

Dr. David Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 20, Segment Survey – James 2:1-7 Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 20, James 2:1-7, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. David Bauer's lecture on Inductive Bible Study analyzes James 2:1-7, focusing on the condemnation of partiality shown towards the wealthy while neglecting the poor. Bauer structures his argument around several key points: God's impartiality, the importance of judging based on character rather than appearance, the need to avoid partiality towards both the rich and the poor, and the inherent contradiction between faith and works. He examines the text grammatically and theologically, exploring the various interpretations of key terms and phrases. The lecture ultimately emphasizes that true faith necessitates actions reflecting God's love and justice towards all, irrespective of social standing, and warns against the hypocrisy of those who favor outward displays of wealth over genuine piety.

2. 16 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 20 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Introduction & Languages → Introductory Series → Inductive Bible Study).



**Bauer_IBS_Session2
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3. Briefing Document: Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 20, James 2:1-7

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided excerpts of Dr. David Bauer's lecture on James 2:1-7:

Briefing Document: Dr. David Bauer on James 2:1-7

Introduction:

This document summarizes Dr. David Bauer's lecture on James 2:1-7, which centers on the command not to show partiality. Bauer frames the passage within the broader context of James chapter 2, highlighting its connection to the themes of faith and works. He argues that partiality, specifically favoring the wealthy over the poor, contradicts both God's nature and the very essence of Christian faith. The lecture is structured around identifying the main command, its substantiations, and the theological implications.

Main Themes:

1. The Structure of James Chapter 2:

- Chapter 2 is divided into two main units:
- **Verses 1-13:** The command to show no partiality, substantiated by two arguments: (1) it is contrary to God's election of the poor (vv. 2-7), and (2) it is contrary to God's law (vv. 8-13).
- **Verses 14-26:** The general principle that faith without works is dead, which relates to the issue of partiality as an example of faith without works.
- The overarching contrast throughout the chapter is between the "contradiction of faith" (faith over against works) and the "correspondence of faith" (faith active in works).

1. The Central Command: Show No Partiality

- The core exhortation of the chapter is found in verse 1: "My brethren, show no partiality as you hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory."
- The Greek word for partiality, "prosopolempsia," means respect of persons, focusing on outward circumstances rather than intrinsic merit. It is consistently used in the New Testament to describe the actions of God, that He *does not* show partiality.

- Showing partiality is considered an act against the work of God, because God does not show partiality.

1. **God's Election and the Poor:**

- God has "chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom" (v. 5). This doesn't mean God *prefers* the poor simply for being poor, but because their circumstances make them more inclined to faith and love.
- Bauer emphasizes that God's choice isn't based on external circumstances but on "intrinsic merit," specifically a general inclination toward faith and love.
- God doesn't show partiality to the poor; rather, he shows partiality toward *poverty* in that a poor condition inclines one toward faith.
- Christians should imitate God, not showing partiality to either the rich or the poor.

1. **Partiality is Rooted in Judging by Appearance:**

- The passage emphasizes that partiality arises from valuing outward appearance over true character.
- The scenario in verses 2-4 (a rich man in fine clothes and a poor man in shabby clothes entering the assembly) is presented as an example, not a record of an actual event. It highlights the superficiality of judging by outward appearance, emphasizing appearance rather than the person's intrinsic merit.
- Bauer makes the point that God judges based on inner character. The text highlights the mistake in judging a person's character based on wealth.
- The lecture notes that it's just as wrong to favor the poor over the rich as it is to favor the rich over the poor. Christians should not be partial to either group based on their status.
- Bauer mentions that the law talks about not showing partiality, especially in the law court, referencing Leviticus 19:15 where it says: "You shall do no injustice in judgment. You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness you shall judge your neighbor."

1. **Response to the Rich and the Poor:**

- The response of the people in the scenario is a key issue. It demonstrates an internal attitude (looking favorably on the rich, "epiblepo") and an external action that takes the form of speech.
- The way they speak to the rich and poor is important, and shows their internal condition. They speak respectfully to the rich ("have a seat here, please") while speaking rudely to the poor ("stand there, or sit at my feet").
- This illustrates how the tongue expresses a person's true character (as further developed in chapter 3), revealing their deep commitment to class distinction. The way they treat the rich and the poor shows that they honor wealth and despise poverty.
- The use of spatial language ("near" for the rich, "distance" for the poor) indicates a desire to associate with the wealthy while distancing themselves from the poor. The positions the people offer ("sit here" and "sit at my feet") reflects their understanding of the position and their view of status, with the rich being exalted and the poor being humbled.

