

Part 3 - No Partiality

Kingdom Collective

Series: Book of James

Kent Nighswander - January 25, 2026

James 2:1-13 ESV

Central Truth: God is no respecter of persons. He plays no favorites. His love is for all. As the hands and feet of Jesus, we are to show no partiality and instead, show the love of Jesus.

Verse 1

- “My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory.”
 - Partiality - *prosōpolēmpsia* (Gk) - to be partial, favoritism, respect of persons
 - Have you ever had a moment where you felt like someone was the favorite and it wasn't you. Do you remember how it made you feel—insignificant? Insecure? Unwanted?
- James instructs clearly to not show partiality, favoritism, or to cast judgement.
- We cannot “hold the faith” and show partiality at the same time.

i.e. Showing partiality is kind of like picking kickball teams at recess. If you're not the best friend or the best athlete you're going to be standing there for a while. Although it seems childish, this type of behavior carries into adulthood.

Verses 2-4

- 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, 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,” have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?
- It is a tendency of the flesh to make judgements based on outward appearance even though we know the old adage not to “judge a book by its cover.”

(OUTWARD APPEARANCE)

Another Definition

- Partiality - *prosōpolēmpsia* (Gk) - The fault of one who when called to give judgement has respect of the outward circumstances of man.

1 Samuel 16:6-7

- Eliab was not only the firstborn, he also looked the part.
- v7 “Man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.”
- There's a desire deep down in all of us that wants some degree of favoritism, partiality, recognition, status, esteem.
 - We want to be more like David.
- This is what we can give away to others.

(PARTIALITY=SIN)

James 2:8-9

- v9 “But if you show partiality, you are committing sin.”
- This is an age-old problem. Cain killed Abel. Gentile against Jew. Black vs white. Rich vs poor.
- Galatians 3:28 - “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.”
- The only way we can know the heart is to sit across the table.
 - Normal is a relative term. You're not normal and neither are they.
 - It's ok to agree to disagree. It's not ok to judge.

(RESPECTOR OF PERSONS)

Acts 10:34-35

- “So Peter opened his mouth and said: “Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.”
- NKJV - “God is no respecter of persons.”
- MSG - “It's God's own truth, nothing could be plainer: God plays no favorites! It makes no difference who you are or where you're from—if you want God and are ready to do as he says, the door is open.”
- Here's the distinction: If we fear God and do what is right we are accepted by Him.
- We are to respect all people but not be a respecter of certain people.

Personal story - being critical of myself and others

- Daily Declaration - "I am not critical of people. I am kind, considerate, and empathetic. Satan is the accuser, I am not. I lay down the stone."

(MERCY)

James 2:13

- If we don't show mercy, our judgement is without mercy.
- Mercy triumphs over judgement!