

# DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

*Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.*

Nov 2017

## FAITH IN ACTION: #3: FAVORITISM FORBIDDEN

### INTRODUCTION

How have you seen favoritism (or prejudice) played out in your profession or church?

### OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

#### Read James 2:1-13

*Note: Too many people have an intellectual belief in Christ, but not a heart belief. They have faith in the facts of historic Christianity, but not saving faith in Christ personally.<sup>1</sup> James says faith is demonstrated in works.*

1. What practical example did James use to illustrate that favoritism is done in church? (1-4)
2. Why might people justify favoritism in church?
3. Why is favoritism or prejudice often overlooked as a sin?
4. How can you honor someone's rank (i.e. General, Admiral, CEO) without sinning? **Lev 19:32; 1 Pet 2:17**
5. What two gifts does God give to the poor? (5) **Lk 6:20**
6. What did James say the rich do to the poor? (6-7)
7. Who are the "poor" in your community? Why does God have a special concern for them?
8. Why do we often treat rich people as more important than poor people?
9. What is the "royal law"? (8) **Lev 19:18; Mt 22:36-40; Rom 13:10; Gal 5:14**
10. What is the effect of practicing favoritism on those who are trying to keep the law?

*Note: The law is the expression of the character and will of God; therefore, to violate one part of the law is to violate God's will and thus his whole law.*

11. Why should we be merciful? (13)

*Note: "Faith in God in no way causes God to be merciful. Rather, faith is made possible because God is merciful. Faith trusts in this merciful God."<sup>2</sup>*

12. How can we avoid the trap of showing favoritism based on external appearances and/or wealth?

### APPLICATION

- In what practical ways can you show genuine love to people that are different from you – their appearance, their race, their culture or economic background?

*OVERCOMING HANDICAPS: Charles Steinmetz, the electrical genius, and one of the founding fathers of the colossal General Electric, was crippled from birth. His body was grotesque; he was so short in stature that he looked like a dwarf; he was a hunchback. His mother died before he was one year old. His father was comparatively poor, but was determined that as far as possible, young Charles would have a thorough education. Charles couldn't run and play games as normal boys did, so he made up his mind that he would devote himself to science. He set this goal: "I will make discoveries that will help other people." When he immigrated to the U.S., he could not speak a word of English. The port authorities were tempted to return him to his native Switzerland. His face was swollen from the cold he had endured on the boat passage across the Atlantic. He was dwarfed and misshapen in body. His sight was defective. His clothes were shabby. But Charles stayed, and even found a job that paid him twelve dollars a week. And he showed amazing abilities. The infant company, General Electric, quickly realized that in Charles Steinmetz they had one of the greatest experts in the world in the field of electricity. His career was marked by unparalleled research and development. When Steinmetz died in 1923, one writer said, "This deformed hunchback had the mind of an angel and the soul of a seer." Though he was twisted and dwarfed in body, Charles Steinmetz was a giant in mind and spirit. As told by Dan Betzer on the Revivaltime radio broadcast.*

<sup>1</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (1992). *Wiersbe's expository outlines on the New Testament* (723). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>2</sup> Richardson, K. A. (1997). *Vol. 36: James*. The New American Commentary (126). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.