



## Finding Love for Anyone Different From Me *James 2*

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- A condemnation of favoritism in the church. James 1:1-4
  - Favoritism is... vs. 1, 4
  
  - Examples of favoritism include... vs. 2, 3  
(see digging deeper)
  
- My correction needed to overcome favoritism includes... James 2:5-7
  - I must view them as God does. Vs. 5
  
  - I must still have discernment without discrimination. Vs. 6, 7  
(see digging deeper for application)
  
- A final command to live without favoritism. James 2:8-13
  - I must express love to all. Vs. 8  
*Who do you need to express this to in your life?*
  
  - I must confess any favoritism as sin. Vs. 9-11  
*What sin of favoritism do you need to acknowledge?*  
*Who have you slighted due to favoritism?*
  
  - I must speak and act with mercy to others. Vs, 12, 13  
**Mercy=**  
*What person will you show mercy to this week?*

## Digging Deeper in James 2

Favoritism or prejudice was a problem in the first century church, just as it is a problem in most all churches today. Somehow, this sin is not as easily recognized as other sins, such as adultery or murder.

Apparently, favoritism of preferring someone of a higher social and financial standing was at work in these first century believers. Those with money, prestige and position were offered seats of honor where as the poor had to be relegated to a lesser seat in the synagogue. James is now calling that sinful and in need of change.

Scripture offers many areas where we are vulnerable to “favoritism” or prejudice against others. On Sunday, I defined favoritism. The Greek term “favoritism” in James 2:1, comes from: *Prosopolepsia* made of *prospōn*= face and *lambanein*=to lift up. I will lift up someone’s face and make a superficial judgment about them. According to James 2:4, that will result in making a distinction of dividing them up where one is more favored based on that superficial judgment and the other is pushed away as if of less value or worth. This judgmental system comes from evil motives to better myself and devalue other people. James calls that sin and must stop.

Along with the favoritism that some show in James by honoring someone of high social or financial status and devaluing others of low social or financial position, prayerfully evaluate the following areas from the Bible which may reveal your own “favoritism” temptation or sinful behavior that needs to be changed. Everyone is tempted in different areas, so use these examples to evaluate if you are guilty of favoring one person over another in the following verses:

### Male or female favoritism.

Galatians 3:26-28 ***“For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”***

### One ethnic or culture over another.

Galatians 3:28 ***“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”***

John 4:25-27 (Jesus and woman of Samaria) ***“The woman said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us.” Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am He.” At this point His disciples came, and they were amazed that He had been speaking with a woman, yet no one said, “What do You seek?” or, “Why do You speak with her?”***

Also Acts 10:34 and Ephesians 2:11-22

### Employer and employee relationship of partiality.

Ephesians 6:7-9 ***“With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free. And masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.”***

### **Favoritism based on a person's age.**

I Timothy 4:12 ***“Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.”***

### **Favoritism based on personal appearance.**

I Samuel 16:7 ***“But the LORD said to Samuel, ‘Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.’”***

### **Favoritism of one sin is worse than another.**

I Corinthians 6:9-11 ***“Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.”***

Matthew 7:1-5 ***“Do not judge, or you too will be judged. <sup>2</sup>For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. <sup>3</sup>“Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? <sup>4</sup>How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? <sup>5</sup>You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.”***

We must avoid making sinful distinctions, divisions and judgments in the preceding areas. But that is not to suggest that we can never confront a behavior that is wrong in fear of being labeled a “bigot.” In James 2:6, 7, he points out the wrong behavior of some rich people in the church. We cannot be tolerant of any sinful behavior. Therefore, we must be discerning about others without being discriminatory against them.

Look up the following passages which will teach you the ways we must discern about what may be wrong in our lives and yet not discriminate with favoritism. What do the following passages teach you about wrong behavior that the church cannot tolerate?

**I Timothy 3**—What kind of person should the church pursue for leadership? Therefore, what behavior should you discern to determine a person’s maturity?

**II Corinthians 6:14-18**—What should any potential marriage or business relationship discern about another person before entering into a relationship?

**I Corinthians 5:11-13; II Timothy 2:22, 23**— What should a Christian discern about another “so called” brother before having an open relationship with him?

**I John 4:1; II John 7-11**— What beliefs should a Christian discern about another believer or church before pursuing a relationship with them?

In conclusion: Use the final three questions on the last point of the front outline to evaluate your own life in those areas? Where are you doing well in this matter? Where do you need to change and mature?

- I must express love to all. James 2:8  
*Who do you need to express this to in your life?*
- I must confess any favoritism as sin. James 2:9-11  
*What sin of favoritism do you need to acknowledge?*  
*Who have you slighted due to favoritism?*
- I must speak and act with mercy to others. James 2:12, 13  
*What person will you show mercy to this week?*



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