

James 2:1-13

My brothers, 1 show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. 2 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, 3 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," 4 have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? 5 Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him? 6 But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the

ones who drag you into court? 7 Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called? 8 If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. 9 But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. 10 For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. 11 For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. 12 So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. 13 For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

Summary

In this passage, James argues against Christians showing favoritism to any people. He opens the passage by explaining that favoritism is not consistent with holding faith in Jesus Christ and that therefore, true Christians do not show favoritism. There are four reasons why favoritism is not compatible with Christianity. The first is that favoritism is ultimately setting ourselves up as judges of people. Secondly, showing favoritism to the wealthy over the poor is a worldly perspective and shows our ignorance of the reality of what true wealth is because God has chosen the poor to be rich in faith and inheritors of the kingdom of God. The third reason is that it breaks God's holy law to love people. Finally, mercy triumphs over judgment, which every true Christian has experienced, leading them to be merciful towards others. The aim of the sermon is to help RHC become a church that does not treat some people differently to others.

Final Thoughts

Singapore is an incredibly diverse nation, and RHC is a diverse church. Are your friendships, actions and lives centred around those who can most help us, or those who we can most bless?

RHC Core Values

Gospel-Centredness – To have the gospel in the centre of our ministry, and for everything we do to find its root in the gospel.

Experimental Faith – To actively seek the modern day work of the Holy Spirit, expecting him to move in our midst in signs and wonders, and to lead us to the will of God.

Theological Depth – To pursue a deep and soul satisfying knowledge and understanding of God through the Bible.

Questions

1. What kind of people are you likely to treat better than others?
2. How has this passage changed the way that you view those who are lowly and despised by the world?
3. If you were to obey God's 'royal law' what difference would this make in your day to day life?
4. How does God's mercy to you empower you to live out the royal law?

One major point, or the sermon in one sentence:

True Christians are not judgmental towards others and do not show favoritism because in Christ we have received the ultimately mercy, which triumphs over judgement in our lives and makes us live out the royal law to love our neighbour as ourselves.