

**SERIES:** "What To Do, When Justice Isn't Blind – Social Discrimination"

**Speaker:** Senior Pastor Prince Guneratnam

**Scripture:** James 2:1-13

---

(James 2:1-13)

1 My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality.  
2 For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes,  
3 and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, "You sit here in a good place," and say to the poor man, "You stand there," or, "Sit here at my footstool,"  
4 have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?  
5 Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?  
6 But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts?  
7 Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called?  
8 If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well;  
9 but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.  
10 For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.  
11 For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.  
12 So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty.  
13 For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

## Introduction

Social discrimination even occurs in the Body of Christ – the Church.

(James 2:1-4)

"My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality.  
2 For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes,  
3 and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, "You sit here in a good place," and say to the poor man, "You stand there," or, "Sit here at my footstool,"  
4 have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?"

Social discrimination can arise from at least 5 situations:

- Our personalities – differing from one another
- Our ancestries – clan, caste, system, family
- Our age
- Our affluence – wealth
- Our achievements – status

James notes 5 facts that indicate God's Word teaches against social discrimination or partiality.

## **Social Discrimination Is **Incompatible** to the Christian Faith (James 2:1-4)**

- Old Testament Teaching

(Leviticus 19:15)

“You shall do no injustice in judgment. You shall not be partial to the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty. In righteousness you shall judge your neighbor.”

(Deuteronomy 1:17)

“You shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small as well as the great; you shall not be afraid in any man’s presence, for the judgment is God’s. The case that is too hard for you, bring to me, and I will hear it.”

(Deuteronomy 10:17)

“For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality nor takes a bribe.”

- New Testament teaching

(Acts 10:34)

“Then Peter opened his mouth and said: “In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality.”

(Romans 2:11)

“For there is no partiality with God”

(Colossians 3:25)

“But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality.”

- There is no room for racial discrimination, for God created mankind equal – we all came from Adam.
- As Christians, we are one in Christ.

## **Social Discrimination Is **Insensitive** to the Church’s Calling**

(James 2:4-5)

“4 have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?

5 Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?”

- Acceptance is not based on wealth, appearance or status but on faith in Christ.
- We are all sinners but those who believe in Christ are sinners saved by grace.

## **Social Discrimination Is **Inconsideration** of God’s Choice**

(James 2:5)

“Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?”

- God has chosen the poor to be rich in faith.
- “Poor” does not only apply to wealth only.

Psalm 82:3

“Defend the poor and fatherless; do justice to the afflicted and needy.”

Psalm 132:15

“I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her poor with bread.”

Proverbs 14:31

“He who oppresses the poor reproaches his Maker,  
But he who honors Him has mercy on the needy.”

Proverbs 17:5

“He who mocks the poor reproaches his Maker;  
He who is glad at calamity will not go unpunished.”

Proverbs 19:22

“What is desired in a man is kindness, and a poor man is better than a liar.”

Proverbs 22:22

“Do not rob the poor because he *is* poor, nor oppress the afflicted at the gate”

Ecclesiastes 4:13

“Better a poor and wise youth  
than an old and foolish king who will be admonished no more”

(1 Corinthians 1:26-29)

“26 For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.

27 But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty;

28 and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are,

29 that no flesh should glory in His presence.”

- The preaching of the Gospel includes the poor.

(Luke 4:18)

“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed.”

## Social Discrimination Is An **Illogical** Conduct Of The Rich

(James 2:6-7)

“6 But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts?

7 Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called?”

James asked 3 questions:

- Who oppresses you and gives you grief?
  - Isn't the rich and powerful?

(Micah 2:1-2)

“Woe to those who devise iniquity, and work out evil on their beds! At morning light they practice it, because it is in the power of their hand. 2 They covet fields and take them by violence, also houses, and seize them. So they oppress a man and his house, a man and his inheritance.”

(Zechariah 7:10)

“Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the alien or the poor. Let none of you plan evil in his heart against his brother.”

- Who drags you to court?
  - The poor don't have the money or the means to do so.
- Who blaspheme the noble name, which you are called?

(James 2:7)

“Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called?”

- Do not take the name of the Lord in vain.

## Social Discrimination Shows **Indifference** To The Character Of The Law

(James 2:8-11)

“8 If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you do well;

9 but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.

10 For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.

11 For He who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.”

- Social discriminators are law breakers.
- The Ten Commandments can be divided into 2 parts.
  - The first relates to God – the Greatest Commandment
  - The second is to your neighbor – the Royal Law

(James 2:10)

“For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all”

- In a chain, there are many links - one broken link will cause whatever it holds to fall – so will two or more.

## **Social Discrimination Is Ignorant Of The Future Judgement**

(James 2:12-13)

“12 So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty.

13 For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.”

- One day, we will all stand before God and be judged.

(Hebrews 9:27)

“And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.”

(2 Corinthians 5:10)

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”

- The Cross
  - The longest part of the cross is vertical (straight up)
    - God has done everything possible for Him to relate to you.
  - The shortest part is horizontal (level)
    - your part to reach out and build a healthy relationship with your neighbor.