

James 2:1-13 Repenting From Partiality

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Date: 30 November 2025

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[0 : 00] James chapter 2, starting in verse 1, just before we read the text, Judah left off basically talking about a handful of issues that James brings up.

! Being slow to speak, slow to anger, receiving with meekness the implanted word, being doers of the word, not hearers only, deceiving yourself.

And then he ends chapter 1, segueing into chapter 2 by saying, If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue, but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless.

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this, to visit orphans and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unstained from the world. And it seems to be a break in thought, a little bit of a break, and he switches to speaking directly to his audience about another issue, which is the issue of partiality.

Or maybe you could say the issue of favoritism in the body of Christ. And just to remind everyone, it seems clear that James is writing to his fellow kinsmen, to Jews.

[1 : 21] He starts off in chapter 1 by saying, James, a servant of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the dispersion. So there's Jews dispersed, and he specifically writes to them.

Now this doesn't mean it's not profitable for us. It's just good to know the context, who he's writing to, and to keep that in mind as we work through it. So I'm going to read the passage, and you can follow along with me, and then we'll dig into it, okay?

So chapter 2, verse 1 says, My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory.

For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, You sit here in a good place, while you say to the poor man, You stand over there, or sit down at my feet, have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

Listen, my beloved brothers, Has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him?

[2 : 43] But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you and the ones who drag you into court? Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called?

If you really fulfill the royal law, according to the scripture, you shall love your neighbor as yourself, you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are committing sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.

Whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has been guilty of all of it. For he who said, Do not commit adultery, also said, Do not murder.

If you do not commit adultery, but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty.

For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment. Okay, so at the end, right there, I'm going to stop before we get into verse 14.

[3 : 47] Just a little bit of a different thought. Still in the same flow of what James is getting at. So we're going to work through 1 through 13. And right off the bat, James addresses his kinsmen, as you might guess, as my brothers.

This is really pervasive through the book of James. He uses my beloved brothers, my brothers, this really familial language of treating these hearers.

And I think that's important because he has a lot to exhort them in, even rebuke them in. And it's important that he calls them his brothers, right?

So if we're all brothers in Christ, then we can know how to relate to one another on these issues. And see that as a familial, brotherly, collegial type of thing, right?

So in verse 1, he says, My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith. And so basically, the sin of partiality or favoritism, we all probably have experience, participated in, been tempted with, right?

[5 : 05] This is really seen with, like, school kids. You know, like, you have your group over here. You have that group over there. And all of a sudden, you have one kid standing, you know, all alone.

You know, and it's kind of just like, well, he'll be fine. You know, just don't include him, you know. That's kind of like a clear example of partiality, you know.

Groups, cliques kind of thing. But James is getting at something that not only is in children, but it's in all of us. And it fleshes itself out in different ways.

Sometimes you can really see it. Other times, it's less noticeable. And so everybody, at some point or another, is partial towards someone.

Okay? And we all understand the temptation. And so in that sense, it's applicable to us. And I'm going to give some maybe helpful guides to show how it happens at a large scale.

[6 : 11] You know, you might see, like, racism as maybe the most, like, prominent, large scale form of partiality, right? Partial towards an entire group or race. But how it always starts, like, in our hearts.

And I think James gets at that root of why we make those distinctions. And so everybody experiences this.

Everyone is tempted. You know, there's no unique person. But it's a sin. He calls it a sin. You know? Show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, that phrase, as you hold the faith, is really important because it says something about Christianity. You can't be partial if you want to be a Christian.

Okay? You can't say, I'm of Apollos. Or I'm of this person. I'm not going to receive you. Or, you know, like, I'll just kind of go my own way. Right?

[7 : 14] He says, show no partiality as you hold the faith. As you claim Christ. As you claim to be a Christian. Do not show partiality. Okay?

And so it's really important for us to pay attention. I think this issue is kind of an issue that maybe doesn't get talked about a lot. But when it comes up, it's like, okay, yeah, it's clear.

You know? This is an actual vice of some. It's an actual sin. You know, the church we came from, Bellicose, at one time, it was a more prominent problem.

