

We like people like us! Nothing wrong with that, is there?? Not until that preference becomes the standard by which I judge others. So How Bad Is Favoritism??

I. **Favoritism Denies Our Faith** (1-4)

A. It is Condemned By God!

1. God shows no favoritism Lev.19:15; Deut.1:17; Job 34:18,19; Deut.10:17-19
2. Chooses the weak, small, insignificant Deut.7:7;

B. It Insults the Glory of Christ.

1. What is Christ’s Glory?
 - a. Glory – the weight of the presence of God – in all his perfections (person & purpose) Moses, Isaiah, Ezekiel
 - b. Christ’s Glory?
 - Takes our nature -Phil 2:5ff; Heb.2:14
 - Rich, and became poor- 2 Cor 8:9; Isaiah 53!!
 - Takes our sin - 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet.2:24
2. The cross is Christ’s glory. He becomes sin for our deliverance. He conquers death and rises again so that we would have life.

C. It Inflates our self-righteousness. *We seek our own glory.*

- approves what God condemns
- robs Christ is His glory to replace it with another
- makes us judges we think wiser than the Lord.

II. **Favoritism DEFIES the Sovereignty of God** (5-7) (and it rewards the oppressor)

- A. His Choice: The Poor. He **chose** those who are poor in the eyes of the world.
 - Hebrews enslaved in Egypt.
 - The weak and foolish-1 Cor.1:26ff
 - Throws us back to 1:9,10
- B. The rich oppressors?
 - You are denying the reality/world in which you live.
 - the powerful and wealthy oppress you

III. **Favoritism Violates the Law O God** (8-12) Law is mentioned in 8-12 in every verse.

A. The “Royal Law”? Love your neighbor as yourself.

1. Royal in the sense of “*belonging to the King*” Mark.12:28-31
 - called “heirs of the kingdom”, now given the “Kingdom Law”.
 - this law of special concern to the king!
2. Love is not emotion, it is action!

B. Opposite of Royal Law is Favoritism. Keep the Law? You do Well. OR Show Favoritism? You Sin!

C. Break this part of the Law and you have broken it all.

1. The Whole Law is a Piece.

- God is not part good, part righteous, part love, part just, etc.
- He is *entirely* good, righteous, just, love, etc.
- To break any part it to break the whole!
- To break any part violates God's nature/person.

2. Breaking one part breaks all the other parts, too.

The little sin of "favoritism"?

- It breaks every commandment
- The Law is not a pile of stones
- The Law is like a mirror

IV. Let Mercy Triumph! (v13)

A. James & Jesus teach the same thing. Matt.18:21-35

- Our showing mercy doesn't merit our redemption
- We have been shown mercy and we, in kind, show it!
- If we are not merciful, we can't expect to receive it.

B. Don't let a merciful spirit be supplanted by one based on favoritism!

- Won't be merciful? Be prepared: The law will be your judge.

C. Mercy triumphs over judgment!

- We know, as believers just how mercy is received.
- Let mercy triumph over judgment in our hearts!

1. How do we put this into practice?

a. In worship?

- Deference is appropriate to age, infirmity, esteemed position.
- We probably wouldn't have much trouble in the worship setting.

b. Where is your heart in this matter?

- Prejudice – judging outward appearances?
- Same problem:
 - Looks down on people (despises them)
 - Makes us a judge (without knowledge)
 - Mercy is not shown

c. Where do my preferences break the Royal Law?

1) We do have different callings.

- Discomfort doesn't define a lack of "calling"
- What is your "calling"?

2. We need to see Christ's glory in those of humble circumstances. We must care, hear, reach out. We who have received such amazing mercy and grace, we who have been rescued from eternal damnation, from the eternal wrath of God – we must show mercy as we have opportunity.

3. Don't know where to start?

- Start in Prayer
- Look: Have you insulated yourself from the poor?
- Find a place to minister.
- Invest yourself in ministry.