

“The Folly of Favoritism”

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Scriptural Foundation: James 2:1-7, ESV

The Sin of Partiality

¹My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. ²For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, ³and 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," ⁴have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? ⁵Listen, 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? ⁶But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? ⁷Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called?

The comic strip character, Charlie Brown identified with the underdog and with the misfit, perhaps because he was one. In one scene he is building a birdhouse when the disparaging Lucy approaches him. As she looks at him, Charlie says, "I'm building it for sparrows." Lucy sneers back, "For sparrows! Nobody builds birdhouses for sparrows." "I do," replied Charlie Brown. "I always stick up for the underbird."

Jesus also stuck up for the underbirds. He invited the sick and poor to come to Him. He allowed the prostitute to anoint His feet with perfume and wash His feet with her tears. He conversed with the Samaritan woman by a well and He offered her living water to drink. He exalted the poor widow who gave two pennies, two mites, into the offering plate. He invited a tax-collector to be one of His twelve. He showed mercy to the woman caught in adultery. He dined with sinners. Jesus was constantly moving toward loving the underbirds. He never was moving away from them, and Jesus wants His church to move towards the underbirds as well and to love them; to not move away from them but toward them.

In James 2, God condemns the sin of favoritism. God communicates that it is wrong for a Christian to practice partiality in this world.¹ Partiality may be based upon social, economic, educational, or ethnic characteristics, but partiality is always wrong for hinders Jesus' church from lifting up Jesus before the world as wonderful, as beautiful, and as glorious and it hinders us from doing the work of the Gospel.

In his autobiography, Mahatma Gandhi wrote that during his student days he read the Gospels seriously and considered converting to Christianity. He believed that in the teachings of Jesus he could find the solution to the horrible caste system that was dividing the people of India. One Sunday he decided to attend services at a nearby church and talk to the minister afterwards about becoming a Christian. When he entered the sanctuary, however, the usher refused to give him a seat and suggested that he go worship with his own people. Gandhi left that church and never returned. He would say, "If Christians have caste differences also, I might as well remain a Hindu."

That usher's prejudice not only betrayed Jesus but also turned a person away from trusting Him as Savior. Authentic Christianity breaks down every social barrier, every hindrance, and Christianity brings us into one family, the Family of God. Favoritism in the church strikes against the very heart of the Gospel by denying its real affect upon the heart of man to make a change and upon God's new community.

James' whole letter presents the nature of authentic faith in opposition to artificial faith. He places before us "living faith" and then before us "dead faith" so that we might be able to discern the difference. James begins his letter by teaching us that one mark of living faith is the way we respond to difficult trials. Then in Verses 12-17, he teaches us that a second mark of living faith is the way we respond to temptations that strike against our soul. Then James relates, from Verse 18 to the end of Chapter 1, the third mark of living faith: the way we respond to the Word of God, whether we love the Word of God, and whether we are eager to obey it.

¹ James 2:1

Today in Chapter 2, Verses 1-7, James teaches us a fourth mark of living faith: the way we love people. James is interested in helping us to discern whether or not our faith is real or whether it is fake and false. He wants us to examine ourselves to see whether we are truly born again, whether we are truly children of God, and whether we truly have God's Spirit in us, so he gives us these marks to help us test ourselves and that is the benefit of Scripture. We examine our own lives as we read and we study and as we listen to God's Spirit speak to us.

In the second chapter, James starts with a command and that command is pretty simple - "Do not show favoritism," and then James presents five reasons why this commandment is so important to the follower of Jesus.

Reason Number One is that favoritism denies Jesus as the Lord of Glory. Reason Number Two is that favoritism is such an egregious sin is that favoritism flows from evil thoughts. Reason Number Three is that favoritism contradicts God's heart. Reason Number Four is that favoritism is harmful to people whom God loves. Reason Number Five is that favoritism creates more oppression and more misery.

Let us first consider the commandment James gives to the church before we look at the reasons. James writes in Verse 1,

¹My brothers, show no partiality...

