

SIN OF PARTIALITY

In our lesson text, James illustrated a common problem in the early Jewish Christian church from Judean legalism regarding the sin of partiality.

It was clearly taught in the Old Covenant that God was no respecter of persons:

(Deut.10:17) “For the Lord your God is the God of the gods and the Lord of the lords, the great and mighty, **and the awesome God who does not show partiality** nor take a bribe.”

This lesson will study four aspects of the Sin of Partiality.

1. James illustrates the sin of partiality by contrasting how different visitors were treated by the assembly:

- (James 2:1-7): wealthy visitor treated well, and Poor visitor treated poorly (James 2:1-3).

Then James challenges the assembled believers with four rhetorical questions that require a **YES** answer:

- (James 2:4) “Have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil motives?”
- (James 2:5) “Did God not choose the poor of the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?” (God’s standards are different than world’s)
- (James 2:6) “Is it not the rich who oppress you and personally drag you into court?” (**Note the statement made in James 2:6**)
- (James 2:7) “Do they not blaspheme the fair name by which you have been called?”

This is how God teaches us. He gives you the answers before the test so that you can get 100%.

(1 Cor.10:13) “No temptation has overtaken you, but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, **but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.**” (Job is one example)

2. Believers can please God but cannot not earn His respect.

(Heb.11:6) “And **without faith it is impossible to please Him**, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of who seek Him.” (James 2:5)

(Rom.8:8) “And Those who are in the flesh **cannot please God.**” (1 Thess.4:1-5)

God respected Job

(Job 2:3) Then the LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil. And he still maintains his integrity, though you incited me against him to ruin him without any reason.”

God respected John the Baptist

(Matt.11:11) Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

3. The Judaizers (legalist) of Jerusalem Church ascribed a higher reputation to those of the law than to those of grace.

Therefore, those who promoted legalism theology considered themselves to be theologically higher or superior to those of grace theology like Paul and Barnabas. **This is a sin of partiality**

(Gal.2:2) “It was because of a revelation that I went up; and I submitted to them the gospel which I preached among the Gentiles, but I did so in private to those who were of **reputation (dokeo)**, for fear that I might be running, or had run in vain.”

(Gal.2:6) “But from those who were of **high reputation (dokeo/ a held opinion)** (what they were make no difference to me; **God shows no partiality**) – well, those who were of **reputation** contributed nothing to me.”

(Gal.2:9) “**And recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and John, who were reputed (dokeo) to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, so that we might go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.**”

All of this was to be settled at the Jerusalem Church Conference in (Acts 15:1, 5).

(Acts 15:11) “But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are.”

They wrote an Apostolic Creed on it (Acts 15:22-29).

4. Positional Sanctification places all church age believers in the same righteous status in Christ

(2 Cor.5:17-21) Therefore if anyone is in Christ, *he is* a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Now all *these* things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

(Gal.3:26-28) “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ ([20 status-privileges](#)). There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, **for you are all one in Christ Jesus.**”

(1 Cor.12:13) For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.