

Date: October 8, 2022
Series Title: Faith Works
Message Title: Overcoming Partiality and Prejudice
Text: James 1: 27-2:13; 5:1-6

James 1:26-2:7

²⁶ If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. ²⁷ Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

¹ My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. ² For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, ³ and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, "You sit here in a good place," while you say to the poor man, "You stand over there," or, "Sit down at my feet," ⁴ have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? ⁵ Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him? ⁶ But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? ⁷ Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called?

James 2:8-13

⁸ If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. ⁹ But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it. ¹¹ For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. ¹² So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. ¹³ For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

The Greatest Segue

James 1:26

If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless.

Religion begins in your relationship with God

- How we draw near to Him
- How we believe in Him
- How we seek Him
- How we listen to Him
- How we respond to Him

This is the foundation of any life you and I live out in the Faith that we say we follow.

James 1:27 — a closer look

James takes that word, that term, Religion, and tells the church where it comes from and from what source we will find the ability to live out the faith.

James 1:27

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

WHAT IS RELIGION?

Religion Defined by the World: A Belief

- The belief in and worship of a superhuman power or powers, especially a God or gods.
 - "Ideas about the relationship between science and religion"
 - A belief in and worship of something/someone
 - Yes belief, in but in Christianity – it is a relationship
 - Yes worship of ..., closer to the truth of "religion"
 - Science and religion as opposites
 - Science discovered from a humanist pre-decision
 - Science created by a Diving Being
- A pursuit or interest to which someone ascribes supreme importance.
 - "Consumerism is the new religion."
 - "Politics is the new religion."
 - It is a comparative statement – so engrossed in a field or topic it becomes your way of life and religious pursuit of it.
- A particular system of faith and worship. plural noun: religions / "the world's great religions"

Religion is a Lived-Out Faith – Our life of Worship

- We have a relationship with Christ
- But throughout the Scriptures we are shown HOW to live our lives in relationship to God
 - Adam and Eve – obedience and fellowship with a boundary that was broken
 - Cain and Abel – giving the right gift with the right heart
 - Noah – a faith In God to obey and build for 120 years
 - Abraham – obey when asked to move, believe for a promised child, offering that child
 - Moses – Look at Exodus, Leviticus and Deuteronomy – there are rules, rituals, and regulations
 - The prophets – how are you living out your faith
 - Jesus – the two commandments and soooo much more on what to do and what not to do
 - The epistles and Reve. – How to live out this faith – Religion is a step by step (system if you will) tutorial on how to live out our life

James 1:27

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

Religion Defined By Scripture

- Lived out purely and undefiled 1:27
- Lived without partiality 2:1
- Lived out with the Royal Law 2:8
- Judging without prejudice 2:9-10
- Mercy for Mercy 2:12-13

Matt 25 – read earlier – *as you have done to the least of these you have done unto me.*

BE PURE AND UNFILED?

- Clear about what is
- Clear about what it is not

LIVE WITHOUT PARTIALITY

James 2:1

My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory.

- James is talking to the church - To the brothers.
 - Not the politicians, not the outside world.
 - But to the church.
 - This behavior should not exist in the church.

What is Partiality?

Partiality - unfair bias in favor of one thing or person compared with another; favoritism.

- Bias, bigotry, prejudice, favoritism, preference, classified distinctions
- Partiality, Prejudice, Preferences, and Distinctions are evil thoughts.
- Bad Judgments: God calls these distinctions evil thoughts

...⁴ have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

Why is it evil to make distinctions?

- We are not seeing like God.
- We are showing that their outward appearance is what deserves our attention.
- We are seeing people the opposite of what the Lord sees.
 - 1 Sam 16:7 – *Do not look at his stature*
 - You look at the outside – God looks at the heart
- We are judging by earthly standards and sinful mindsets.

Riches

- Clothing, house, car, appearance, wealth, influencers

...⁶ Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? ⁷ Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called?

- Not a slam against wealth
- Abraham, Job – very wealthy
- Wealthy people tend to feel entitled.

James 5:1-6

- ¹*Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you.*
- ²*Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten.*
- ³*Your gold and silver have corroded, and their corrosion will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire.*
- *You have laid up treasure in the last days.*

- ⁴ Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, are crying out against you, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts.
- ⁵ You have lived on the earth in luxury and in self-indulgence.
- You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.
- ⁶ You have condemned and murdered the righteous person. He does not resist you.

Add Race

We are not thinking like God who is impartial.

Rom. 2:9-11

⁹There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, ¹⁰ but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. ¹¹ For God shows no partiality.

- Jew and Greek covers everyone
- From Hebrew thought Greeks were a category that simply meant NON-Jew

Eph. 6:9

Knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.

Colossians 3:25

For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

Why Should We Avoid Partiality and Prejudice?

“Show no partiality” is a descriptor of holding onto the faith.

Being impartial and unprejudiced

2:1 - ... *show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ*

Dividers have all been destroyed at the Cross

Gal 3:27-29

²⁷For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

- Put on Christ – he has removed those distinctions

Rom. 3:22-24

... ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...

We are all sinners...all saved by same faith

- The great equalizer
 - All guilty
 - all in need
 - All have the offer
 - All who come will be saved
 - No distinction

True Worship and Pure and Undefiled Religion is to not show any partiality or bigotry or preference, or favoritism.

- If you think or speak ill about and do not show love and mercy and kindness to blacks, Asians,

WHAT IS THE ROYAL LAW?

James 1:8-9

⁸ If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. ⁹ But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.

- The royal law – The Great Shema
 - Law of Liberty is driven by love - Love God and others.
 - Love is the natural fruit of faith in Jesus.

GOD JUDGES WITHOUT PREJUDICE (James 2:10-11)

Breaking One of God's Laws Make Us Guilty Of Breaking The Whole

¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.

- It is not like ten bowling pins – I knocked down two pins – but 8 still stand
- It is more like if you cracked a window pane the whole window is broken
- All sins make you a lawbreaker but He is not saying that all sins are equal
 - Stealing a candy bar is not adultery, yet still wrong

¹¹ For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.

¹² So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty.

- Law of freedom (Liberty)
 - In Christ we are set free from the controlling power of sin.
 - Act like you have been given the freedom to be able to love like God.
 - What is the "royal law" (2:8)?
 - Love others as you have loved yourself.
- Law of Moses was a law of condemnation.
 - Here is what you can do and can't do and how to pay for your sins.
 - It does not give you any assistance in how to not break the law.

⁹ But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.

- Is this a measure of our salvation?
 - Yes – if you do not love....it begs the question of your salvation.
- Transgressor – knows what is wrong and right and does it anyway.

GOD WILL SHOW MERCY TO THOSE WHO SHOW MERCY (JAMES 2:13)

¹³ For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

- An overarching statement to the believers in how we live our lives
- Talking to the saved – Now here he is addressing the heart of mercy.

- Not talking about salvation
- Talking about sowing and reaping – as you give mercy, you will receive mercy.
- Matt 7:1-2
 - Not salvation ---but a biblical principle (sowing and reaping)

The world does not have the answer to:

- Racism, Bigotry, Prejudice
- Socio-economic distinctions

In Christ alone do we walk in pure and undefiled religion of loving everyone

CHALLENGE

In right relationship with God,
You can live a pure and undefiled life
of loving everyone with a heart of mercy