

A Sad Case of Prejudice In the Church

2007-02-04

James 2:1 My dear brothers and sisters, how can you claim that you have faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ if you favor some people more than others?

2 For instance, suppose someone comes into your meeting dressed in fancy clothes and expensive jewelry, and another comes in who is poor and dressed in shabby clothes. 3 If you give special attention and a good seat to the rich person, but you say to the poor one, "You can stand over there, or else sit on the floor" — well, 4 **doesn't this discrimination show that you are guided by wrong motives?**

5 Listen to me, dear brothers and sisters. Hasn't God chosen the poor in this world to be rich in faith? Aren't they the ones who will inherit the Kingdom he promised to those who love him? 6 And yet, you insult the poor man! Isn't it the rich who oppress you and drag you into court? 7 Aren't they the ones who slander Jesus Christ, whose noble name you bear?

8 Yes indeed, it is good when you truly obey our Lord's royal command found in the Scriptures: "Love your neighbor as yourself." 9 **But if you pay special attention to the rich, you are committing a sin, for you are guilty of breaking that law.**

10 And the person who keeps all of the laws except one is as guilty as the person who has broken all of God's laws. NLT

1. The Prohibition of Prejudice

James 2:1 My dear brothers and sisters, how can you claim that you have faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ if you favor some people more than others? NLT

James 2:4 doesn't this discrimination show that you are guided by wrong motives? NLT

ILL - Restaurant in Cincinnati

Samuel Choosing David

1Sam 16:7 The LORD said to Samuel "Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." (NIV)

2. The Problem of Prejudice

Two Men Went to Church!

A. The Appearance of the Men

a. Mr. Gold Fingers

James 2:2 For instance, suppose someone comes into your meeting dressed in fancy clothes and expensive jewelry. . .NLT

b. Peter Pauper

James 2:2 . . .suppose someone comes into your meeting dressed in fancy clothes and expensive jewelry, and another comes in who is poor and dressed in shabby clothes. NLT

"Poor" - (pto-khos'); lit. to crouch - a word used to refer to a beggar or a pauper

"Many of God's Best Jewels Come in a Plain Box."

Illustration: Mahatma Ghandi

B. The Attitude of the Church Member

James 2:3 If you give special attention and a good seat to the rich person, but you say to the poor one, "You can stand over there, or else sit on the floor" — well, 4 **doesn't this discrimination show that you are guided by wrong motives?**

Attitude - We've got to watch who we let into our church attitude.

ILLUSTRATION: Catrons

C. The Admonition of the Lord

James 2:4 doesn't this discrimination show that you are guided by wrong motives? NLT

Proper Judgment - Not No Judgment

Rom 13:7 Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor. NIV

1Tim 5:17 The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. NIV

Acts 10:34 ...God does not show favoritism [discriminate] (NIV)

Acts 10:34 And Peter opened his mouth and said: Most certainly and thoroughly I now perceive and understand that God shows no partiality and is no respecter of persons, AMP

Gal 3:28 There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male or female. For you are all Christians — you are one in Christ Jesus. NLT

3. The Position of the Poor

James 2:5 Listen to me, dear brothers and sisters. **Hasn't God chosen the poor** in this world to be rich in faith? Aren't they the ones who will inherit the Kingdom he promised to those who love him? NLT

A. The Poor Are Chosen of God

Abraham Lincoln said, "God must really love common people. He made so many of them.

1Cor 1:26 For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. 27 But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to

shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; 28 and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, 29 that no flesh should glory in His presence. (NKJ)

B. The Poor Are Rich in Faith

James 2:5 Listen to me, dear brothers and sisters. **Hasn't God chosen the poor** in this world to be rich in faith? NLT

C. The Poor Are Heirs of the Coming Kingdom

James 2:5 Listen to me, dear brothers and sisters. **Hasn't God chosen the poor** in this world to be rich in faith? Aren't they **the ones who will inherit the Kingdom** he promised to those who love him? NLT

Matt 25:23 "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!' NIV

Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. For them the second death holds no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him a thousand years. NLT

ILLUSTRATION: ANDIRAM JUDSON

4. The Persecution by the Prosperous

James 2:6 . . . Isn't it the rich who oppress you and drag you into court? 7 Aren't they the ones who slander Jesus Christ, whose noble name you bear? NLT

1. The True Gospel Undermines Their Position Of Superiority

2. The Gospel Diminished Their Bank Roll

The gospel teaches GIVING not GETTING.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Matt 5:3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. NIV

Poor in spirit - I need God.