The New International Version is a bit stronger in its translation and rightly so because this is a very strong exhortation. The NIV reads: Don't show favoritism! That word favoritism, or partiality, quite literally means "to lay hold of one's face" or "to lift up someone's face". The meaning is to judge someone by outward appearances, by what they see on their face, or to elevate someone on the basis of external appearances. James says, "Don't do that in the church!" James knows that this is normal in the workings of this world to show favoritism, to show partiality, because that is the way the world works. The world treats people according the externals of life.

Mark Twain rightly noted, "Prejudice is the ink with which all history is written." That is a sad statement but I believe that it is a true statement. By nature, apart from God's Spirit working in us, we tend to place people in certain categories of importance. We evaluate very quickly sometimes and we place people in various strata and some are on the "top shelf" and some occupy the "bottom shelf" in the way we think about them and in the way we treat them. We place them on the top shelf or on the bottom shelf based upon very superficial measurements. We do this on the basis of the house one lives in, or the car that one drives, or the clothes that one wears. We do this on the basis of the job one holds, the occupation, the career, or the success that is established in it. We do this on the basis of the influence that they possess in the community or the education that they have obtained; how many degrees are behind their name. We do this on the basis of race or nationality. We show partiality on the basis of personalities; whether we enjoy another person's humor, their intellect, the way they engage, the way they communicate, or their abilities and their talents.

James says, "I know that this is the way it is in this dark world, but don't do this in the church! Don't treat people according to the externals of life." This is not a minor sin. This sin grieves the heart of God when it happens among His people. James then lists five reasons why this sin is so grievous to God.

Reason Number One is that favoritism denies Jesus as the Lord of glory, as we see in Verse 1,

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

The sin of favoritism is particularly contrary to faith in Jesus. Favoritism and faith in Jesus contradict one another and they are mutually exclusive. Where faith thrives, favoritism dies. Where favoritism thrives, faith dies. Faith in Jesus brings us into a right relationship with a living God and it brings us into a personal knowledge of Him so that we come to understand who He really is and then we live our lives according to His character.

All through the Old Testament and the New Testament God reveals Himself to be a God who is completely and utterly impartial. God does not look at all at the external qualities that impress us. They are nothing to Him. Because real faith is a personal commitment to God and not just an intellectual assent to a doctrinal statement and to certain

ideas about God, favoritism destroys real faith because it pulls us away from our commitment to following the Living God.

All of God's commandments flow from His personal character. God's commandments are not arbitrary rules that God makes up upon a whim, but they flow from who He is as a person. In the Old Testament, Moses teaches us this about God's impartial nature, in Deuteronomy 10,

¹⁷ For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who is not partial...

In 2 Chronicles 19, we read,

⁷ Now then, let the fear of the Lord be upon you. Be careful what you do, for there is no injustice with the Lord our God, or partiality...

It is on the basis of God's nature, that He commands His people in Leviticus 19,

¹⁵ You shall do no injustice in court. You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor.

God says, "Do not treat a person better because he is rich, but also do not treat a person better because he is poor." Favoritism can swing against the rich just as easily as it can against the poor and God condemns both forms of favoritism.

The New Testament also asserts this truth about God. One place is in Acts 10,

³⁴ So Peter opened his mouth and said: "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, ³⁵ but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him."

Isn't that a wonderful truth? Peter says that God does not accept people on the basis of their wealth, one the basis of their nationality, one the basis of their appearance, or upon the basis of their family background, or upon the basis of any other external value. Peter announces the Good News that anyone, regardless of who they are and what they have accomplished in this life, regardless of their talents, or regardless of their status in this world, anyone in any nation who fears God, who humbles himself before Him, and who believes in name of Jesus, will be welcomed into God's family if they believe. No one is shut out. The blessing of God is not based upon external factors. It is based upon the internal heart response of one's life to the Gospel.