You know, maybe clickiness. Not wanting to reach out to people who were obviously in front of us. You know? And I think a similar word would be had to a church that James is speaking to as it would be to us if we fall in that category.

I don't think necessarily that it's easy to do this with Christ Church because, you know, we're so small and everybody's here. Which actually makes it even more needful to talk about the heart, I think, aspect of partiality because it still sends a sin that we're tempted with.

[8 : 30] Okay? So everybody can understand this. And maybe even some people in this room struggle with this particularly more than they would like to admit.

Maybe you have a hard time with certain persons. Maybe in your heart you always struggle to crucify this.

Right? Maybe you make provisions for it. And I hope that as I work through this, you would receive grace. But also know that you can't walk in that anymore.

Okay? And so basically he says, show no partiality as you hold the faith.

And then he gives this example about two different people, two different stark examples. Rich guy, poor guy. Maybe you could say the homeless guy walks in. And then the bougie guy with the ring wearing Gucci walks in.

[9 : 30] And it's obvious. You're like, okay, that guy, I want to be his friend. You know? The rich dude. The poor guy is just like, oh man, what's he doing here? I hope he leaves. You know?

Like, maybe we should just keep him in the back. You know? Type of thing. That's the kind of example he gives. And that's obvious.

But you can apply that across the board to many situations. And I think it starts in our heart. So I'm going to divide the sin of partiality into two categories.

Micro partiality, you can call it. And then macro partiality over here. Okay? And the micro would basically encompass everything more on an individual level.

Person-to-person specific. Partiality. Favoritism between persons or class. You know? A class of person.

[10:33] That's more on a heart level. But then you have, you can see partiality on a macro level. Like I mentioned earlier with racism. Or like ethnic, socioeconomic, or religious partiality.

Right now in America and abroad. You're either an anti-Semite. Or you're pro-Israel. You know? There's not really a middle ground. I mean, there is a middle ground. Plenty of people are in it. But that's really not how the societies are treating people.

Right? You're either in this camp. Or you're in this camp. You're either partial to this person or group. Or this person. And I think that's a really fleshly thing.

You know? That we, that people obviously do. But it's in all of us to err on an extreme. And say, you must be this. Or you must be this.

[11:30] And James says, show none of that. Show no partiality. And so that would be the macro. You know? Sometimes if a whole church gives in to this sin, you could see an entire church being partial towards a specific group.

That's a macro level sin of partiality. You know? And that does happen, unfortunately, in the Christian church. People take massive stances against the Jews. And unfortunately, the Bible has a lot to say about our treatment of Jews.

And even reception of them. That's a whole other conversation to get into that. But these are examples of the sin of partiality.

And so... If you keep working through, James talks about this man wearing a gold ring and the shabby man.

And if you work down to verse... Four. There we go. After he says to the poor man, You stand over here.

[12:45] Or you sit down at my feet. He says in verse four, Have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

Okay, this word distinctions is a really important Bible word. We actually see it throughout the New Testament. And then he gives a blow.

He says, You become judges. Not only just judges merely, but ones with evil thoughts. Okay? How does... James, how do you know my thoughts? Okay? I'm just saying you sit over here, you sit over there.

Well, James knows... He knows how partiality works. You know? It starts with the thought, right? It starts with the heart. He's like, You guys have been entertaining evil thoughts.

And I can see it's true because of how you're actually treating people. In your actions. Right? And so, he says, You have made distinctions.

[13:45] So, in Scripture, there's a... Well, okay. There's a couple examples. I'm going to bring up just one from Galatians 2.

You guys don't have to turn there. I can read it. But we have a situation where Peter, the most greatest example of a disciple, you know, didn't make any mistakes, is confronted by Paul in Galatians 2.

It basically says that something happened in Peter's heart and then it was micro and then it turned macro. Okay? Galatians 2, verse 11 says, But when Cephas came to Antioch, that's Peter, I opposed him to his face because he stood condemned.

Verse 12, So, Peter fell to the sin by withdrawing himself.

He separated himself. He was saying, you know, like, Oh, yeah, Gentiles are in. You know, the gospel has brought in Gentiles. I'll eat with them. I'll fellowship. You know? But then, he was tempted with some peer pressure.

