

Pt. 3 Favoritism Forbidden

James 2:1-13

Jesus Way of Treating People who might be "Different" than You...

A Christian should treat others...

1. Consistently... with a Sincere Faith in CHRIST... vs.1-4

Faith- is a virile, active, powerful quality that must be present in a Christian.

Statements...

#1... *We cannot possibly worship Jesus who gave His life for all men and at the same time reject some of those people because of their status, their looks, their speech, their race, or culture!*

#2... *What a man has should not determine the action of a believer in Christ.*

#3... *What a man is or may become in the sight of God is the thing that matters.*

Christians should also treat others...

2. In Harmony with God's Revelation of Human Worth ... vs.5-7

"Listen my dear brothers" is James call

- When we reject a certain class of people we are rejecting people whom God has personally died for their sins.

- God created all men in His image.

That includes: Rich & Poor & Middle class... Male & Female
Black & White & Hispanic & Asian & Oriental.

Statements...

#1... *When you discriminate by withholding Christian fellowship from any of these people you are rejecting one who was made in the image of God.*

#2... *Consider this... If these people were made in the image of God & you don't like them, what makes you think you'll like being with God?*

1 Cor. 1:26 "Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth."

- Many have been poor in earthly goods but are rich in faith.

Much of our prejudice was taught to us as children.

- Many poor children are taught to hate the rich.

- Many rich are taught to hate the poor.

- Many white are taught to hate the black.

- Many black are taught to hate the white.

- But if we are to be biblical Christians we must reject any prejudice that has been instilled in us and admit that we are all equals in the sight of God.

- My children are no better than black children & if I ever teach them anything differently than I am sinning against God the creator of all mankind.

- We have got to reach the point in the church where we are not struggling against each other because of our differences but our using our differences to further the Kingdom of God.

Thirdly, the Christian should treat others...

3. In Obedience to the Royal Law... vs. 8-9

a. The "royal law" is found in both testaments.

- Leviticus 19:18 "love your neighbor as yourself."
- **Luke 10:27** So he answered and said, " 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.' "

Statements...

#1... If we are to be in obedience to this royal law we will love all we come into contact with.

#2... We must extend God's love to all people regardless of race, color, creed or status.

Lastly... if we are to treat others right we must treat them as...

4. One who will Stand at the Judgment Bar of God... vs.10-13

- Illus. - An old saying affirms, "Beauty is only skin deep."
- A well-known comedian said, "Ugly is only skin deep too."
- This same comedian went to a photographer & said,
"I hope you will do justice to these pictures."
- The photographer responded,
"With that face you don't need justice, you need mercy."

Justice/Judgment... getting what we deserve

Mercy... getting what we need

Remember... both judgment & mercy are part of the nature of God.

1. Judgment... N.T. is permeated by the idea of God's judgment.

We will be judged by God for...

- our disobedience (John. 3:36).
- our unbelief (John. 8:24).
- our words (Matthew 12:36).
- our deeds (Colossians 3:25).
- our thoughts (Romans 2:16).

Whenever the holiness of God confronts human sin the result is judgment.

2. Mercy... The idea of mercy also permeates the N.T.

Jesus declared... "*I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world*" (John. 12:47).

The N.T. writers refer to...

- God's great mercy (Lk. 1:58).
- God's tender mercy (Lk. 1:78).
- God's abundant mercy (1 Pet. 1:3).

He is also a loving God who has mercy on those who turn to Him.

- The thief hanging on the cross next to Jesus experienced the mercy of God.

3. Connection

- God desires for us to experience His mercy, not His judgment.

Question...What determines which we experience?

- James 2:13 "judgment w/o mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful"

- Matthew 5:7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy."

- Matthew 6:15 "But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions."

- The Bible suggests that our attitude toward others is a reflection of our basic commitment.

- If we are not committed to God's way, if we have not accepted His way of life as our way of life, if we do not believe in Jesus Christ, if we do not reflect the loving mercy which comes from a life committed to God, **then we will experience the judgment of God.**

- If, on the other hand, we have acknowledged our need of God, if we have received Jesus Christ into our lives, & if we are now living a life which reflects His love & compassion for others, these things confirm we are believers.

- Thus, we will experience the mercy of God.

The judgment of God or the mercy of God, which do we want to experience?

- It is up to us.

As a country preacher once put it... **"An election is going on in our life every day. God votes for us.**

The devil votes against us. And we cast the deciding vote."

- Which way will your vote go?

CONCLUSION:

- It basically comes down to this:

We are to treat them as God treats them--with all the love in the world.