

# The Letter of James

## Faith that works!

### Study 5 – Playing Favourites

#### Introduction

In the late 1880's when Gandhi was studying at University College in London, he was curious to investigate Christianity. He thought it might have some answer to the social problems caused by the caste system in India. But when he got to the door of his local church, he was stopped by those welcoming and they suggested that he would be more comfortable if he went and worshipped with his own people, meaning of course, that they didn't want an Indian in their white church. Reflecting on that he later wrote, "If Christians have class differences – I might as well remain a Hindu."

James Ch 2:1-13 deals with favouritism. The example that James gives is the favouritism that some Christians showed to the rich over the poor, but as in the story told by Gandhi, we know it can take many shapes. We usually show preference to those who are like us, or to those whom we think we can gain something from. We usually discriminate against those who are different to us, or those we assume can't give us any advantage. In whatever form it takes, favouritism is unacceptable for those who are 'believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ' (2:1). Favouritism is offensive to people, but it's also offensive to the gospel, and as we'll discover in tonight's study, offensive to God. How will we know if we have 'humbly accepted God's word planted in us' on this issue? This passage will expose the favouritism in our own hearts and in turn, will begin to change how we think about other people, ourselves and God.

#### Read James 2:1-13



#### Investigate

1. What does it mean to show favouritism? Have you ever suffered because of someone else's favouritism? How did it make you feel?







## Think and Apply



### Mind

How did tonight's passage challenge you to think differently about those different to you?



### Heart

In what way does this passage help you understand yourself better? Does it shed light on a sin, emotion or desire?



### Life

Is there someone you must change your attitude and behaviour towards as a result of tonight's bible study? How will you do this? When will you do this?