On the other hand, no one is invited into God's family and invited to the blessings of God on the basis of these external factors. God does not look at the outward appearance. He is not impressed by the externals like we are often impressed by them. These externals do not define a person's value and they do not define a person's identity to God, and God says to His people, "Do not let it define a person's value or identity to you, my people." Aren't we so thankful that the Gospel is available to us and that we can announce the message of God's invitation to come and be a part of His family and to believe on Jesus to anyone and everyone that we meet, because God is not impartial? It is an assault against God's character to act as though certain people, based upon externals, are more important than others.

I love 1 Samuel 16 where God is instructing the prophet Samuel before he recognizes and anoints David as the next king of Israel. Saul has been set aside for the sins that he has committed against the Lord and now Samuel has set before the family of Jesse and he sees Jesse's first son, Eliab, and Samuel is very impressed, and he says, "Certainly this must be the man whom you want to be king," but God said,

⁷ "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart."²

² English Standard Version

Jesus, as God come in the flesh, kept Himself free from partiality and favoritism. He possessed all of the attributes of God in His person and Matthew's Gospel relates how Jesus' enemies observed this to true of Jesus' life. The Pharisees and the Herodians got together to try and trap Jesus and they come to Jesus and say, in Matthew 22,

¹⁶ "Teacher, we know that you are true and teach the way of God truthfully, and you do not care about anyone's opinion, for you are not swayed by appearances."

That is interesting because the Pharisees and the Herodians were all about appearances. They noticed that Jesus was absolutely different from themselves in this way; that Jesus did not consider these external matters to be of importance at all. Friends, there is no place for favoritism in the heart of Jesus and there is no place for favoritism in the heart of Jesus' church.

When James calls Jesus the "Lord of glory", He is teaching us that Jesus is God in human form and that as such Jesus reveals the beauty, the majesty, the wonder, and indeed the glory of God to us. The word "glory" in biblical literature refers to the manifestation of God's character, His nature, and His attributes, and that is what Jesus does! When He came we were able, as John 1:14, says, "When the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, we beheld his glory, it was the glory as of the one and only begotten of God Himself, full of grace and truth."

What happens when the church shows favoritism? The church, whose role it is to lift up Jesus, to show Himself and to reveal Himself to be glorious, what happens when the church shows favoritism? The church throws a curtain, a blanket, over the glory of Jesus so that Jesus' glory remains hidden from the sight of this world. We consider Mahatma Gandhi when he went into the church. He was not able to see the glory of Jesus in that church because of the sin of favoritism. The world thinks of him as common, ordinary, and no more special than anyone else.

Friends, let us fix our eyes upon Jesus and upon His glory. When we keep our eyes fixed upon Jesus and we stand in the enjoyment of the wonder of His glory and of His person we are not going to be impressed by the glitter of the externals of this world. We are going to be able to honor and worship the Lord of Glory. We won't be blinded by the glitter of this world for we will be enraptured with the glory of God and with the face of Jesus.

The second reason why favoritism is so grievous to God is that favoritism flows from evil thoughts. James, in Verse 2, provides a real life example and application as we reflect upon the impartiality of God. This is not the only example and the only application, but there are many applications that we can make regarding this issue of favoritism, but James gives us one specific one so that we can allow our thoughts and souls to sink into it and begin to consider other ways that we might be guilty of this sin.

We read in Verse 2,

² 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, ³ 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," ⁴ have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

James places us in a church service on a Sunday morning and he begins to talk about how people in that church greeted one another and how they particularly welcomed new visitors. Two men visit the same church on the same Sunday, but these two men had completely different experiences at that church. The first man is described as wearing a "gold ring and fine clothing". This man dresses for success, and the way that James describes him as intentionally dressing so as to draw attention to importance of his person. He wants to be noticed as a wealthy, as influential, and as important man in the community, and indeed, others do notice him. Heads turn when he enters the building. People begin to whisper and point, "Look who is here today." The people in the church fawn over him and ask him to sit in a very special seat of honor in the sanctuary. They really hope this guy makes this church his church home.