[15:17] Right? Maybe his other friends were coming along and he's like, Oh, I don't think I want to be seen eating with these Gentiles. You know? To appease my Jewish fellows.

So, I'm going to draw back. I'm going to, I'm going to, you know, eat with them and separate myself from these guys. So, that was, that was a micro deal. Right? Peter was like, Ah, you know what? I'm kind of afraid of what people think. You know? It does say that fear was the beginning of the sin. Right? It says, Fearing the circumcision party. He's like, Ah, I'm going to just kind of eat with them.

Right? And then what happens? It goes macro. It says, And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with them. And even Barnabas, right, was led astray by their hypocrisy.

Now, partiality isn't exactly hypocrisy. Those aren't the same. You know, you can be a hypocrite in many ways that I think is more than partiality.

[16:19] But we see hypocrisy as very close to partiality. There's a lot of overlap. So, Paul rebukes him and then actually preaches the gospel directly after that.

Because, essentially, when we fall by favoring one over the other, we actually forget about how God has treated us.

We forget about the gospel. We lose sight of it. And we start to become self-seeking. We start to give way to our own feelings, give in to temptations of what people think.

And that's, you can really see that. Paul did, and he called that out. He's like, hey, you can't do that.

You know, like, remember, remember the God who saved you, you know, when you were astray.

And so, um, we see how subtle the sin comes up, even in Peter. You know, don't think that if you're spiritual or religious, that, you know, this doesn't, uh, this isn't, uh, something that you can struggle with.

[17:27] You know, even Peter, um, you know, fell quickly, it seemed to it. And so, there must be no distinctions. So, he uses that word.

He says, have you not made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

And so, when, when we look at people in the church, um, we can't look at them in the way that says, because you're X or Y or Z, I won't receive you.

Okay? That, that's where it starts. Uh, whether it's personality, sometimes we honestly have good, maybe not good, but understandable reasons for not interacting with certain people.

Um, but ultimately, they're not good reasons. Right? Like, you might say, this person's personality is really hard. This person's easily irritable. This person's really awkward.

I'm just not gonna talk to them. I'm just not gonna, you know, I think we bet, you know, we have dinner scheduled, but like, I really hope one of our kids gets sick. Or we cancel. You know, because they really don't wanna spend an hour, maybe two hours in their home talking about, who knows?

[18:38] You know, like, like, these are all things that we've probably shared and experienced. And we start to entertain, right? We start to be like, uh, you know, uh, as soon as the church service is over, we should dip, honey.

You know, we should, we should, we should go to lunch. We already have lunch plans. So if anyone asked us, you know, like, anyways, it sounds ridiculous, right? But how, how often do we, uh, maybe slowly think that way?

You know, maybe we're just like, okay, um, I'm making what the Bible calls a provision for my flesh, right? Subtle provisions.

May, may we not do that? You know, James says at the beginning, if you claim to be Christian, uh, show no partiality. I think the NLT says, it asked the question at the beginning of James two, instead of just a statement, that's the question, how can you have faith in the Lord Jesus when you treat others differently?

You know, or something like that. Basically it poses this, this question, like, how can you call yourself a Christian when you show partiality? You know, that's, that's a real thing. You know, I think it's, it's good that we feel the weight of that.

[19:51] So in verse four, he says, uh, have you not made distinctions and become judges with evil thoughts? Okay. Um, that was a little bit of a blow, but in case you forgot, everybody, James still loves you guys as beloved brothers, because he says this, listen, my beloved brothers.

Okay. Now we're, now we're back. Okay. He's like, I know what I just said. I know some of you are like, James, get off my case. He's like, Hey, you guys are the beloved. Like, listen to me.

Okay. So in verse five, he says, listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him.

So after he says, you guys have made distinctions. You guys have evil thoughts. He, he basically shows them something of maybe how they once were. We're not you guys that poor man, you know, didn't Jesus seek you out?

You know, like a lot of us were fishermen, uh, maybe uneducated men. Right. And, uh, the Lord, the Lord came to us. Right.

[21 : 02] Has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom? Um, despite being a side, but I don't think that, uh, James is saying that, uh, impoverished people are intrinsic, intrinsically more righteous.

Or deserving of the kingdom per se, or that, you know, if you're middle class or rich, that you have to become poor to get into the kingdom. Right.

