up eating with Gentiles and moved over to sit with Jews. Paul said: Christ did not teach us that:

Galatians 2: 18: For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.

That is what James is saying here. If we show partiality we set ourselves up as judges of evil thoughts.

James 2: 5: Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

The majority whom God chose in Christ before the foundation of the world, he has not given worldly riches or honor, not before calling them or after.

I Corinthians 1: 26: For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*:

Judging by outward appearances the majority of brethren are poor by the world's standards. God has made his saints are rich in ways that no man can see with the natural eye.

rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

But if we show partiality—here is the meaning of evil thoughts—

James 2: 6: But ye have despised the poor.

III. THE PRINCIPLE

James gives an illustration. The principle goes far beyond rich or poor in material things.

God Chose Foolish Things

God has chosen things men do not esteem to stain the pride of man's own wisdom.

I Corinthians 1: 19: For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. 20: Where *is* the wise? where *is* the scribe? where *is* the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

God chose a bloody cross. God chose for his own Son to come in human flesh, of poor parents, a nobody from nowhere, to be crucified on a bloody cross. He chose this gospel as the means wherein he reveals his glory and saves sinners. It is offensive to men to be told this is how God saves, edifies and builds up his saints in faith and obedience.

I Corinthians 1: 18: The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness;

To the man rich in his religious service, the preaching of Christ crucified is a stumblingblock—To have to subject himself to God, to wait on God to save, to trust God to make disciples, to add to his church daily such as should be saved, only through the preaching of Christ just gets in the way of his doing, of his making disciples and of building a church like you would a business enterprise. To those rich in their own wisdom their foremost philosophy is that the preaching of Christ is utter foolishness. But here is what all such men do.

James 2: 6...Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? 7: Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?

Wealthy men do this, but those rich in religion and their own wisdom are far worse. They judge by outward appearance. They oppress. Religious men drag men to the judgment seat: of God's law, to the bar of their polluted discernment, to the seat of vain tradition, and before any seat of judgment whereby they can turn you away from Christ. **THAT IS EXACTLY WHY CHRIST WAS NAILED TO THE CROSS!**

I Corinthians 1: 23: But we preach Christ crucified,

CHRIST is that worthy name by the which ye are called!

He could have been born anywhere he chose but he chose to be born from a poor family out of Nazareth. This one owned the cattle on a thousand hills chose to have no place to lay his head. He is God upholding all things by the word of his power, yet he chose to come to sinners with absolutely no education and no authority from the religious leaders. And the highly esteemed religious host and wise men of the day despised and reject and esteem him as nothing, but stricken, smitten of God and afflicted.

They blaspheme that WORTHY NAME BY THE WHICH YE ARE CALLED. But unto those who are called:

I Corinthians 1: 24: unto them which ARE called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. 25: For the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men....

Christ Jesus, the cross, the preaching of Christ crucified, and those who he saves are the base things, the foolish things, the despised things God has chosen to confound the wise and mighty, that no flesh glory in his presence.

Most know the doctrine that the believer is not under the law but under grace. But how I pray that God would makes us to hear Christ when he says that which is highly esteemed among men, is the breaking of the entire law of God.

James 2: 8: If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: 9: But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. 10: For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. 11: For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

Is there any under the sound of my voice that is yet so foolish, so blind, so rich and mighty and noble, so highly respected in his own eyes as to read these words and say he as fulfilled the royal law, that he has “done well?”

James 1: 12: So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. 13: For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

They that shall be judged of the thrice holy God, without spot, and without blemish, perfect, and accepted, having fulfilled the whole law of God, are those who shall be judged BY THAT WORTHY NAME, WHO IS THE GOSPEL OF LIBERTY—THE REDEEMER, CHRIST JESUS THEIR LORD AND SAVIOR.

Those who go on esteeming that which God hates, say within themselves that they need no mercy, and they shall have judgment without mercy.

But those who have been set free, speak and do: THEY SPEAK OF HIM WHO IS THEIR MERCY, THEY CAST THEMSELVES UPON HIS MERCY, THEY CONTINUALLY BEG HIM FOR NEW MERCIES FOR THEMSELVES AND THOSE AROUND THEM, AND BY HIS MERCY, THEY REJOICE TO SHOW MERCY TO ALL...THEY DO SO FOR ONE REASON...BECAUSE THEY REJOICE THAT GOD’S MERCY TOWARD THEM IN CHRIST JESUS HAS WON THEM THE VICTORY OVER JUDGMENT.

James 2: 1: My brethren, have not this gift of faith from our Lord Jesus Christ in glory, with respect of persons...12: So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

Amen!