The second man, in contrast, is described as being "poor". The word poor is interesting. It does not describe a person from the lower middle class or even the working poor class. This person is poor in the sense that he is relegated to the beggar class. He has to beg in order to have enough food to live on. If he doesn't receive something from others then he will die. This person comes in wearing "shabby" clothing. The term "shabby" means stinky and filthy. It is a term

that evokes repulsion. This is likely the only garment that this man owns. He lives in it. He sleeps in it. He works in it. He sweats in it. If he sat down in the seat behind you, you would smell him before you would see him. That is the image that James is painting for us.

Now notice that when the man in shabby clothing comes in no one turns him away. They are not necessarily mean to him. They do not kick him out of the building. They welcome him in and they give him some options, “You can stand over here or you can sit down over here at my feet.” Their concern was that this man just simply get settled wherever he needed to get settled so that they could put him out of the way and so that they didn’t have to think about him any more; “Just get settled. Stand over there or sit down over here. It doesn’t matter. Just find a place.” about where he can be in the meeting room. He can stand over there or sit down over here.

Now what kinds of thoughts are going through the minds of the people who treat these two different men so differently? James says, “Evil ones.” That is the kind. They are evil thoughts and those are very strong words. Notice what James says in Verse 4,

⁴ ...have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

James likens favoritism in the church to that of corrupt judges who are biased on the basis of bribes that they receive. Rather than making their decisions upon the basis of justice and what is right, they make their decisions upon the basis of prejudice and upon the basis of privilege. James is saying that preferential seating in the church, even that light of a form of favoritism, is as serious a miscarriage of justice as bribes in the courtroom!

Favoritism flows from thoughts that are motivated by self. They are motivated by a love for money; thoughts that are motivated by worldly pursuits, worldly acclaim, worldly advancement and you might even be able to imagine some of the specific thoughts going through the minds of the people in this church as this rich man walk in. The pastor and elders may have been thinking, “This guy could really help us pay off the loan we have just taken out in order to build our new building. Let us make sure that he really knows that he is welcomed here.” James says that it is evil to think that way. It is evil because the church is not to think of people as instruments to come and use for the churches’ interests, but the church is to think of people as those whom God loves and whom we can serve and help and encourage with the grace of God.

Others may have been thinking that morning, “This person could really help with some contacts that would advance my career. I want to get to know him. I hope he stays because then I might be able to get into a circle of friends who would help me in life.” James says that that is an evil thought. Again, this is a thought that considers people as objects to be used rather than as eternal souls to be freely loved. Such thinking is evil because it destroys the message of the Gospel of grace. The Gospel of Jesus is too valuable and it is too precious to put a price tag upon it, but that is what favoritism does; it takes the Gospel and it marks it with a price tag, “This is how much this is for sale.”

Let us ask ourselves the question, “How am I tempted to show favoritism in the way that I speak or in the way that I treat others.”

As I understand it, some companies answer calls on the basis of the customer’s past buying history and their past purchasing history. Technology makes it possible for a company to identify a caller and to look up immediately how good or poor a customer they have been in the past. If you have been a great customer, some use this technology to put you “in the front of the line”. Some may argue that in business that is fair and a good business practice, but James says that that is not the way it is to be in the church and that is not the way that we are to think about people in the church, for church attenders and church members are not consumers, they are worshippers. The church is a people that is set apart for the glory of God to proclaim the Good News to the sinner and nothing about favoritism advances the name of Christ. In fact, it diminishes it.

So, how am I tempted to show favoritism? Undoubtedly, all of us are tempted in some way to treat people on the basis of the externals. That is part of our human nature and it is a part of our fleshly nature. So we ask, do I reflect the mind of Christ in the way I treat others, or do I reflect the mind of a sinful man and a sinful woman? We cannot change ourselves but we can call upon God’s grace to change our hearts, and I would encourage all of us to pray, “Lord, would you show me areas of my heart that are not true and that are not pure in this area of favoritism? Then, Lord, would you change my heart. I need you to change my heart so that I think differently about people and so that I have

the mind of Christ when I relate to others and so that I don't have the heart of a sinful man thinking evil thoughts, but, Lord, I want to live to the glory of God and I want to live to the praise of your name."

