

## THE PROBLEM WITH PREJUDICE

James 2:1-4

### Introduction:

1. Have you ever looked down upon another because he was different?
  - a. “Women! You can’t live with them; you can’t live without them!”
  - b. “Men! What would they do if they didn’t have us to clean up the messes they make?”
  - c. “That dumb n -?” “White trash!” “Stupid cracker!”
  - d. “The English are all a bunch of stuffed shirts!”
  - e. “The French are all arrogant snobs.”
  - f. “Americans are so rude!”
  - g. “Clean up our state. Put a Yankee on a bus going north.”
  - h. “Ignorant hillbilly!” “Dumb redneck!”
2. To look down upon a person because of the accident of birth (gender, place, or race) or economic, educational or social level is prejudice.
3. Prejudice is no respecter of persons, for people of all races, genders, nationalities and social and economic levels practice it.
4. Should Christians be prejudiced? If not, how can we overcome it?

### Discussion:

#### I. WHAT IS PREJUDICE?

- A. The dictionary defines prejudice as “a pre-conceived judgment, an opinion formed without sufficient knowledge.”
  1. Prejudice is making up your mind before you know all the facts.
  2. We can be prejudiced against a person, a race, a nation, a religion, a business, an idea, or an institution.
- B. Prejudice is the product of a closed mind.

1. **“Some minds have been closed for years, but not for alterations or repairs.”**
2. **“Nothing is more difficult to open than a closed mind!”**
3. **An old preacher prayed: “May we always be right for Thou knowest we will never change our minds.”**

**C. Prejudice is condemnation without investigation.**

1. **“Prejudice is a great timesaver; it enables us to make up our minds without going to the trouble to learn the facts.”**
2. **Robert Burns told of a judge who pounded on his desk for silence and said: “Ladies and gentlemen, you must be quiet! I’ve had to convict the last five accused without hearing a word of their defense!”**

**II. MANY IN THE WORLD ARE PREJUDICED AGAINST THE TRUTH.**

**A. The Pharisees were prejudiced against our Lord.**

1. **They sought to trap Him in His words (Matt. 19:3; Mk. 3:2).**
2. **They accused Him of being a glutton and a winebibber (Matthew 11:18,19).**
3. **They even claimed He cast out demons by the power of Satan (Matthew 12:24-30).**

**B. The Jews in Antioch of Pisidia were prejudiced against the Gospel and sought to prejudice others as well (Acts 13:42-46).**

**C. Many in the world are prejudiced against the Lord’s church.**

1. **“You believe in water salvation” (Mark 16:16; 1 Pet. 3:21).**
2. **“You don’t believe in music” (Colossians 3:16).**
3. **“You think you are the only ones going to Heaven” (Luke 6:46; Acts 2:38, 41, 46).**

**D. Some in the church are prejudiced against new methods of carrying out God’s commands.**

1. If God tells us to do something, but does not specify how, He has left it up to us to choose the best way.
2. Some in the Lord's church have been prejudiced against:
  - a. Indoor baptistries to carry out immersion.
  - b. Classes according to age for teaching the Bible.
  - c. Multiple cups in serving communion.
  - d. Supporting homes to care for orphans and widows.
  - e. Church bulletins to keep the members informed.

E. Others in the church are prejudiced against certain Bible teachings:

1. Marriage, divorce and remarriage (Matthew 19:9).
2. Giving as God has prospered us (1 Corinthians 16:1,2).
3. Continuing steadfastly in worship and Bible study (Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:25).

### III. MANY ARE PREJUDICED AGAINST PEOPLE WHO ARE DIFFERENT.

- A. Nathanael was prejudiced against Jesus (John 1:45-51).
- B. The Jews were prejudiced against the Samaritans (John 4:9).
- C. The Pharisees were prejudiced against the tax collectors (Luke 15:1,2; 18:9-14).
- D. Some today are prejudiced against those different from them:
  1. The poor, downtrodden and outcast.
  2. Those of other races.
  3. Those in sin seeking a Savior.
  4. Jesus invites everyone to come to Him (Matt. 11:28).

### IV. HOW CAN WE OVERCOME PREJUDICE?

- A. We must remember the "Golden Rule."

1. “... whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 7:12).
  2. I want others to be kind, considerate and courteous to me, therefore I must treat them the same way.
- B. We must remember “the royal law” of Scripture.**
1. “If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself,’ you do well” (James 2:8).
  2. If I love others as I love myself, I will want no harm to come to them.
- C. We must remember every person is one for whom Jesus died.**
1. “But we see Jesus, Who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone” (Hebrews 2:9).
  2. Every soul is just as precious to Jesus as mine.
- D. We must remember the saved are all one in Christ (Eph. 4:4-6).**
1. We all are in the same body.
  2. We all partake of the same Spirit.
  3. We all have the same hope.
  4. We all have the same Lord.
  5. We all have the same faith.
  6. We all have the same baptism.
  7. We all have the same Father.

**Conclusion:**

1. We must hate sin, but love the sinner (Acts 10:34,35).
2. We must seek and save the lost as Jesus did (Luke 19:10).
3. We must accept the simple truths of salvation that Jesus taught if we would be saved (John 8:24; Luke 13:3; Matt. 10:32; Mark 16:16).

