

James 2:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:

Analysis

And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: Showing deference (epiblepsēte, ἐπιβλέψητε) to the well-dressed while telling the poor person to stand or sit underfoot reveals a heart enslaved to worldly honor. The commands "sit thou here" and "stand there" expose subtle yet painful marginalization.

James reveals how speech betrays partiality. Reformed ethics insist that love of neighbor is the fulfillment of the law; words assigning worth based on wealth violate the royal law.

Historical Context

House churches lacked enough seating; where someone sat communicated value. In a shame-honor culture, telling someone to sit "under the footstool" was deeply insulting. James ensures diaspora believers see such practices as incompatible with the gospel.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What subtle cues might communicate favoritism in your interactions?
2. How can you cultivate speech that dignifies every believer?
3. Who could you invite into closer fellowship despite social differences?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἐπιβλέψετε ἐπὶ τὸν φοροῦντα τὴν ἐσθῆτα τὴν
And ye have respect to him that weareth clothing
G2532 G1914 G1909 G3588 G5409 G3588 G2066

λαμπράν καὶ εἶπητε αὐτῷ, Σὺ κάθου ὧδε καλῶς
the gay And say unto him thou Sit here in a good place
G2986 G2532 G2036 G846 G4771 G2521 G5602 G2573

καὶ τῷ πτωχῷ εἶπητε Σὺ στήθι ἐκεῖ ἢ κάθου ὧδε
And to the poor say thou Stand there or Sit here
G2532 G3588 G4434 G2036 G4771 G2476 G1563 G2228 G2521 G5602

ὑπὸ τὸ ὑποπόδιόν μου
under footstool my
G5259 G3588 G5286 G3450

Additional Cross-References

2 Corinthians 8:9 (Parallel theme): For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

James 2:6 (Parallel theme): But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?

Jude 1:16 (Parallel theme): These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

Isaiah 65:5 (Parallel theme): Which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou. These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day.

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