Perhaps we don't show favoritism on the basis of wealth like the illustration James used. Perhaps we show favoritism on other basis; the basis of talent or personality, or the way one dresses. What would happen if a person came dressed in Goth attire and covered with tattoos? How would we treat them? What about the person from another race or from another nation? What about the person who comes to church wearing a frown instead of a smile? It is so much easier to approach the person who is smiling and to treat them with a bit more friendliness than the person who looks standoffish and who has a frown on their face. That is an external thing, so we want to ask God to help us so that we might love our neighbors as ourselves³ so that we might love other people for His glory.

The third reason favoritism is wrong is because it contradicts God's heart, as we see in Verse 5,

⁵ 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?

It is not a sin to be wealthy. That is not James point. Both the rich and the poor alike come to faith in Jesus and the New Testament gives ample record of this fact, but what James is saying here is that God takes special delight in choosing the poor of this world to become rich in faith and to become heirs of His Kingdom. God tells us why this is true in 1 Corinthians 1, when the Apostle Paul says,

²⁶ For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, ²⁹ so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰ And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹ so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

Someone has remarked how thankful they were for the letter "m", for the text does not say, "Not any of you were powerful, not any of you were wise according to worldly standards, and not any of you were from noble birth." There have always been, from the beginning of time, individuals in the church who were from noble birth, who were of great wealth, or who were from great influence. Thankfully, there are some that God has placed from those strata of society into His church, but Paul says, "Not many of you were..."

God takes special delight in bringing those who are in this world to the richness of faith because the poor and the lowly of this world bring Him such glory. They recognize that they credit none of their spiritual advancement to their family, to their wealth, to their intellect, or to their own abilities, but they recognize that they are a sinner who has been saved by grace and that they have nothing that would commend them to God. It is God in His grace who has redeemed them. God loves to choose the lowly of this world to become rich in faith so that He would receive the greater glory and so that He would receive all of the credit.

James says the poor are often the ones who are "rich in faith". They have had to live a life of dependence upon God, humbling themselves before Him to ask for their daily bread, so the poor within the church are often such great reservoirs of the treasure of faith that strengthens a church and that builds her up. James says, "Why then, if you know that is true, are you treating the poor man as though he were less supportive than the rich man? He is such a treasure to the church; that can bring such strength to the church? Why would you show favoritism?"

The church exists to bring glory to God. That is our bottom line purpose. That is why we exist. If we recognize that God loves to create worshippers out of the poor and lowly of this world, why would we treat the lowly of this world with less enthusiasm than we do the people of this world who are important in the world's eyes? The only reason is that our heart is not in line with God's. Our heart contradicts God's heart.

³ Matthew 19:19

In his commentary on The Book of Acts, evangelist Ajith Fernando describes the Maltose people who live in a mountainous area of India. Without access to clean water, bathing was very difficult. The tribe's people often smelled so bad that outsiders avoided them. Mortality rates were so high that extinction of this people group was a real danger. When missionaries came to this people group, remarkable changes began to take place. By 1996, more than one-third of the Maltose people had become Christians. Better hygiene has led to lower mortality rates, yet this barrier and this change, this act of God's redemption among a people, came with a great price – those missionaries who first came to the Maltose people died from diseases that were common among them. They went to a lowly, poor, outcast group of people and they gave their lives. Why is that? It is because their hearts were aligned with God's heart. Friends, are our hearts aligned with God?

The fourth reason why favoritism is such a grievous sin is that it is harmful to people whom God loves. Verse 6 begins very simply,

⁶ But you have dishonored the poor man...

The implication is that “you have dishonored the poor man whom God has chosen and whom God loves”.