Because I think he, he, he qualifies it at the end by saying that he's promised the kingdom to those who love him. You know, you can, you meet plenty of impoverished people who genuinely hate God.

Right. That's not a, uh, uh, economic status. You know, hatred of God is not an economic status. Um, you can be rich and you can be middle class and you can be poor and all shake your fists at God.

Right. But I think he's talking about a poverty, which all of us, uh, need to have in order to enter the kingdom, which basically I think Jesus gets at in Matthew when he says, the poor in spirit, uh, theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[22 : 15] Right. The kingdom of God. So you have to have a poorness, a neediness that says, um, that you need God, you know, that you see God as savior, right?

A poorness in spirit that would actually cry out to God that wouldn't just, you know, raise your hand, but would, uh, from your heart, you know, uh, fall prostrate before the Lord and beg his, his salvation.

Right. That kind of neediness to that person, the, the gift and inheritance is the kingdom. And so I think that's the sentiment.

Um, not that there's nothing to say about the impoverished person. I think we should care for the poor as other areas of scripture say, but I think it's important to mention that.

And so, um, the needy will inherit the kingdom. Um, God has promised this to those who love him and those who know their need.

[23 : 21] And so working downward, um, after James has said that, he says in verse six, here's another blow.

Prepare yourself. He says, but you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich, the ones who oppress you and the ones who drag you into court.

Are they not the ones who blasting the honorable name by which you were called? So he's basically saying you guys are inconsistent. It might've been that they were talking about like, maybe they were gumbling, like, ah, the rich people, they all, they're responsible for everything.

You know, those billionaires, those, those, uh, big corporate owners, like they, they're terrible.

James is like, you're inconsistent. You just had a billionaire walk in and you want him to have the best seat.

Like, you know, what's going on? Like, he's like, are not the rich ones, the ones who oppress you and they blaspheme the honorable name? You know, um, are you willing to give that up?

[24 : 27] You know, the name by which you were bought and sealed just to appease somebody, to give into some peer pressure, partiality, right? he's like, he's like, you guys are riddled with inconsistency and the sin is clear.

Okay. And then he, and then he says in verse eight, if you really fulfill the Royal law, according to the scripture, you shall love your neighbor as yourself.

You are doing well. Now it doesn't say, if you really fulfill the Royal law to love your neighbor, you'll be saved. Right.

Um, he's not saying, Hey, just, just don't feel partiality and you're good. But he said, you're doing well. In other words, there's a theme throughout James. I think that can sometimes get into the weeds of other parts of scripture.

If you read it just on its face. Um, for example, um, who's teaching next week? Verse 14. You are. Yeah. So Seth is going to be tasked with explaining Paul's words, not being justified by works.

[25 : 38] When James talks about being justified by works. And it seems like James and, and Paul are at odds, but honestly, this is a pretty simple one.

If you just read the rest of scripture, we actually see that Paul and James agree at the Jerusalem council and that, um, the poor, um, James says that he, he doesn't want them to forget the poor. And then Paul actually agrees. And he says, this is the very thing I'm eager to do. So there was clearly unity between those guys. Uh, especially with the gospel. Paul presented the gospel to

James and they received him and gave them the right hand of fellowship.

Scripture says. So it's not that these guys are writing against each other. Okay. The scripture actually is in unity. And so when we read something like this, we have to read it in context of the rest of scripture.

Okay. And so in verse eight, James is not saying, Hey, if you love your neighbor as yourself, you'll be saved. No, he's not saying that he's, he's talking specifically about partiality.

[26 : 41] Right. And so we need to understand how this applies. He says, if you really fulfill what he calls the Royal law, according to the scripture, you shall love your neighbor as yourself.

You are doing well. Um, I was researching kind of the Royal law. Like we have the law of Liberty, which Judah said, and that's coming up again, but then he says the Royal law.

And some people say that, um, this specific commandment, uh, he adds the Royal aspect to it because Jesus reinstated it in the new Testament as, uh, one among the greatest commandments, but Lord your God.

And the second is like it. Love your neighbor as yourself. So he's saying, you know, it's Royal in the sense where Jesus said it, reinstated it. Um, I think that's a possibility.

