

James 2:1-3:12

I. Introduction

A. The book of James is filled with practical instruction for daily Christian living. Notice some specific instruction given in the second and third chapters of the book.

II. Partiality Condemned

- A. While chapter one ends by stressing the inconsistency of claiming devotion to God while being *worldly*, chapter two begins by showing the inconsistency of being a Christian while showing *partiality*. **James 2:1**
- B. The example of partiality condemned in James 2 involves showing favoritism toward the rich over the poor. **James 2:2-4**
- C. While there are times we *must* make distinctions between two or more people, we must avoid treating one as if he or she is better than another based on wealth, race, popularity, education, etc. We must let go of such prejudices and be *fair* in our treatment of others. **1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:14**

III. To Be Rich or Poor?

A. James indicates that the poor of his day often accepted truth, while the rich were often oppressive. This shows the foolishness of favoring the rich over the poor. It is also wrong to show partiality to the *poor* over the *rich*. Earthly wealth, or lack of it, does not make one more or less pleasing to God. **James 2:5-7**

IV. Keeping the Whole Law

- A. To show partiality is to fail to love one's neighbor as oneself. **James 2:8-9; Romans 13:9**
- B. More generally, it is to disobey one of Christ's commands. To commit *anything* He forbids or omit *anything* He requires is to break the Law of Christ. **James 2:10-11**
- C. We must live in view of the fact that we will be judged by the totality of this Law on the Day of Judgment. **James 2:12-13**

V. Faith and Works

- A. The inspired apostle Paul teaches that we are saved by grace through faith. **Ephesians 2:8-9**
- B. Scripture does *not*, though, teach that we are saved by faith *alone*. James exposes this way of thinking. **James 2:14-20**
- C. Faith and works must not be disconnected from each other. A faith that *saves* is a faith that *obeys*. **James 2:21-26**

VI. Warning About Teaching

- A. The third chapter of James begins with a warning about teaching. **James 3:1**
- B. James' command "Let not many of you be teachers" is not intended to discourage Christians from teaching. Rather, the emphasis is on the great responsibility that comes with teaching God's will, and the harsh judgment God will render against *false* teachers. **Hebrews 5:12**

VII. Dangers of the Tongue

- A. False teaching is an example of the danger that can be caused by the tongue if it is not controlled. Whether it is this, gossiping, murmuring, lying, cursing, hateful words, etc, man often fails to control his tongue. **James 3:2**
- B. Like a bit in a horse's mouth or the rudder of a ship, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it has an enormous influence. **James 3:3-6; Matthew 12:36-37**
- C. While man has proven the ability to tame a wide variety of animals, taming the *tongue* is a different story. **James 3:7-8; Matthew 12:34-35**
- D. The dangers of the tongue should cause us to put forth diligent effort to bridle the tongue, bringing *all* of our speech in line with God's will. **James 3:9-12**

XIII. Conclusion

- A. May we heed these truths from the book of James.