It does not appear that the people in the church service that Sunday morning that James described intended any harm to the poor person. They were not mean to him. They were just neglectful. They wanted him to find a place so that they could move on with their Sunday activities and so that they could move on to talk to more important people. Do you think that this poor man noticed the second-rate reception he received in the church that day? Of course he did. Perhaps no one else noticed. Perhaps the pastors and the elders of the congregation or anyone else noticed that these two people were treated differently. It was not a part of their “strategic plan”. It was not something they decided to do. It just simply happened. James says, “Don't forget, though, that God loves this man.”

He was a man in need of truth, in need of grace, and in need of a Savior and the church on that Sunday didn't present Christ to Him. In fact, through their actions they denied Christ. They pulled the Gospel's message and its beauty from his hands. I urge you to look around you. Everyone you see is a person whom God loves and to whom God desires to bless with His grace and mercy. Each person is important to God from the wee little child all the way up to the very oldest saint; from the most brilliant mind to the weakest mind; from the person with the greatest abilities, athleticism, and talent to the person with no abilities whatsoever in their talent; to the person who is so socially adept that they are so fun to talk to that you laugh and have such a good time to the person who is a bit of a bore. Every person you see is immeasurably loved by God and is important to Him. God says, “Treat that person, when you run into them and when you connect with them, as Jesus would treat them.” Favoritism is harmful to God's people. It is harmful to people whom God loves.

The last reason why favoritism is so harmful and so grievous a sin is that it creates more oppression, misery, and oppression.

James has just instructed us, at the end of Chapter One, that true religion is religion that visits orphans and widows in their distress. In other words, they are concerned about the hurts and needs of other people, particularly the weakest in a culture. The church involves itself in the plight of the widow and it involves itself in the plight of the orphan in the community, and rightly so. At Bethany, we are so thankful for our partnership with Christian organizations such as the South Side Mission, the Peoria Rescue Mission, and other missions throughout the world that are concerned with the plight of the poor and who are concerned with the plight of the weak and concerned with the plight of those who are hurting in this world. But, favoritism cancels out the other efforts that a church might do to try to attend to the needs of the oppressed. It adds to the misery! Let's look at Verses 6 and 7 again,

⁶ But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? ⁷ Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called?

James is communicating that favoritism in the church makes no sense whatsoever. It does no good and it only brings greater misery. It feeds the mouth of the lion that would devour the church. By James description, the man in the story wanted special attention and he dressed to get it. Do you think that the man was helped by coming to that church that day? Do you think that he was drawn closer to God's grace because of the favoritism that existed in that church? No, he was unable to see the true picture of the glorious Christ because of this sin. The person that they wanted to treat

with special honor only had his own selfishness and his own sinfulness fueled by that involvement and engagement with that congregation. He didn't have the Gospel that would convict him of his sin and convince him of his need for a Savior to weigh upon his soul that day.

Furthermore, the poor man is deeply harmed. By showing favoritism, the church was behaving in the same way that oppressors in this world do. James is saying that this is not the way the church is to be.

We close with Verses 8 and 9,

⁸ If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. ⁹ But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors

The big question, as we consider the application of James' message to us, is, "God, how will you use me in this church to create an environment in which this church is your feet and your hands; that we love people the way that Jesus loves people? Father, what do you have to do in my heart to change me so that I would be a part of that kind of living faith and that kind of Gospel influence in the lives of the rich and the poor and the like? Father, how would you have me to love others as I come to church?"

The history of the church of Jesus has not been stellar in its application of James 2. We could march all throughout the history of various parts of the world of how the church has failed to avoid the very sin that James condemns so clearly and so strongly.

God, may this church, in this time, in this place be different. May we break that mold. May we live to your glory and may we love as you loved.

Charlie Brown was building a little birdhouse for sparrows. "For sparrows! Nobody builds a birdhouse for sparrows!" "I do. I like to stick up for the underbird!"

Friends, let us love the underbirds. Jesus does.