



# JAMES 2: 1-4

The Condemnation of Favoritism

**HOLLY HILLS BIBLE CHURCH**

SUNDAY 9 A.M. STUDY OF JAMES



**JAMES 2: 1-4: The Condemnation of Favoritism**

1 My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism.  
2 For if a man comes into your assembly with a gold ring and dressed in fine clothes, and there also comes in a poor man in dirty clothes,  
3 and you pay special attention to the one who is wearing the fine clothes, and say, "You sit here in a good place," and you say to the poor man, "You stand over there, or sit down by my footstool,"  
4 have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil motives?

I. Better titled perhaps: The Temptation to Show Partiality (H. MOLLOY/TRIALS & SUFFERING 3.21.04)

a. The 15 Temptations of James:

1. Temptation to express a swift, negative response & verbalize wrath [hair trigger] [1:19-20]
2. Temptation to be Hearers only of the Word & not Doers of the Word [1:22-25]
3. Temptation to Criticize Others [1:26-27]
4. **Temptation to Show Partiality/ Favoritism [2:1-13]**
5. Temptation to Boast of Our Faith without Works [2:14-26]
6. Temptation to Misuse & Not Restrain the Tongue [3:1-12]
7. Temptation to Walk in Human v. Divine Wisdom [3:13-18]
8. Temptation to Quarrel and Enter into Conflict [4:1-3]
9. Temptation of Friendship with the World/Cosmos system [4:4]
10. Temptation to be Proud [4:6]
11. Temptation to Not be Submissive to God [4:7-10]
12. Temptation to Judge Others [4:11-12]
13. Temptation to Make Decisions Apart from the Lord [4:13-17]
14. Temptation to Hoard Wealth & Live in Pleasure [5:1-6]
15. Temptation to Be Impatient and Complain [5:7-11]

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### II. Do Not Hold Your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ

- a. “do not hold” : present ACTIVE IMPERATIVE command – *to have and to hold, possess*
- b. “your faith” – personal faith is the aspect here / rest / reliance upon / trust in
- c. “the glorious Lord Jesus Christ”: reliance upon His Person, His Work, the Reality of Who and What He is; these are the sum of His Essence which is displayed in Light, splendor, brightness. “God is Light” from I John 1:5

### III. With an attitude of personal favoritism

- a. this phrase = one word in the Greek = *prosōpolēmpsia*; partiality; respect of persons
- b. used only 3x in the N.T.:

ROM 2:11 *“For there is no respect of persons with God.”*

EPH 6:9: *And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.*

COL 3: 23-25: *Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve. For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and **that without partiality***

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c. partiality; respect of persons: *the fault of one who when called to give judgment has respect (for) the outward circumstances of man and not to their intrinsic merits, and so prefers, as more worthy- one who is rich, high-born, powerful to another who does not possess these qualities* [Thayers definition]

. . . . Continuing on with Verses 2, 3 & 4:

. . . . 2 For if a man comes into your assembly with a gold ring and dressed in fine clothes, and there also comes in a poor man in dirty clothes,  
 3 and you pay special attention to the one who is wearing the fine clothes, and say, "You sit here in a good place," and you say to the poor man, "You stand over there, or sit down by my footstool,"  
 4 have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil motives?

### *IV. For if a man comes into your synagogue...*

- a. 'if' is in the subjunctive = probable; possible mood. This is a hypothetical
- b. It is a 'more probable future' 3<sup>rd</sup> class conditional
- c. It is easily likely to happen . . .
- d. be on guard for your mental attitude condition in this situation. Is it according to your faith in the glorious, risen Lord Jesus Christ, in Whom there is no respect of persons?
- e. synagogue: a gathering in of people; a coming together. VERSES: the church-
- f. *ekklesia* = *church*, a calling out; called out ones



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V. *With a gold ring and dressed in fine clothes...*

- a. 'fine clothes' is *lampros*; splendid, magnificent, gorgeous, bright
- b. 'dirty clothes' is *rhoo-par-os'*: cheap, shabby; vile raiment

VI. *... and you pay special attention to the fine clothes one.. and say 'sit in a good place' and to the poor man, 'stand over there' or 'sit down by my footstool*

- a. Has allusion to Psa. 110: *"The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet."*
- b. Footstool: a place of dishonor, place the undesirables there
- c. You put the rich and splendidly dressed in a special place; most likely in the pews in the first row on your right side.
- d. You have made a judgment call based on appearances and not on what you do not see: a man's spiritual condition, his heavenly position which God clearly sees;
- e. How do you know he is not a beloved brother *incognito*? Or an angel you are unaware of..
- f. *epiblepo* – to gaze upon with regard, respect is the one word for the phrase 'pay special attention to'
- g. *AFTER ALL! this is true: but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, 28 and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, 29 so that no man may boast before God. [1 Cor 1:27-29]*



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### VII. *have not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil motives?*

- a. The 'then' of the 'if/then' third class conditional proposition. A logical conclusion given the premise
- b. The logic comes to: YES you become in essence, an evil judge
- c. Shown with clarity in the following O.T. truisms:

Prov. 24:23: *These also are sayings of the wise. To show partiality in judgment is not good.*

I Pet. 1:17: *If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth;*

Prov. 22:2: *The rich and the poor have a common bond, The LORD is the maker of them all.*

### **On being Judges w/ evil thoughts:**

Mal 2:9

*"So I also have made you despised and abased before all the people, just as you are not keeping My ways but are showing partiality in the instruction*

Mal. 2:10

*"Do we not all have one father? Has not one God created us?"*

Psa 82:2

*How long will you judge unjustly, And show partiality to the wicked? Selah.*



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d. The issue of judging with partiality was addressed on the Mount: [Mat. 7:1-5]

**“Do not judge so that you will not be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you. 3 Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ and behold, the log is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.”**

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### VIII. Conclusion / Solution: WHAT ARE OUR RESOURCES IN THIS EASY TO FALL INTO TEMPTATION?

a. The only answer is without self-effort is in what Paul says to the Colossians 3:1-17:

1 *Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. 3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.*

5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. 6 For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience, 7 and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. 8 But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, *and* abusive speech from your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, since **you laid aside the old self** [AORIST; it was done] with its *evil* practices, 10 **and have put on the new self** [AORIST: middle voice; this is also done] who is being renewed [pres. PASSIVE vox] to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him— 11 **a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.**

**... and even further ! . . . . .**





[12] So, as those who have been **chosen** [*same word as 1 Cor.- God choosing the base things, the weak things to shame wise/strong*] of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart [*splagchnon: bowels of mercy*] of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. Beyond all these things **put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity** [*love for the one in vile and brilliant raiment alike*]. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; [*rich and poor alike in Christ*] and be thankful. Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, [*ie. James' word of truth; the word implanted*] with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. [17] Whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.