

Sermon Notes: Playing Favorites  
James Chapter 2

Background: James is a book written to “confront” Jewish-Christians with the practicality of the Christian life.

Context: These believers had suffered for their faith (“scattered”), and were, to say the least, confused in regard

Chapter 2:

1. Favoritism can be played out even in church meetings

a. What are the reasons people “play favorites?”

i. Power (2:6-7)

ii. Benefits

b. How does favoritism work practically

*Lk 14:12-14 (NIV)*

Then Jesus said to his host, “When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

c. What are the reasons God is so repulsed at “playing favorites?”

i. His love does not discriminate on the basis of what someone has to offer

ii. God loves the “underdog” (those who appear weak or helpless, or are without)

*Mt 9:36 (NIV)* When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

2. Understanding sin (2:8-11)

While there are some sins which are “worse” than others, all sin is offensive to God and all sin is destructive.

3. In what ways can the church transform culture and be a means of hope

a. Showing, in our actions, that all have dignity and value as God’s creation

b. Displaying the appeal of the Gospel: for all people (not just for the “appealing”)