

CCC HOW TO TREAT PEOPLE RIGHT P6

Develop a Faith That Works

James 2:1-13

Welcome:

The Sunday School teacher was describing that when Lot's wife looked back at Sodom she turned into a pillar of salt, a little boy raised his hand and said, "My mommy looked back once while she was driving and turned into a telephone pole."

A Sunday School teacher said to her children, "We have been learning about how powerful the kings and queens were in Biblical times. But there is a higher power. Who can tell me what that Higher power is?" Tommy blurted out, "Aces."

After explaining the commandment to honor your father and mother, a children church teacher asked her class if there was a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters.

One boy answered, "Thou shalt not kill."

A father was reading Bible stories to his young son. He read, "The man named Lot was warned to take his wife and **flee** out of the city, but his wife looked back and was turned into a pillar of salt."

His son asked, "What happened to the flea?"

Message: Today I want for us to look at "How to Treat People Right." See, our biggest problems in life are people problems -- getting along with other people. I have some poetry to share with you this morning that maybe describes

what I am saying. "To dwell above with those you love... that will be a glory. But to dwell below, with those we know... we'll that's just another story."

So, how do you get along with people here on earth, How do you treat people right... The book of James gives us some insight to this question. [Read James 2:1-13](#)

James gives us the principle, the problem, and the application in this passage. v. 1 *"My dear brothers and sisters, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don't show favoritism."* Whenever James says, "my dear" get ready, because he's ready to nail you. And what he's talking about here when he says, *"don't show favoritism"* He's talking about prejudice, partiality, favoritism, being a snob. A snob is somebody thinks they're better than everybody else. They look and talk about others as being those people, they have a superficial judgment. James

starts off and says to us, “Don't do that. Don't accept people on superficial judgments. This morning, in order to deal with it, we need to first look at some common areas of discrimination.

Appearance -- We discriminate often because of appearance. God's word, the bible says, “*Never treat anybody in a different way according to their outward appearance.*” But yet it is a common social disease of today society. We judge people on their appearance -- How you're dressed definitely influences how you will relate to people. Let me ask you a question, “If somebody has long hair and a beard and tattoos, do you judge them immediately? Do you treat love them differently than someone who dress for success. Another common area of discrimination is:

Ancestry – What I mean by that is we judge people according to their race, according to their nationality, their ethnic background. I heard about a black man who went to a church in the south and was trying to get in. The church was full of bigots and they wouldn't let him in. He went to the pastor and told him about what happen. The pastor said, "You just need to pray about it." About three weeks later the pastor saw him and asked, "Did you talk to the Lord about it?" The man said, "Yes, and God told me, 'Don't worry, I've been trying to get in that church 20 years myself and I can't get in either.'"

Age -- You're too young or too old.

Achievement -- Our society gushes over winners and forgets the losers. Success and status are keywords in churches today. Let me say it this way, we have our own superstars Christians now...

Affluence -- the most common distinction today and the most discrimination today is: We judge people by their wealth -- whether they're rich or poor -- we treat people differently because of their economic status. Let me share something with you... most people would have missed who Jesus was in His days here on earth because He was poor and just an ordinary looking person.

James continues on in this area of, affluence. He says this is a big one. This is the one everyone most likely will really struggle with, affluence. Listen to what he says in verse 2, *"Suppose a man comes to your meeting wearing gold rings and fine clothes and a poor man in shabby clothes also comes in. If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say 'Here's a good seat for you' but say to the poor man 'You stand over there' or 'Sit*

on the floor at my feet', have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?"

James doesn't criticize the guy who is wealthy; he criticizes the members of that meeting for being partial to the wealthy guy. They usher the rich guy to the front row and then says to the bum, *"You can stand over there in a corner or you can sit on the floor."* Literally he is saying, "be someone footstool." It's the ultimate putdown and James says to us there are problems with favoritism.

