

James 1:27: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world".

Last time, we considered what MUST BE an essential characteristic of our Christianity, or of our religion, "keeping ourselves unspotted from the world". If you and I would fulfill THIS truth as children of God, we must constantly be turning from sin and from the influences of the world.

But as you know, the world is going to try daily to PULL YOU IN, for that reason, you and I have the continual need of BEING TRANSFORMED by the renewing of our minds by the Spirit of God in the Word! Proverbs 13:4!
To be in love with the world is to NOT be in love with Christ! If ANYONE (who professes to be a Christian love the world), the love of the Father IS NOT IN THEM!

James 4:4: "Friendship (kinship) with (or fondness) for the world is enmity with God! Whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God".

Child of God, if you would keep yourself unspotted from the world, you must keep yourself from being influenced by the world.

You MUST NEVER FORGET that the world is under the leadership of the god of this world..... and there is nothing more that he would love than for you to be reunited with him in his kingdom!

As we begin (C2), James teaches us about wrong thinking and a bad attitude that exists in the world that should NEVER be found in any of us who profess faith in Christ. Read James 2:1-14. Emphasize (V14)

FIRST: Are you a respecter of persons? NOT, are you respectful toward others, we should certainly be that... I think of Romans 13:8-10

What is it then to be a respecter of persons? It's respecting certain people because of who they are, but it's also disrespecting some others because of who they are.

If you're a respecter of persons, you judge someone by how they look, or by their social status, wealth, poverty, ethnicity, where they live, or by their vocation. Child of God, hear what God is teaching you this morning...

(V1): "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons".

(V4): "Are you then partial (or biased) in yourselves, and become judges of evil thoughts?"

(V9): "If ye (DO) have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors".

We should not be partial or biased toward any, we should be impartial and unbiased to all, remembering that none of us

was made any better than the other... every one of us was made in the image of God, and every one of us, no matter what we have or who we are... are sinners! Proverbs 22:2
We should THEREFORE treat everyone who crosses our path with dignity and respect, no matter how they look, no matter how they're dressed, no matter what they have or don't have, no matter where they live, no matter whether rich or poor.

Everyone WHOM YOU SEE came into the world the same way, with nothing, and we will all die with nothing! What you see on the outside is garnish... it's superficial, unimportant, and immaterial...

CH Spurgeon wrote: Rich and poor must soon meet in the grave, there all differences of rank will be obliterated. C. Bridges: "At the gate of the invisible world the distinction of riches and poverty is dropped". Psalm 49:1-3,10-20

SECOND: James' emphasis (in our text) is on how we, as a church receive and treat people who come to our worship.

Are WE as a church, respecters of persons? Do we give attention to, and love to some because of what we see, and avoid and shun others because of what we see? What do strangers who come in these doors, who've never met us experience FROM US? Especially the poor. James 2:2-4

Would WE RATHER see a well-groomed person come in the door than one who is poor and not well-dressed?

Listen to me, the world is full of sinful prejudices, partiality, and biases, and we as individual Christians MUST RECOGNIZE these sinful attitudes in our minds and MORTIFY THEM! We must abhor thoughts like this and cast them from us, and NEVER bring them into the church!

If you want to see the best example of a Man who was no respecter of persons, look no further than the Lord Jesus.

Look at the men whom He chose to be His apostles! Men who would communicate God's salvation and truth to a world of fallen sinners.

He chose poor, ignorant, and unlearned fishermen, a publican and tax collector for the Romans, and a political zealot or a revolutionary.

All of them were common, ordinary, and unqualified for what was before them. If Jesus was a respecter of persons, Paul would have been the only apostle chosen... but Paul was quickly taught by Christ, what things WERE gain to him, those things he willingly counted loss for Christ.

If the (12) apostles walked in the door right now, BEFORE Christ called them, what would we think? What would we think of Christ?

Christ called these men, and taught these men, and loved them "in their poverty and nothingness", and when they believed Him to be their Messiah, He continued to devote Himself to them, teach them, and equip them for what was before them.

So, beloved, let us love EVERY HUMAN who walks in these doors, no matter who they are or how they look... And let us care about them and devote ourselves to them, just as our Lord devoted Himself to His apostles!

If they're lost, let us tell them about the cross of Christ and the love of Christ toward sinners... And let us tell it to them from the love of Christ within us!

If they already profess faith in Christ, let us meet them where they are, love them as brethren THAT THEY MIGHT BE TAUGHT OF GOD WITH US, transformed in their minds by the Spirit of God and Word of God WITH US, and conformed to the image of Christ WITH US! 1 Corinthians 1:26-29

THIRD: James is pleading with us as "beloved brethren" about a very dangerous and damning sinful attitude that should be in none of us!

Be warned of respecting the rich and elite, and being prejudiced against those who are common and poor, you may very well be loving whom God hates and despising one whom God loves!

Not all, but many of the rich of this world, who are the elite and upper class despise and oppress the poor, they blaspheme the wonderful Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and they despise Christians! James 2:5-7

Proverbs 14:31: "He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth Him (His Maker) hath mercy on the poor". Proverbs 17:5: "Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his Maker".

Those who oppress and mock the poor would treat the Lord Jesus with scorn and contempt and despise and reject Him because of how He looked... for He, "The Lord of Glory" took upon Himself the form of a servant and lived as a common and poor man in this world.

Matthew 8:20, Luke 8:1-3, 2 Corinthians 8:9, Matthew 11:5

James 2:8-11

If you're a Christian, you're a child of the King, you are called to obey the royal law, the commands of Christ given by your King...to love thy neighbor as thyself, without any distinctions or partiality, whether rich or poor!

i. James 2:12-13: "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment".

Remember the rich man in hell, he cried out for mercy, but received none, also remember that in his lifetime, he showed no mercy to poor Lazarus!

Christian, if you have found yourself to be partial to some and impartial to others, if you're a respecter of persons, repent of your sinful biases, it is not so in the Kingdom of Christ, and it must not be so in His churches!

To the lost, to those of you who are not saved.....you might be well-off in this world, but when it comes to your relationship

with God, you are helpless, poor, and in great need of what you will never have without Christ.

All people (without exception) have sinned and fallen short of what God requires, yeah demands.....God TODAY commands all sinners everywhere, (without exception or distinction) to repent, believe on Christ whom He sent to save every sinner who believes!