Um, but then remember, as I remind you guys in the beginning that he's talking to Jews. So in one sense, they should know the law, right? He quotes, this is from Leviticus, the old Testament, which every Jew should know.

[27 : 52] You shall love your neighbor as yourself. And so he's kind of, he's, you can see he's digging down even deeper. He's just like, look, you are Jews. You should know the law.

Like, why are you acting this way? Like, you know what the word says. If you really fulfill the Royal law, not only in the old Testament, but reiterated by Jesus in the new, then you will do well.

But even that you cannot do. So, and, uh, in verse nine, we see, he just keeps going. He says, but if you show partiality, you're committing sin.

And are convicted by the law as transgressors. Whoever keeps the whole law, but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.

So right there, James says, you're committing sin. If you do this, right? It's no ambiguity. It's very clear. And so, um, there's kind of a little bit of a mirror here in verse nine and 10.

[29 : 02] He says, but if you show partiality, you're committing sin and are convicted. And then he, he says, he says, uh, this is partiality, but then he talks about something that's impartial.

He says, for whoever keeps the whole law, but fails in one point has been guilty of all of it. Okay.

So you see what I'm saying? It basically, if he, if the guy who is keeping the whole law, quote unquote, except for one area, uh, let's say that guy's partial.

And, um, he's like, come on, James, look at all this. Look at, I'm keeping the whole law. You know what I mean? Like, give me a break, like get out of jail, free card.

Like, I've kept the rest of the law. You know, he's saying your, your treatment of the law is not good. You're treating the law as if the law itself is partial. But in fact, the law is not partial because if you fail at one point, uh, it doesn't favor the rest of your obediences, but actually it condemns you.

[30 : 09] And so in one sense, that's the law is a reflection of how, how God is in a lot of ways, right? Like he requires, requires perfect obedience, right?

Uh, so that no boasting can happen. You know, James says, if you want to try and boast, remember that the law is not partial. Okay. If you fail at one point, you become guilty of all of it.

And he gives the example. He says, for he who said, do not commit adultery, also said, do not murder. If you do not commit adultery, but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.

Verse 12. So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy.

Mercy triumphs over judgment. Okay. But there's his exhortation in verse 12. James says, so speak and so act what you say, what you do, let it be that that will be held accountable, that those words and those actions will be held accountable to you.

[31 : 28] Another place in scripture, I think Jesus says this with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Um, but he doesn't say you'll be judged under the law period, the mosaic law period.

He says law of liberty, which I think is really important, right? Because all of us are going to start to feel condemned when we survey all of our sins and realize, oh no, if I'm judged today, this is bad news for me, right?

So good news is James calls this the law of liberty, which I think Judah was getting at, um, really well, that he used in, uh, chapter one.

He uses the phrase, the law of liberty, which you might call the law of freedom synonymous with liberty. Uh, but in what way are we to be judged by the, this law of freedom?

Okay. I think this is really important. And, uh, in Matthew 18, verse 21, there's the parable of the unforgiving servant.

[32 : 32] You guys remember that? Where, uh, the man had the debt. I'm just going to read it really quickly. Uh, and we'll see kind of maybe what the law of liberty might look more like.

Matthew 18, 21 says, therefore, the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with servants. And when he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him 10,000 talents.

And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold with his wife and his children and all that he had and the payment to be made.

So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, have patience with me and I will pay you everything. Now to pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt.

And when the servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii and seizing him, he began to choke him saying, pay what you owe.

[33 : 40] So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him or fell down pleading with him and said, have patience with me and I will pay you. He refused and went out and put him in prison until you should pay the debt.

When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed. And when they went and reported to their master, all that had taken place, then his master summoned him and said, you wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt because, as you pleaded with me.

And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I have, I had mercy on you. And in anger, his master delivered him to the jailers until he should pay all his debt.

Okay. A lot at work here. Um, but the principle of this is the law says you got to pay all the debt. Okay.

The master, he could have been a just abider of, of the law and said, Nope, doesn't matter how much you plead. Patience doesn't matter.

[34 : 48] If I work according to the law, you got to pay all of it. Let's go. Right. But instead of that, he showed him mercy. Instead of that, he gave him forgiveness.

