

## James #3: Faith When It's Hard to Love Everyone

*Real faith leads us to stop making judgments about people based on external qualities or circumstances., because that's not how God looks at us.*

- Favoritism is drawing conclusions about people based on outward characteristics.
  - **James 2:3** If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes...
- Background: Favoritism was accepted as fitting in ancient culture.
  - We easily assess people based on race, money, status, looks.
- Jesus introduced the radical new value of every person as equally valuable, created in God's image.

Favoritism is incompatible with following Jesus. (Jas 2:1)

- **James 2:1** My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism.
- The appeal is based on the fact of being people who know Jesus.
- Jesus himself embodied an attitude toward people.
  - **Phil 2:5** You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. **6** Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. **7** Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, **8** he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross..
- God is not concerned about externals, but about the heart.
  - **1 Samuel 16:7** The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.

Avoid favoritism by choosing to love all those around us. (Jas 2:8)

- **James 2:8** If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right.
- We can't love and honor our neighbor and still show favoritism.
- Neighbor = all people around you; anyone in your path.
  - Regardless of whether they are like you or not.

Remember how and why God loves you. (Acts 10:34-35)

- **Acts 10:34** Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism **35** but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right.
- We were were not saved because of race, money, or looks, but only because of God's gracious choice.