

## PREJUDICE

Text: James 2:1-4

INTRO: The English word prejudice describes the practice of pre-judging, that is, judging before all the facts are in. The fellow who comes into the assembly in dirty clothes may have lost a wheel from his chariot on the way to services & had to crawl around on the ground to replace it, grease his axle, etc. Or he may have left home good condition & got mugged along the way. Or there might be any number of logical explanations. Perhaps his dirty apparel DOES reflect a poor attitude on his part, an attitude of disrespect. Even so, being welcomed by God's people & exposed to God's will may help build in him a more acceptable attitude. Don't judge him. Just be a Christian. God will do whatever judging is needed in due time.

When the Bible speaks of what we call prejudice it uses such terms as "partiality," "respect of persons," or "favoritism."

All of us have probably been guilty--probably sometimes continue to be guilty of partiality; pre-judging on the basis of race, nationality or ethnic background, social standing, occupation, education, etc.

Jesus Himself was sometimes a victim of prejudice. Nathaniel, JN 1:46. The Samaritans, LK 9:52-53; The Samaritan woman, JN 4:9, 20. I worked with a man who grew up in a "Christian home," grew up listening to some of the best gospel preachers of our generation. He told me he almost became a Christian until he realized that Jesus was a Jew. He wasn't about to be a disciple of some Jew. Sound terrible? What if Jesus had been descended from Ham instead of Shem? What if He had been black instead of Semitic?

### I. GOD DOES NOT SHOW PARTIALITY.

The Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." (1 Sam 16:7).

#### A. The Law.

You shall do no injustice in judgment. You shall not be partial to the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty. In righteousness you shall judge your neighbor.  
(Lev 19:15).

#### B. The gospel. READ ACTS 10:34-35.

## II. PARTIALITY IS INCONSISTENT WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIANITY.

A. One great function of Christianity was to create a sphere in which there should be neither Jew nor Gentile, Greek nor barbarian, bond nor free. READ GAL. 3:26-29.

B. Such impartiality is implied in the use of the term "brethren" and in the instructions given to them.

READ JAMES 2:1-5.

C. The Pharisees rightly recognized that Jesus did not show partiality.

Then they asked Him, saying, "Teacher, we know that You say & teach rightly, & You do not show personal favoritism, but teach the way of God in truth..." (Luke 20:21).

1. He associated with publicans & sinners. He did not participate in their sins, but He associated with them in order to lead them to repentance.

2. He associated with Samaritans & Gentiles.

3. He mingled with shepherds & kings, with carpenters & scribes, with farmers & fishermen & doctors of the law.

## III. "RESPECT OF PERSONS" IS NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH THE RESPECT WE ARE COMMANDED TO RENDER.

A. We must respect those in authority.

1. Civil rulers, Rom 13:1-7; 1 Pet 2:17.

2. Those who are over us in the work place.  
Eph 6:5-9; Col. 3:22-25

3. Elders in the church, Heb. 13:7, 17

B. We should respect those whose character makes them worthy of our respect. READ ROMANS 2:11-16.

C. But our respect of any person, or lack of respect, should

never rest on pre-judgment of a whole race or class or caste of people.

D. Prejudice is sinful & it is beneath the dignity of a Christian. If you show partiality, you commit sin, & are convicted by the law as transgressors. (James 2:9).

E. Prejudice is inconsistent, in most cases, with our own status in the world.

READ JAMES 2:5-9; 1 CORINTHIANS 1:26-31

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