Says he forgave all the debt. Okay. Now, that's not a law in the sense that it's, he's abiding by a specific set of rules, but more, he's using his authority to create a law as a, more of a declaration type of thing, a, a more of a decree, a decree of mercy and forgiveness, a truth, a law in that sense. And I think that can be similarly applied as the law of liberty here. So if we look back in verse 12, uh, it says, so speak and act as those who are going to be judged under the law of liberty.

If the liberty is, if the law of liberty is this, you've been forgiven so much. And Christ has lifted so much of your burden, taking all of your debt away. Right. If that, if that's the, the, the rule, right.

If that's the law, then, um, act and speak in light of that. Act and speak in a way that you're going to be judged under that.

[36 : 01] If you take, if you so speak and so act as the wicked servant did, um, the judgment's not going to look too good.

Right. How can, how can you say, you know, um, God forgave me and I'm so thankful for it. And then not speak like that, act like that, grab your friend, metaphorically speaking, right.

And not forgive him. He thought, I think this runs all the way through this, this chapter with partiality. How can you treat other people, not extend mercy, grace, you know, pardon, um, however cringy and however messy other people are.

When God treated you, one may be cringy and messy yourself, uh, with mercy and grace. Right. So it's not, it's not to be judged under the law that condemns us, but more the law that actually sets us free, that gives us grace.

And so, um, he finishes by saying, for judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. I think you see that in that parable really clearly, right. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

[37 : 15] That's a cool phrase because, um, how often are we tempted to see the value in judgment, right? Like, ah, I think judgment is more valuable.

You know, how often do we husbands with our wives want to say the thing we ought not to say, because we genuinely think that is more valuable. That will do the trick that will persuade her. You know, she'll finally see or vice versa. Maybe wives to your husbands. It doesn't matter. Uh, when in reality, the scripture says mercy triumphs, mercy actually wins. Mercy makes you see right judgment that is without mercy condemns. And the thing is, um, it would be unrighteous for us to do that. But the good news of the gospel is that it would actually be righteous for God to do that to us in justice. Since he's the only one righteous is the only righteous judge. We deserve God's sentence of, uh, judgment, but as it stands, we haven't received that because of Christ. [38 : 20] You know, how much more do we, does that influence us to live our lives differently than we're tempted to? Right? Um, that's verse 13.

Um, I have a couple points. To finish. Um, but as I was preparing and thinking about this topic, uh, partiality is just kind of one of those things that comes and goes that I'm tempted with, but I realized I have more of a, uh, like I should, I should view it more as like a severe sin, you know, because of where it comes from.

It basically, I basically say in my heart, God, I'm really not that grateful for your, uh, impartiality towards me, you know, and, um, that leads me into, uh, three closing points or exhortations. Um, which I think can apply to our church. Um, if not presently, you know, that we're immersed in this sin, I don't think we are, would guard us in our hearts as we relate to one another. And even those coming in to our church. And so, uh, number one, number one is no, uh, distinctions, no distinctions.

[39 : 49] Uh, there's a verse, I think it's in first Corinthians or second Corinthians five. It says, we regard no one anymore. According to the flesh, you know, getting at the distinctions, right?

But we're all one in Christ. Okay. No distinctions. Romans 10, 12 says, speaking of distinctions, for there is no distinction between Jew and Greek for the same Lord is Lord of all, but stowing riches on all who call on him.

So there, there's the distinction language. And then there's the riches language, right? We're talking about the rich and the poor, but Romans 10, 12 says, for there's no distinction between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing riches on all who call on him.

Uh, if you want to, uh, if you're really immersed in this and you're having a hard time, I would encourage you to read the book of Romans, uh, on this issue, specifically the first three chapters. Uh, in chapter one, we see that God, uh, through Paul writes, and Paul delivers a pretty fatal blow to the Gentiles by explaining how they're so utterly wicked and corrupt, debased in mind, right?

[41 : 07] He paints a horrible picture of the Gentiles. And then maybe a Jew's listening to that. And they're like, yes, those Gentiles. But then in chapter two, he paints an equally as damning, uh, picture of the Jews.

