

God's Impartiality

During His incarnation, Jesus was the glory and image of God in human form and, like His Father, He showed no favoritism, a virtue even His enemies acknowledged. It made no difference to Jesus whether the one to whom He spoke or ministered was a wealthy Jewish leader or a common beggar, a virtuous woman or a prostitute, a high priest or a common worshiper, handsome or ugly, educated or ignorant, religious or irreligious, law-abiding citizen or criminal. His overriding concern was the condition of the soul. One day, John assures believers, "we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is" (1 John 3:2). And while we are on earth, we should act just as He did when He was on earth.

God's impartiality is reflected even in the genealogies of His Son, Jesus Christ. In both Matthew and Luke, Jesus' descendants are shown to include such notable and godly believers as Abraham, David, Solomon, and Hezekiah. But also included are many otherwise obscure and common people, including the incestuous Tamar, the former prostitute Rahab, and Ruth, from the outcast Moabites (Matt. 1:3, 5). Jesus was not born in the great holy city of Jerusalem but in Bethlehem, of historical importance to Jews as the city of David but not at all comparable to Jerusalem in glory, and of total insignificance to the rest of the world. Jesus grew up in the Galilean town of Nazareth, whose poor reputation among most Jews is reflected in Nathanael's comment to Philip: "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46). On another occasion some people commented about Jesus, "Surely the Christ is not going to come from Galilee, is He?" (John 7:41).

The landowner who hired workers in Jesus' parable sent them to begin working at various times throughout the day. At the end of the day the men discovered they were all being paid the same amount. But those who had worked all day complained that those who started work near the end of the day were paid the same as they were. The landowner "answered and said to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what is yours and go, but I wish to give to this last man the same as to you. Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with what is my own? Or is your eye envious because I am generous?' " Clearly recognizing the man's right to do as he did, Jesus added, "So the last shall be first, and the first last" (Matt. 20:13–16). Those who are saved in the last minutes of their lives will enjoy the same glories in heaven as those who have known and served the Lord faithfully for many years. The time of their salvation, like their wealth, fame, intelligence, social status, and other worldly measurements, will not be factors in their heavenly blessings. This wonderful story shows God's impartiality in giving all the same eternal life.

The gospel is a great leveler, available with absolute equality to everyone who believes in the Savior it proclaims. Jesus' promise to all those who trust in Him is: "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light" (Matt. 11:29–30).

Tragically, many otherwise biblical and faithful churches today do not treat all their members the same. Frequently, those who are of a different ethnic background, race, or financial standing are not fully welcomed into fellowship. That ought not to be. It not only is a transgression of God's divine law but is a mockery of His divine character.¹

¹ MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1998). *James*. MacArthur New Testament Commentary (98–100). Chicago: Moody Press.