1. **Motivation Behind Partiality:**

- By making distinctions, the readers assume the role of the wealthy, revealing their longing for status and a desire to exalt themselves over others.
- The word diakrinomai, "made distinctions" (v. 4), can also mean "doubt" or "judge," suggesting a lack of faith. Showing partiality involves not faith, but doubt.
- The lecture states that by judging, they usurp the role of God, who is the only judge.
- The judgment stems from "evil thoughts" (v. 4), or "dialogismon," referring to self-centered motives and calculated attempts to gain favor from the wealthy. It means they want patronage from the wealthy. This is self-centered, not God-centered.

1. **Theological Basis for Rejecting Partiality:**

- God's election of the poor is supported by Old Testament themes, Christ's attitude toward the poor, and the readers' own experience of their congregation being predominantly poor.

- The description of the poor as "rich in faith" and "heirs of the kingdom" highlights a connection between poverty and piety. They are rich in faith and have a promise.
- The rich are described morally in verses 6 and 7 as oppressors, exploiters, and blasphemers of the name of Christ, the honorable name that was invoked over them at baptism.
- The actions of those who show partiality contradict their baptism, making the claim that there can be no separation between faith and works.

1. **The Meaning of "Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory"**

- The genitive construction in the phrase "faith of our Lord Jesus Christ" can be interpreted as either subjective or objective.
- Objective genitive: Faith *in* Jesus Christ as the object of salvation.
- Subjective genitive: Faith *like* Jesus' faith, His faithfulness to God.
- Bauer argues for the objective genitive, emphasizing the Lordship and glory of Christ and our faith directed to Him for salvation.
- Jesus is presented as the "Lord of Glory" with three possible meanings:
 - His glory in poverty (taking on the role of the poor).
 - His eschatological glory (coming back as judge).
 - Both (assuming the role of the poor and coming back as judge).
- Partiality is a contradiction to holding faith in Jesus as the Lord of glory, and is a contradiction in the nature of faith because it does not result in works. It also contradicts the object of faith, the Lordship of Christ, and fails to take into account His ministry and example. Finally, partiality contradicts their own experience of faith.

Key Quotes:

- "My brethren, show no partiality as you hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory." (James 2:1)
- "Listen, my beloved brethren, 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?" (James 2:5)

- "You have dishonored the poor man. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? Is it not they who blaspheme the honorable name which was invoked over you?" (James 2:6-7)
- "The word partiality here is *prosopolempsia*, which involves respect of persons, partiality, the fault of one when caught on to requite or to give judgment has respect to the outward circumstances of men and not to their intrinsic merits, and so prefers as the more wealthy one who is rich, high-born, or powerful to another who is destitute of such gifts."
- "God does not show partiality to the poor, but He shows partiality to poverty. There is a kind of spiritual redemption of poverty here. Their condition makes them more inclined to faith and to love."

Conclusion:

Dr. Bauer's lecture emphasizes the severity of partiality as a contradiction to the Christian faith, specifically as it goes against God's nature, the example of Christ, and the gospel message. He connects partiality to the failure to act justly and the lack of love to fellow humans. The lecture shows how the principle of partiality can be applied beyond simple rich/poor distinctions to any instance of judging based on appearance rather than the inward person. The key takeaway is that Christians should be imitators of God, seeking to treat all people with equal dignity and honor, not being swayed by superficial distinctions. The failure to do so calls into question the genuineness of one's faith.

4. Study Guide: Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 20, James 2:1-7

Inductive Bible Study: James 2:1-7 Study Guide

Quiz

1. According to Dr. Bauer, what is the main command given in James 2:1-13? What two main points does James use to substantiate this command?
2. What does Dr. Bauer mean by the terms “contradiction of faith” and “correspondence of faith,” as used in James chapter 2?
3. What is the Greek word for “partiality” used in James 2:1? What does this word mean and how is it used in the New Testament?
4. According to Dr. Bauer, why does James use a third-class conditional statement when he presents the scenario of the rich and poor in verses 2-4?
5. How does Dr. Bauer interpret the phrase "the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory"?
6. Dr. Bauer presents three possibilities for interpreting "the Lord of glory." What are they?
7. Why does Dr. Bauer believe that the scenario in James 2:2-4 is most likely describing a worship service rather than a disciplinary hearing?
8. According to Dr. Bauer, what is the deeper motivation behind the behavior described in the scenario in James 2:2-4?
9. What are the three senses that Dr. Bauer argues that God has chosen the poor in verse 5?
10. According to the passage, what behaviors are characteristic of the wealthy (verses 6-7)?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The main command is to "show no partiality as you hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory." James substantiates this command by arguing that partiality is contrary to God's election of the poor (verses 2-7) and contrary to God's law (verses 8-13).

