

Greater Pleasant Branch Baptist Church

Connect Learn Grow

Wednesday Bible Study - Theme: Pathways to Spirituality

Review of the Book of James- Chapter 2- Lesson #2 - April 14,2021

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I. Subject: Results of partiality- James 2: 5-7

II. Central Focus

You were created to become like Christ- Romans 8: 29-30-Message Translation.

III. 2021 Bible Study Motto “ Simply put , we must practice the spiritual disciplines that form pathways to the heart of God and transform us into godly people. Training-not trying is the key.” The Complete Book of Discipleship by Bill Hull

IV. Big Idea

Believers must show compassion for the poor and spiritually hungry rather than cater to the rich and powerful.

V. Introduction

In this section of James chapter 2, James deals with the results of the practice of partiality .

James maintains that partiality is contrary to God’s plan and a threat to the best interests of believers . James exposes how some believers were abusing the poor ,while on the contrary , the poor were exalted by God.

The way some believers were treating the poor was contrary to the way God had purposed to treat them.

James teaches that believers must adopt God’s view for how the poor should be treated.

The world may see poor people as insignificant and worthless. God sees them as abounding in the riches of faith.

Showing partiality to the rich is to disregard what God has done for the poor.

James insists that showing partiality is wrong because it violates the “ royal law.”

James describes two inconsistencies in verse 5-7 that are apparent when the rich man is exalted above the poor man as follows:

1. It is inconsistent with God's choice of the poor.
2. It is inconsistent when considering the unjust actions of the rich.

This lesson teaches that believers should not displease God by favoring the rich or abusing the poor.

#### VI. Key definitions, commands, spiritual principles and spiritual disciplines

1. James begins his teaching in verse 5 with an appeal to his "beloved brethren". The word "hearken" that James uses means to listen or pay attention. The expression "hearken beloved brethren" is an impassioned "Command" regarding the sinful practice of partiality for which certain believers were guilty.

2. James teaches that preferential treatment of the rich and prejudiced treatment of the poor is to deny what God has done for the poor.

3. James describes in verse 5 three things that God has done for the poor as follows:

- \* God has chosen the poor.
- \* The poor are rich in faith.
- \* The poor are heirs of the Kingdom of Christ.

The fact that God has chosen the poor does not mean that all poor people will be saved. However, it does mean that poverty is not a disadvantage or barrier in coming to Christ by faith.

The poor are rich in God's sight because of their faith in God.

James teaches that physical/ material wealth pales in comparison to spiritual wealth.

The poor are heirs of the Kingdom which God has promised to them that love Him. This means that the poor who have accepted Jesus as Savior and Lord are already possessors of an estate reserved for them by God.

This kingdom and its full manifestation is Christ's future Kingdom at the end of the age. The poor who are true believers can look forward to a glorious inheritance.

4. In verse 6, James calls attention to the partiality of some believers toward the poor using the term "but ye have despised the poor", this term calls attention to the contrast in their attitudes and actions toward the poor.

5. Despised means to treat shamefully, to disgrace or dishonor. The treatment of the poor was in fact much like a form of "Segregation"

6. James shows in verse 6 how the rich were oppressing these believers and dragging them into court for retribution, what a contrast, these believers were abusing the poor while being abused themselves by the rich.

7. Oppress means to conquer or enslave. Believers who were mistreating the poor had in fact become slaves to the rich.

8. The rich were not content to oppress these believers but were also guilty of blaspheming the “worthy name”, that name is not mentioned but the only worthy name according to Scripture is the name of Jesus Christ -Philippians 2:9-11. Blaspheme means to slander, defame or speak evil of someone who is honorable. This sin of the rich was quite an affront to God and showed their disregard for God. James teaches that it does not make spiritual sense for believers to honor someone who speaks evil of God.

9. James makes a strong case regarding how shameful it was to treat with contempt other believers who God had saved and ignore God’s concern and compassion for them , such attitudes and actions are against the holy will of God and must stop.

## VII. Application

1. This lesson teaches that believers must not displease God by favoring the rich and despising the poor. What steps should our church take to comply with this command ?

2. Do you practice “ Segregation “ in your relationship with fellow believers ? How do you avoid this sinful practice ?

3. How do the “ Commands” in this lesson apply to you as a believer ?

4. Identify spiritual disciplines described in James 2: 5-7.

5. How will you apply this lesson to your heart and life ?