



FREEDOM FROM FAVORITISM

WEEK 3 | DAVE D'ANGELO

James 2:1-13

My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. 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, 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," have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? 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? But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called?

If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it. 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. So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

James' letter has 108 verses. **13 are dedicated to partiality.**

James 2:1

My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory.

→ James doesn't say ushers, pastors, greeters, etc. My brothers = all of us

Partiality is more than a seat location in church. It's treating others based on evil thoughts.

James 2:4

...have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

Question:

Who are my "those people"?

1 Samuel 16:7

But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart."

→ If even Samuel the prophet faced the temptation of partiality, so do we.

Partiality is devastating for everyone involved.

- For those who favor: by expressing partiality we act as though blessing can come from man and not God.
- For the favored: receiving partiality creates entitlement.
- For the dishonored: partiality perverts our view of grace and of God himself.
 - › "Why won't you bless me?"
 - › "Why did you make me like this?"
 - › "What do I have to do to be favored?"

In attempting to create space in our culture to acknowledge pain, we can fall into the trap of seeing everything through our pain.

- Everyone is prejudiced, everyone dishonors, everyone is oppressive, everyone is biased

Galatians 5:1 (MSG)

Christ has set us free to live a free life. So take your stand! Never again let anyone put a harness of slavery on you.

James 2:13

For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

Rest comes in treating our “those people” like Jesus would—**with mercy**.

Philippians 2:5-8

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Cultivating Mercy in our Hearts

1. Mercy flows from proximity.

- The longer we stay away from “those people” the more we judge.
 - If we never sit with people, we’ll never understand why they stand “where they stand.”
- Jesus doesn’t compromise the truth, but He showed no partiality.

2. Mercy flows from an honest assessment of our own self.

- The more we deny our brokenness, the more judgmental we will stay.
 - Sometimes we’re more offended by the sin of other people than we are the sin of our own hearts.
- The ground is level at the cross.

3. Mercy flows from a deep desire to glorify God.

- When we choose to obey God we humble ourselves.

Question:

Is there any place of disobedience in my life?

