

Favoritism in the Church

James 2:1-13

The Command - **SHOW NO PARTIALITY!** (v.1-4)

- An illustration - the rich man and the dirty beggar (v.2-4)
- Not a matter of preference, but an issue of true faith! (v.1)

Reason #1 – Showing partiality is **CONTRARY TO GOD'S CHARACTER** (v.5-8)

- God has always shown special concern for the poor (v.5-6a)
 - Israel was first sojourners in Egypt (*Deuteronomy 10:17-19*)
 - Most believers come from humble origins (*1 Corinthians 1:26-29*)
 - Jesus preached an upside down kingdom (*Luke 6:20-26*)
 - The poor are often richest in faith!
 - When we show favoritism toward the wealthy or powerful, we are rebelling against God's very character
- It is often the rich and powerful who persecute believers (v.6b-7)
 - The gospel calls us to treat people with equity, but the wealthy and powerful often like to cling to their status

Reason #2 - Showing partiality is **BREAKING GOD'S LAW** (v.8-12)

- God calls us to love others as ourselves (v.8)
- Living with partiality/favoritism, of any kind, is contrary to God's law of love (v.9)
- Just as great rebellion against God as murder and adultery (v.10-11)
- Therefore, we must strive to obey, by loving people as God loves them (v.12)

The Response: **SHOW MERCY!** (v.13)

- Our relationship with God is based upon mercy
- Our relationships with others must be based upon mercy as well
- God looks at peoples' hearts, not their external appearance, and so we must as well!