

# DEALING WITH PEOPLE HONESTLY

## LESSON 3: JAMES ON BUSINESS

*My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism.*

– JAMES 2:1

### CORPORATE SITUATION ROOM

You have a deadline looming week and it is going to take all the focus and time management skills to meet it. That morning your boss stops by your cubical just to say “hi” and chat. You politely stop what you are doing and listen politely meanwhile thinking of all you must do. Later that afternoon a coworker stops in at your cubical to say hi and get caught up on what went on during the weekend. You can’t believe it. Don’t they know you are stressed and must get your work done? You pretend to listen but keep typing at the computer hoping they will get the hint and go away. They do and leave with hurt feelings.

Joe is a top producer and leader of a main division of your company. He is awesome in every way but one. He has a problem turning in his time sheets at all, much less on time. Every month, the Administrative Staff complains that they cannot run payroll and that they must constantly bend the rules for Joe. You always deflect their concerns citing his contribution to the company.

One of your new hires has this same problem. Policy states that if you do not turn in your time sheet, you don’t get paid and it could be grounds for dismissal. You have “the talk” with this new hire.

- Q. How should you have dealt with each person?
- Q. What is the motive to show favoritism in each case?
- Q. What are some other ways we can show favoritism at work that are subtle and appear harmless?
- Q. What are some ways we subconsciously show favoritism?
- Q. What work environment promotes favoritism?

### JAMES 2:1-13

<sup>1</sup> *My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism.*

<sup>2</sup> *Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. <sup>3</sup> If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, “Here’s a good seat for you,” but say to the poor man, “You stand there” or “Sit on the floor by my feet,” <sup>4</sup> have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?*

*<sup>5</sup> Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? <sup>6</sup> But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? <sup>7</sup> Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong?*

*<sup>8</sup> If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, “Love your neighbor as yourself,”<sup>[a]</sup> you are doing right. <sup>9</sup> But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. <sup>10</sup> For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. <sup>11</sup> For he who said, “You shall not commit adultery,”<sup>[b]</sup> also said, “You shall not murder.”<sup>[c]</sup> If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.*

*<sup>12</sup> Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, <sup>13</sup> because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment.*

## **FAVORITISM FORBIDDEN**

**v. 1** Who must not show favoritism?

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**v. 2-4** What are the evil thoughts that we have and why are they evil?

What does this have to do with Justice?

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**v. 5-7** In what ways do the rich exploit?

Who are the poor in your world? At work?

In what subtle ways do we dishonor the poor?

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**v. 8-11** Why is discriminating evil?

Why is it important to understand and admit your sin nature?

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**v. 12-13** What law is he referring to?

How do you balance mercy and policy in the workplace?