

Sunday, October 11, 2020

Text: James 2:1-7

Title: Rags and Rings

*Outline:*

The Command Against Favoritism (2:1-3)

Six Reasons to Reject Favoritism (2:4-7)

- Reason 1: Favoritism reveals wickedness in judgment (v.4).
- Reason 2: Favoritism reveals ignorance of God's ways (v.5).
- Reason 3: Favoritism brings shame upon the rejected (v.6a).
- Reason 4: Favoritism displays the stupefying effect of sin (v.6b).
- Reason 5: Favoritism reveals a risk of disloyalty to Christ (v.7).
- Reason 6: Favoritism has led people to reject Christ (v.1).

*Study Guide Questions:*

- How does James 2:1-7 connect thematically to James 1:26-27? What connections do you find between this section and the rest of Chapter 1?
- Did you think you struggled with favoritism or partiality before Sunday's message? Do you now? Do you think our church does?
- James' example in vv.2-3 seems simple. What could be going in someone's heart when they show favoritism? Are there potential motives you can think of that the preacher didn't mention?
- What specifics about someone might draw you personally to show someone partiality? What specifics about someone might draw our particular church to show someone partiality?
- What are some ways in which you have shown favoritism? Are there ways in which you think our church might have shown favoritism in the past or be in

danger of doing so? (While this analysis may be helpful (and painful), we should also guard against pride in judging others of partiality.)

- Why does James in v.1 command those who believe in Christ not to show partiality? Why are they incompatible?
- How does favoritism reveal the stain of the world (1:27)?
- Why does James refer to the saints once as “my brethren” and once as “my beloved brethren” in this passage? What does that indicate to you about James? About the topic?
- In v.4, James says that when we make distinctions we become judges with evil motives (or thoughts). In what ways do we judge wickedly? (Those are strong words, James!)
- In v.5, James says that God’s plan was to choose the poor to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom. Why is this God’s plan? Does God then show partiality to the poor?
- How do the poor have an advantage over the rich when it comes to seeing spiritual needs (Luke 6:20, 24)?
- How could you personally maximize upon God’s plan to save the poor? How could we as a church?
- Spend some time asking the Lord if you have dishonored someone by showing partiality to another (2:6a).
- From 2:6-7, what is the foolishness of showing partiality to the rich and powerful? What is a danger that James may be pointing out?
- Why do Christians keep hoping to win the “influencers” of the world to Christ? (Of course, the desire to see someone saved is good. But where is the fault in that particular hope?)
- Would favoritism have led someone to follow Jesus while he was on earth? If so, for how long? If not, why not?
- Do you need to repent of favoritism and partiality? If so, what does repentance look like?