

TITLE: James (Lesson 9)

TEXT: James 2:1-4

INTRO: "Since the Civil War, our nation has never been as divided as it is right now. But we have to make sure the division in our nation never infects the church...The most powerful witness we have to an unbelieving world is our ability to love one another. Only through the Holy Spirit is such unity possible." *Dr. Robert Jeffress*

- I. (vs. 1-2) Two visitors.
 - A. "My brethren"

NOTE: In the Jewish synagogues it was customary to give certain people places of honor.

- 1. Believers represent the family of God as well as Jesus Himself.

- B. We are not to hold the faith with partiality.

- 1. "the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory"

NOTE: **our** (ownership, relationship); **Lord** (owner, master); **Jesus** (Jehovah is salvation); **Christ** (Messiah); **Lord of glory** (majesty of God) See John 1:14

- 2. Don't show favoritism or prejudice.

NOTE: Rom. 2:11; Gal. 3:26-28; Eph. 6:9

- C. Visitors in the assembly!

- 1. One represents a rich man and one a poor man.

NOTE: Both drew attention to themselves. One finely dressed, one soiled and smelly.

- II. (vs. 3) Two responses.
 - A. The prosperous man is treated with *respect*.

NOTE: **respect** means the man was noticed, looked upon and regarded with favor.

- B. The pitiful man was treated with contempt.

- III. (vs. 4) An unjust standard.
 - A. "Are ye not then partial in yourselves...?"

- 1. Guilty of discrimination based on outward appearances.

NOTE: James was not just giving instruction but was forbidding what they were already practicing. Apparently they were judging people (themselves included) outwardly according to physical appearance, social status, wealth, and power, etc.

- B. "...and are become judges of evil thoughts?"

NOTE: They were guilty of discrimination resulting in their becoming unjust judges with evil thoughts, making their judgments according to worldly standards.

- IV. Biblical instruction.

NOTE: James 1:8-10, 22-25

- A. The example and testimony of Jesus. (Matt. 22:16)
- B. The reflection of Jesus in the believer. (Col. 3:10-11)
- C. Beware of reverse discrimination.
- D. Beware of self-exaltation. (Luke 14:7-14)
- E. Remember Christ is present. (Matt. 25:34-40)