And says that they don't, they don't have an excuse. They're, they're like them in a different sense, but, but guilty as well. And then chapter three, he takes both of those people, wants them in the same category, and says, there's no one righteous.

Okay. And that's where we get in Romans three, where he, he says that there's no distinctions. Uh, both Jews, both Greeks, which could probably encompass the whole human race are under sin. Why? Why? Romans says so that every mouth may be stopped and every person held accountable before God. Right? All of us in this room have, uh, shared in the same spiritual death, which is sin. And all of us are held accountable before God. And, and Paul, um, paints that picture in a very slow way, but, um, even more glorious one about the remedy for that, which you see in Romans seven and eight, even in six, about how Christ has come, set us free from the law and, uh, the condemnation that the law brings.

[42 : 34] And so, that's point number one, no distinctions. All of us have, uh, sin that we can share, you know, and that means all of us need to share in something, uh, even greater than that, that will save us.

Right? That's Christ, the same Lord of all. So, make no distinctions. Point number two, um, is, uh, repenting from partiality.

So, if you find yourself in, in, in this sin, or maybe tomorrow you're tempted with it, um, there's a couple things to consider. One, in second Corinthians eight, verse nine, it says, for, you know, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake, he became poor, so that

you, by his poverty, might become rich.

It's an, an amazing verse. Josh preached a message, I think, a while ago about, uh, becoming relationship poor, so that others become relationship rich.

I think this concept is really practical when we're being tempted with partiality. Uh, this is a great way to actually repent of partiality, is to, is to think of the person that you're partial towards, and instead of avoiding them, and closing your heart to them, become poor to yourself.

[44 : 05] Okay, I'm going to say that again. Become poor to yourself, and rich towards them. Why, why, why should we be motivated to do that?

Second Corinthians eight, nine, Lord Jesus Christ, though he was rich, yet for your sake, became poor, so that you, by his poverty, might become rich.

Okay, we're interested in building other people. Partiality is self-sacrifice, seeking. It only cares about its own, right? Let, let us become poor to ourselves, and rich towards others.

Okay, that's how we repent from partiality. And then, um, point number three, remember the gospel. I've been exhorting us this whole time, I think, to remember the gospel, but, um, I think now I want to actually preach it.

Okay? We need to remember that the gospel is not partial. The gospel is not changing. The gospel is unchanging. Remember that today, if God decided to bring down a thorough reckoning, and call to account every sin known and unknown, that apart from the finished work of a man named Jesus Christ, two thousand years ago, we would all be lost eternally.

[45 : 20] End of story. Right? But as it is, in a world gasping for air, it feels like, striving to manufacture the next scapegoat for their sins, riddled with partiality, Jew blaming or not, God the Father has already provided the scapegoat, and blamed the Jew, by hanging him on a cross, and thus satisfying the ruthless demands of the law, once and for all.

Not only that, but to prove his work was accomplished, he rose from the grave three days later, receiving the name, firstborn from the dead, guaranteeing that he would see his children after him. This is an amazing truth, guys. Jesus was crucified, so that you and your sins would be buried with him, including partiality.

Jesus rose from the dead, so that you and not your sins would rise with him. So, wherever you find yourself, either impartiality or any sin, let that be buried with Christ, and let your new man, which God has purchased, rise with him, clean, forgiven, and walk in newness of life, Romans 6 says. He took all of the lust, anger, malice, greed, ungratefulness, idolatry, and yes, the sin of partiality, and laid them upon his son, as if he was guilty of all of them.

[46 : 59] all to bring us to God. If we forget the good news of the gospel, we will be partial Christians, which is no Christian at all.

Right? This is the bedrock of our faith, of the impartial God coming down and saving a partial people. Right? So, the Lord bids us come and bids us welcome.

Before I pray, if any of you feel like, maybe not necessarily that you're entrenched in partiality, but that you feel you need to repent of specific sins, or that you've just forgotten the gospel.

It's that, Lord, I've just forgotten the good news. I've forgotten what you've done for me. I've started to treat others, maybe with judgment, when it should have been mercy, as you've shown me.

Then I would just exhort all of you guys, whoever that is, to repent today. And let those sins die again. Right? Be buried with Christ.

[48 : 09] do you