Study Hints for Thinking Further

International Bible Lessons

James 2:1-13

Sunday, February 9, 2014

L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

Some Bible study groups or classes can further discussion by asking some or all of the **Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** below. Others may want to send the bulletin size *International Bible Lesson* home with their students for further study in the coming week to encourage continuing Bible study. The *Study Hints for Thinking Further* below are not actually intended to be the answers to the discussion questions. These indeed are "hints" a teacher may use to help students think through and discuss the questions in class.

Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. How might showing favoritism make someone think that you do not "really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ"?

If you show favoritism, then you are not obeying Jesus' commands or example. If you are not obeying Jesus' commands or example, then that may indicate you have not made Jesus Christ the Lord over your whole life. Perhaps you think you can accept Jesus as your Savior but not as your Lord to go to heaven .

2. In addition to showing favoritism toward the rich, in what other ways might the church show partiality?

Some in the church might show partiality or favoritism toward those of their own race or nationality or political party or theological belief system.

3. What possible mistake or mistakes can a church make when attempting to be impartial?

A church might put a known convicted felon in a place of responsibility over others in the church, a person who could harm others, even though the person has not repented of their sins or demonstrated a changed life over sufficient time through faith in Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul said he was the chief of sinners, but Paul did not continue sinning as he had in the past; he had to prove to church leaders that he no longer persecuted Christians and had come to true faith in Jesus Christ before the church sent him on any missionary journeys. The church needs this same wisdom today as it seeks to follow the Bible's teachings and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

4. Why may it be difficult for a poor person to become a Christian? Why may it be easy for a poor person to become a Christian?

It may be difficult because the poor person may have experienced discrimination in the churches he has visited in the past. He may feel that God has treated him unfairly

and he is poor because God is unfair. He may not have the advantages of a Bible to read whenever he wants to, or of good Christian books that others can afford, or of a church near him where he can worship and meet Christians who can teach him about Jesus and the Bible.

It may be easy because the poor person may see that trusting God is his only hope for the future and all eternity. While seeking God as his only hope, God may reveal Jesus Christ to him in a way that inspires him to joyfully receive Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior. It may be easy because he knows he must trust Jesus Christ every day for his daily needs.

5. Why may it be difficult for a rich person to become a Christian? Why may it be easy for a rich person to become a Christian?

It may be difficult for a rich person because he may think he does not need God because of his riches, because his focus is on increasing his wealth and what money can buy. It may be difficult because he missuses his time and uses his wealth to do evil. He may think it is more important to build a name for himself on earth and leave a worldly legacy than live right with God.

He may have access to the Bible whenever he wants to read it and good churches and Bible study groups near him to help him become a Christian and grow spiritually as a Christian. It may be easy because he has seen that his wealth is a gift of God, so he wants to use his riches to help others. He may come to trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior partly because he wants Jesus' help to use his riches wisely to benefit others; for example, to help widows and orphans in their times of need.

— © Copyright 2014 L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.
You may reprint or reproduce Study Hints for Thinking Further for not-for-profit use.