2. "Contradiction of faith" refers to faith that is held without works, often involving partiality and a failure to live out God's law, while "correspondence of faith" is faith that is active in works, demonstrating a genuine commitment to God and his principles.
3. The Greek word is *prosopolempsia*, which means "respect of persons" or "partiality." In the New Testament, it's used to describe God's impartiality and is also condemned when used by people, who are to judge based on merit rather than outward circumstances.
4. James uses a third-class conditional statement to indicate that the scenario is a potential or hypothetical situation, not an actual event, allowing him to focus on the underlying principle rather than a specific incident.
5. Dr. Bauer interprets the phrase as likely an objective genitive, emphasizing faith *in* Jesus Christ as the object of faith for salvation, with Jesus as the worthy recipient of trust.
6. The three possibilities are: 1) Jesus' glory in poverty; 2) Jesus' eschatological judgment; and 3) both of the previous interpretations, emphasizing that the glory is found in His humility and His righteous judgment.
7. Dr. Bauer believes that it's a worship service because it doesn't reference juridical issues, relates to chapter 1's concern for caring for the poor as religious duty, and uses judging language generally of Christian relationships, not just court cases.
8. The deeper motivation is the desire for the status of the rich so they can exalt themselves over others, demonstrating a self-centered ambition for status and influence rather than a God-centered humility.
9. The three senses are: 1) testamentally, where the Old Testament shows God's care for the poor; 2) Christologically, through Christ's example and reception among the poor; and 3) experientially, as many of the readers were themselves from the poor classes.
10. The wealthy are described as oppressors, those who drag others into court, and blasphemers of the honorable name invoked over believers, highlighting their unjust use of power and their antagonism towards Christ.

Essay Questions

1. Analyze the significance of the “contradiction of faith” and the “correspondence of faith” in James 2, exploring how these concepts relate to both the initial command against partiality and the subsequent discussion of faith and works.
2. Discuss Dr. Bauer's arguments against partiality in the context of God's election in James 2:5. How does this section of the lecture challenge common assumptions about wealth and divine favor, and what does it suggest about God's perspective on human value?
3. Examine the scenario presented in James 2:2-4, explaining how it functions as an example of flawed judgment and a critique of the misuse of power in the early church. How does this example challenge the church's view of status and social distinctions?
4. Explain Dr. Bauer's analysis of how the issue of partiality in James relates to a broader understanding of the importance of inward attitude and outward actions in faith. How does the misuse of the tongue play into the issue of partiality and its implications for the Christian life?
5. Drawing from the lecture, discuss the interconnectedness of the themes of faith, works, wealth, and poverty in James 2:1-17. How does this section of James address the challenges of living a genuinely faithful life in a world marked by social inequality?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Partiality (*prosopolempsia*):** Respect of persons, showing favoritism towards someone based on external circumstances rather than intrinsic worth or character.
- **Contradiction of Faith:** Faith that is held without corresponding works or actions, often involving partiality, and failing to live by the law of God.
- **Correspondence of Faith:** Faith that is active in good works, demonstrating a genuine commitment to God and expressing itself through actions that align with God's will.
- **Objective Genitive:** A grammatical construction that describes the noun as the object toward which the action or quality of the first noun is directed. (i.e. faith *in* Jesus).

- **Subjective Genitive:** A grammatical construction that describes the noun as the source or agent that performs the action of the first noun. (i.e. faithfulness *of* Jesus).
- **Eschatological:** Relating to the end times or the final events in history, especially as described in prophecy.
- **Imitatio Dei:** Imitation of God, the principle that believers should strive to be like God in their actions and character.
- **Diakrinomai:** A Greek term meaning "to doubt," "to judge," or "to make distinctions."
- **Patronage:** The system of support and favor granted by the wealthy or influential to those of lower social standing, often for personal gain.
- **Rhetorical Question:** A question asked not to elicit an answer but to make a point or to persuade the listener.

