

# How to Avoid Prejudice

Intro:

1. **ILL: Tevye in Fiddler on the Roof couldn't accept a Gentile son-in-law.**
2. Prejudice never has done anyone any good but can hurt everyone involved.
  - a. **ILL: Partiality of Rebecca for Jacob** Gen 25:28 - Isaac, who had a taste for wild game, loved Esau, but Rebekah loved Jacob.
  - b. **ILL: Partiality of Jacob for Rachel.** Gen 29:30 - Jacob lay with Rachel also, and he loved Rachel more than Leah. And he worked for Laban another seven years.
  - c. **ILL: Partiality of Jacob for Joseph.** Gen 37:3-4 - Now Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made a richly ornamented robe for him. When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of them, they hated him and could not speak a kind word to him.
  - d. **ILL: "The Sin of Prejudice".**
3. How can you avoid prejudice in your Christian lives?

*James 2:1-13*

## I. You Need to Realize What Prejudice Is

- A. Definition of prejudice = "A judgment formed beforehand without the examination of the facts".
- B. Prejudice is expressed by favoring some & scorning or ignoring others.
  1. v2-3 - The rich may be more physically attractive. Our society worships beauty.
    - a. **ILL: TV commercials are made with attractive people.**
    - b. This attracts kids especially.
    - c. **ILL: Barbie Dolls are perfect.** So starve yourself little girl with anorexia & bulimia so you can look like Barbie!
  2. v6b - The rich have power.
    - a. They **exploit** (καταδυναστεύω) = to exercise power over. These are the bosses!
    - b. They "drag you into court". **ILL: Debtors' Prison in the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant** (Matt 18:23-34).
  3. v7 - They are the ones slandering your name "Christian". **Belong** (ἐπικαλέω) = to call upon, also used for a wife being called by her husband's name.
  4. The rich were also less likely to be very spiritual.
    - a. Possessions tend to be the rich person's idol.
    - b. **ILL: The Rich Young Ruler** (Matt 19:16-22).
    - c. The Lord said, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." - Matt 19:24.
  5. The poor have nothing - but are usually pretty humble. That's a goal God wants or Christians!

### C. There should never be prejudice in the church!

1. The church in Jerusalem went out of its way to care for the poor.
2. **Act 2:44-45** - All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need.
3. **Act 4:32-37** - All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all. There were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need. Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement), sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet.
4. **ILL: Peter's Rooftop Experience (Act 10:9-23)**. Peter would then say, "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right. - Act 10:34-35.
5. **ILL: COL Causey welcoming visitors to chapel.**

## II. You Need to Realize the Affects of Prejudice.

### A. How does prejudice affect those who are being treated poorly?

1. **v6a** - They feel insulted & unwelcome in the kingdom of God.
2. Low self esteem tends to remain low unless it is encouraged.
3. Christians are kings kids, a royal priesthood, a holy people (1 Pet 2:9).
4. Every Christian needs to be encouraged by the others "to think of themselves as they ought to think".

### B. How does prejudice affect those who are prejudiced?

1. **v4** - It makes you a judge with evil thoughts.
2. **v11** - It makes you a law breaker.
3. **v8-11** - It makes you live the Royal Law hypocritically.
  - a. The Royal Law is **Lev 19:18** - Love your neighbor as yourself.
  - b. **v9** - It is a sin to love only some "neighbors" & not others!
4. **v12-13** - It makes you not practice what you preach!
  - a. The "law that gives freedom" was the Royal Law (**v8**) in contrast to the Law of Moses.
  - b. The Law of Moses was judgment without mercy.
  - c. But the Royal Law of Love satisfied needs regardless of who had the needs.
  - d. **ILL: The Parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:30-37)**.

**Who was the real neighbor? Good Sam, of course! The Lord Jesus says to you, "Go & do likewise!" - Lk 10:37.**