

Greater Pleasant Branch Baptist Church

Connect Learn Grow

Wednesday Bible Study - Theme: Pathways to Spirituality

Review of the Book of James-Chapter 2

I. Central Focus

You were created to become like Christ- Romans 8:29-30(Message Translation)
“ God knew what He was doing from the very beginning. He decided from the outset to shape the lives of those who love Him along the same lines as the life of his Son. We see the original and intended shape of our lives there in Him.”

II. 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

III. James Chapter 2-General Outline

- I. Rebuking partiality-James 2: 1-4
- II. Results of partiality-James 2: 5-7
- III. Reality of faith- James 2: 8-13

IV. James Chapter 2- General Introduction

There are two important themes in James chapter one. The first one is faith to trust God and His plan for our lives. This includes growing our faith through trials and circumstances. The second theme is right living.

The second chapter of James continues these themes and focuses on application, which the author had previously stated in James 1: 22 “ But prove yourselves doers of the word and not merely hearers.” The goal of the text is to help believers close the gap between what we say and how we live.

Not only is the mature Christian patient in trials/testing (James chapter 1)but also practices truth, which is the principle theme of chapter 2.

Immature Christians talk about their faith, but the mature Christian lives his faith.

Hearing God’s word and talking about God’s word can never substitute for doing God’s word.

The first section of James chapter 2(verses 1-13) addresses the sin of partiality.

James Chapter 2

Lesson # 1- April 7, 2021-Prepared by: Pastor Artee Williams and Minister Andrew Balenton

I. Subject: Rebuking partiality- James 2: 1-4

II. Big Idea

God wants believers to demonstrate their obedience to His word by overcoming partiality and by producing deeds of compassion.

Stated another way the Big Idea is: God wants believers to demonstrate the relationship between their beliefs and behavior, conduct and convictions.

III. Key definitions, commands, spiritual principles, and spiritual disciplines

1. Partiality was a prevalent problem within the family of believers to whom James addressed his epistle and provided instructions on how to correct the problem in verses 1-13.

2. James begins his instructions in verse 1 with a command, the Amplified Translation of the Bible provides clarity regarding these instructions: “ My fellow believers, do not practice your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of partiality (toward people, show no favoritism, no prejudice, no snobbery).

3. Showing favoritism is considered a sin, because you elevate people based on human standards.

4. Showing favoritism is prohibited by the following Scripture passages: Leviticus 19: 15, Deuteronomy 1:17, Deuteronomy 10:17-18, Proverbs 22:2, Romans 2:11.

5. The term “ have not” is considered part of an imperative statement or command and indicates continuous practice. The believers scattered abroad were continually practicing partiality and James commands that it stop.

6. The term “ faith of our Lord Jesus Christ” indicates that the partiality being practiced was inconsistent with the faith these believers professed in Jesus Christ.

7. The “ Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ” does not represent a faith that Jesus possessed but the believers faith in Him.

8. The term “ with respect of persons” identifies the sin that James commanded should stop. The meaning of this term is that of favoritism, partiality, and prejudice.

9. James concludes verse 1 by asserting that if believers have in fact accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as the Lord of glory, that is sovereign over their lives, then they should have left favoritism, partiality and prejudice in their past.

10. In verses 2-4 James shows the inconsistency of his fellow believers profession and practice.

11. James utilized an illustration to describe the actual practice of partiality.

12. These believers demonstrated a sharp contrast in how they treated the prosperous man with a gold ring and goodly apparel and the poor man because of his vile: shabby, foul and dirty apparel.

13. The sin of these believers was showing respect for the prosperous man and contempt for the poor man. "Respect to him" means to pay attention to, or deference paid to another person based on outward appearance.

14. These believers were guilty of making a difference based on external appearances alone. In fact James states that the rich man was poor in spiritual matters and the poor man was rich in spiritual matters. James proves that God is no respecter of persons and he judges the heart and intentions of men.

15. The compelling question in verse 4 had to get the attention of those who were practicing partiality. The Amplified Translation of the Bible states the question as follows: "Have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with wrong motives?"

16. The term "and are become judges of evil thoughts" indicated that these believers were not judging evil thoughts, but in fact were judges with evil thoughts, they were being motivated by their evil thoughts. This kind of judging showed a preference for that which is worldly over that which is spiritual.

17. These believers had expressed their faith in the Lord, yet by their actions, were at odds with what they professed.

IV. Application (Questions and Points to Ponder)

1. Identify commands, spiritual principles and spiritual disciplines in James 2:1-4.
2. Is partiality considered a sin, why?
3. How does partiality negatively impact the the message (word of God)we are commanded to proclaim?
4. How can believers avoid the sin of partiality?
5. What might be the outcome if we practiced impartiality among all people?
6. How will you apply the teaching of this lesson to your heart and life?