1. Favoritism is unchristian. If you want to be like Jesus you can't play favorites. *"My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don't show favoritism."* Faith in Christ and favoritism or discrimination is incompatible. God does not play favorites, if you're a Christian and your desire is to be like Jesus... Jesus treated everybody with fairness and dignity. If there is any place in the world

where there shouldn't be any kind of discrimination... it should be the church. Another problem James says is:

2. Favoritism is unreasonable. In v. 5-7 he says it's illogical, it doesn't make sense. "In the first place," he says, "God has chosen the poor." *"Has not God chosen the poor to be rich in faith and inherit the kingdom?"* He's not saying that it's good to be poor and bad to be rich. He's not saying only the poor will be saved either. What James is saying, it doesn't make any difference to God one way or another so it should to you either.

Listen I don't know about you but aren't you glad God doesn't check your wallet before He saves you? Aren't you glad your salvation isn't based on your wallet size or your savings account size or your 401k size? James says to us wealth in itself... does not deserve any special treatment. Your value to God is not based on your wealth. I want to

share one more thing while were here. **Don't confuse your net worth with your self-worth.** There's a big difference. I drive a 1999 Toyota with screws holding the bumper. \$19.95 hub caps on it... Can I afford better, maybe but I happen to believe you drive cars for transportation, not for status. I have a \$7 watch I wear sometimes. It tells me the same time as your Rolex does. Can I afford those neat things, maybe, but that's not my priority. My net worth and my self-worth have nothing to do with who I am and what I am. I don't get my strokes by impressing you by wearing certain kinds of clothes or driving a certain kind of cars. It doesn't matter to me where you buy your clothes or what you drive, you're welcome here at Calvary anytime, just as you are, and all I am about is trying to be like Christ and see lives change for eternity. James says, "Don't show favoritism. It's unchristian, it's unreasonable, it's illogical,

it doesn't make sense.” Then he gives us his real primary reason about favoritism.

Favoritism is unloving. That's why you shouldn't do it. He says to you and I in verse 8, *"If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' you're doing right."* Remember love is giving away; love is you acting on something. *"Love your neighbor as yourself."* If I play favorites I'm being unloving. The Bible says, how we relate to other people shows how much we really love God. I John 4:20 *"If a man says he loves God and hates his brother he's lying. How can you love God whom you haven't seen if you don't love your brother whom you have seen?"* How I relate to you proves how much I love God. Favoritism is unloving.

v. 9 *"If you show favoritism you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. For whoever keeps the whole law yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it."* *"For who said, 'Do not commit adultery' also said 'Do not murder'. If you don't commit adultery but you do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker."* What is he saying is: If I come to your house and say, "I really respect you a whole lot and by the way I'm going to prove to you how much I love you: I'm not going to commit adultery with your wife. However, if you tick me off I reserve the right to murder you." What does God care if I'm partial to certain kinds of people?" God says it's all the same, Adultery, murder or favoritism/ discrimination. It's all sin in God's eyes. Love treats people with mercy. Love gives people what they need, not what they deserve. That's the

problem. It's unchristian, it's unreasonable, it's unloving to show favoritism to be a snob. So, how do you treat people?

III. THE PRESCRIPTION: HOW TO TREAT

PEOPLE RIGHT - We may want to say it this way, “How do you have a loving church?” Typically the reasons for growth in churches has been their focus such factors such as pastoral leadership, attractiveness of the facilities, whether they are liberal or conservative theology, Politics. But there is increasing evidence that none of these influences are working in a church any more because all they are doing is trading membership back and forth, no real growth, just taking people from one church to another... because of the leadership of a pastor, or it's political stance or it's conservative or liberal theology. But God's word, the bible says, a church is to grow based on its love of the non-church people. You don't argue people into

the kingdom of heaven. You don't talk people into the kingdom of heaven you allow God love to flow from you that brings people into the kingdom of heaven. You love them into the kingdom of heaven and that's James prescription. How do you do that?

