

"THE EPISTLE OF JAMES"

Chapter Two

OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THE CHAPTER

- 1) To consider the sin and danger of showing personal favoritism
- 2) To note the folly of faith without works, how that faith without works is a dead faith

SUMMARY

In this chapter we first find a call to hold the faith of Jesus Christ without partiality. Evidently some were displaying favoritism toward the rich in their assemblies, while despising the poor. Showing respect of persons made one a judge with evil thoughts, and James provides several reasons why such prejudice was unbecoming of those who believe in Jesus and worthy of condemnation (**1-13**).

James then addresses the relationship between faith and works, especially the folly of professing faith when unaccompanied by works. Using several examples to make his point, including those of Abraham the friend of God and Rahab the harlot, James declares three times that faith without works is dead (14-26).

OUTLINE

I. TRUE RELIGION DOES NOT SHOW PARTIALITY (1-13)

A. SUCH AS SHOWING PREFERENCE TO THE RICH (1-3)

1. The faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, is not to be held with partiality
2. A case in point: showing preference with seating arrangements in the assembly

B. REASONS NOT TO SHOW PARTIALITY TOWARD THE RICH (4-13)

1. It makes one a judge with evil thoughts
2. Has not God chosen the poor to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom?
3. Have not the rich oppressed and blasphemed you?
4. Does not the royal law call upon us to love our neighbor?
5. Partiality will convict us as transgressors, even if we stumble in only one point
6. We shall be judged by the law of liberty, in which judgment without mercy is given to those who show no mercy

II. TRUE RELIGION SHOWS FAITH THROUGH WORKS (14-26)

A. FAITH WITHOUT WORKS CANNOT SAVE ONE (14-19)

1. What profit is there in faith without works?
 - a. Can such faith save one?
 - b. Is there any profit to tell a naked and destitute person to be warm and filled, and not give them what they need?
 - c. Thus faith by itself, without works, is dead
2. Faith is shown by one's works
 - a. It is not enough to claim to have faith
 - b. The devils believe in God, and tremble

B. FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD (20-26)

1. As exemplified by Abraham, the friend of God
 - a. Who was justified by works when he offered his son Isaac on the altar
 - b. His faith was working with his works, and by them perfected his faith
 - c. By his works the Scripture was fulfilled that declared him faithful and righteous
2. As exemplified by Rahab, the harlot
 - a. Who was justified by works when she hid the spies
 - b. Thus faith without works is dead, just as the body without the spirit is dead