5. FAQs on Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 20, James 2:1-7, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ on James 2:8-13

- **What is the "royal law" that James refers to, and why is it significant?**
- The "royal law," as James describes it in this passage, is the commandment to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18), which Jesus elevated to the center of the law. This is a "royal law" because it reflects Jesus's teaching and is the law of the kingdom of God. It's not just a part of the Old Testament law, but it's the Old Testament law as interpreted and emphasized by Jesus, the King. It signifies that the law finds its ultimate meaning in love for both God and neighbor, placing this love command at the core of all moral obligations and duties. This love command becomes the lens through which all other laws are understood.
- **How does James' understanding of the law differ from Paul's perspective, and are these views contradictory?**
- James views the law positively, as a "law of liberty" that empowers Christians to fulfill God's will through loving actions, which is made possible by faith in Christ and which finds its fulfillment through loving actions. Paul, while not contradicting James entirely, often highlights the law's negative function as a "tutor" or "schoolmaster" that exposes our inability to meet God's standards on our own and drives us toward faith in Christ and God's grace. While Paul does see a positive role for the law later, James is more positive toward the law. The distinction lies in the emphasis: James focuses on the law as a guide for Christian living, while Paul often focuses on the law as something we can never completely fulfill. They agree that love for God and neighbor is the crux of the matter. Both understand that the law continues in force and is a standard for Christian life, but the difference is in the lens through which they are interpreting the role of law for followers of Christ.

- **What does it mean that the "law is still in force" for Christians according to James?**
- For James, the law is still in force for Christians, but it is not just about following a set of rules. It is about understanding that all the commandments express and come back to the core commandment of love. It signifies the enduring relevance of God's moral expectations. Christians are called to live out the law's intent—to love God and their neighbors—as expressed through specific commands, interpreted through Jesus' teachings and example. However, James emphasizes that these expressions should be understood as manifestations of love rather than rigid legalistic adherence to rules.
- **Why is showing partiality considered a sin, and what does it reveal about a person's heart?**
- Showing partiality is a sin because it contradicts the love commandment to love your neighbor as yourself. It indicates a love of self that outweighs love for others. When you show partiality, you fail to love your neighbor equally, instead, you are prioritizing some individuals over others. This act reveals a heart that is not fully aligned with God's love, and it can be understood as a form of rebellion against God's authority since God does not show partiality. Instead, the only relevant factor in loving a neighbor is the opportunity that is present.
- **What is the connection between the law of liberty and true freedom in the context of James 2:8-13?**
- The "law of liberty" in James refers to the law as understood through the lens of love, as opposed to an external restriction. True freedom, according to James, is not found by breaking free from external constraints, but is found by freeing ourselves from the bondage of self-centered desires and passions. The law, when properly understood, frees one from self-obsession by directing one towards loving God and neighbor. The law, then, empowers true freedom by turning the focus from one's self to love for God and others.

- **How does James's argument that failing in one point of the law makes one guilty of all of it relate to the unity of God?**
- James argues that because God is one and not divided, his character is unified. All that he does and says and has given coheres in perfect unity. And because the law is an expression of God's unified character, the law itself is one. Therefore, if a person breaks any single commandment, he violates the essence of the entire law because he is rejecting the lawgiver himself. This underscores that true obedience is not just about adhering to individual rules, but about aligning oneself with God's entire will.
- **What is the significance of judgment being without mercy for those who have shown no mercy?**
- This statement highlights the principle of divine justice. Those who have not extended mercy to others should not expect mercy themselves, because such a judgment would violate justice. God is compassionate and merciful, but he is also just. The law of the end-times kingdom will require all to show mercy. The statement is a call for Christians to show mercy because such compassion aligns with the core intention of the law.
- **How does showing mercy relate to the law, particularly in light of the coming judgment?**
- Showing mercy is not just an act of kindness but is also an expression of the royal law, to love one's neighbor. The work of mercy expresses faith because the heart of God is compassionate and merciful, therefore one who follows him is expressing his heart when one extends mercy to others. James argues that mercy triumphs over judgement. Mercy is an expression of love at the center of the law. On judgment day, those who have expressed their love through works of mercy, particularly to the poor and marginalized, have followed the royal law and can thus expect mercy. However, this does not negate the fact that we all fall short. There is a need for mercy for all. But ultimately, God's mercy is rooted in love and his judgement is rooted in justice.