1. Accept everybody.

Have you ever been in a church of spiritual snobs? They act like we got it and you don't. Do you know why people have a hard time accepting others? They confuse acceptance with approval. There's a big difference between acceptance and approval. You can accept somebody without approving of his lifestyle. They may be doing something totally contrary to the word of God, but you can accept them without approving of the sin there involved in. I accept you, you accept me and we all have parts of our life that is contrary to the word of God, the

bible. Romans 15:7 "*Accept one another just as Christ accepted you.*" At Calvary we are trying to cultivate an attitude of acceptance. See Jesus said His church is to be a hospital for sinners, not a hotel for saints. If you're perfect, you don't belong here at Calvary trust me. Calvary is a church where people are growing. This is a church for people who don't have it all together. We have every kind of background here you can imagine in this church. We've got Catholics, Charismatics, Jews, Baptists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Assembly of God, Pentecostal, we have the bill's here I use to say I was a nothing, had no religious background. It doesn't matter where you've been. It matters where you are now and if you know Jesus or if you don't were all the same. If you want to consider the claims of Christ you're welcome,... if you made a decision to follow Christ with your life, your welcome... if you

have made that decision and want to grow up in it and become a godly man, a godly husband, a godly father, a godly women, mother and wife, your welcome.

I hate to tell some of you this but you're not going to like Heaven very much because it's not exclusive enough for you. There will be people all backgrounds different races and guess what their going to be treat just like you. There will be no favoritism in Heaven.

2. Appreciate everybody. This goes a little bit further than acceptance for me here at Calvary. Philippians 2:35 "*Do nothing from selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourself. Each of you should look not only to your own interest but also the interest of others.*" Appreciate everybody. Find something you can like in that person, not just accept them, find something you can like in somebody and tell them. Maybe

you need to just really stretch yourself and invite them to lunch or over for dinner or something and appreciate them just as they are... Now I am not talking about those that are in your little click... but, branch out and love someone just as they are and show them God's love living through you in your actions. Get to know them to love them. There are a lot of great people in this church but if you stay just in your little circle or maybe let's call them now your little click you won't have to love anybody unconditionally. Reach out to others.

3. Affirm everybody.

Give everybody a lift whenever you can. I Thess. 5:11
"Encourage one another and build each other up." When people stumble, don't criticize, sympathize. Be an encourager to them not a complainer, not a condemner, not a critical person, not a judger. You can encourage people

just by smiling at them. Give them a handshake, a smile. Affirm people.

So, what is God saying in His word, in the book of James? The church that accepts, appreciates and affirms people is the church that God blesses. Absolutely nothing can stop the church that's filled with God's love. But, listen ...it doesn't happen accidentally. Learning to treat people right doesn't happen accidentally. You have a choice. Everybody here will contribute to the atmosphere of this church either negatively or positively. So, let me ask you a question, would people come back to this church just because of you? Would people come to this church and consider the claims of Christ because of you. Together we need to make a commitment that this church will receive people unconditionally. Together we need to make a commitment to treat people right with the idea of inviting

them to come and consider the claims of Christ... and they will if you have been treating them like Christ would, I truly believe that... People who come to this church are as welcomed as a member of this church is and should be. It really doesn't matter what you wear, what your economic status, whether you've been once married, never married, or married ten times. It doesn't matter if you speak in tongues in your prayer closet. It doesn't matter whether you disagree with me in the interpretation of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. You are welcome here at Calvary. It doesn't matter what color or race you are. You are accepted. It was said about the New Testament church in the book of acts, *"See how they love one another."* *"By this shall all men know that you are my disciples that you love each other."* There is no distinction in the body of Christ. We are Christians. We are one in Christ Jesus."

Prayer:" Heavenly Father, I know in a place like Anne Arundel County this is a message we need to hear. Lord, it is so easy to become smug and presumptuous, to look down on others who have less. To look down on others because they may have a different point of view than us. Lord, I pray that there may be an outstretched hand and a warm hug and a loving smile for every person who worships here. Lord, forgive us for making judgments about people based on outward appearance. Lord, help us to realize that favoritism and faith do not match, they don't mix. Help us to realize that it is unchristian, unreasonable, unloving to do so. I pray that each of us would commit ourselves to accepting people, appreciating people, affirming people... because You have accepted us. Lord, if there is somebody here that has not made that step of accepting You into their lives I pray that they would do it right now, that they would realize that You care about them and You want to have a relationship with them. I pray that today they would say in their heart "Jesus, come in." Help them to realize that You accept them just as they are. I pray they would open their hearts. I sense that even now some are saying, "Jesus Christ, make me a believer." If you prayed that in your heart God heard you. Lord, thank You for Your word. Thank You that it pierces our heart. Help us to be loving. More than anything else help us to have a reputation that we love You and that we love other people. In Jesus' name. Amen