

Welcoming James 2:1-2:13

Romans 15:7

⁷Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

Ray Ortlund Jr.

Welcome to church. Now here's the one thing I invite you to understand. You may have noticed when you walked in, that the doors out there are painted *red*. That is an old Christian tradition [reflecting how we] enter into the church through the blood of Christ.

Out in that world, where we live the rest of the week, we never measure up. Our lives are never complete. We never fully belong. Then we come into the church through the finished work of Christ on the cross, and what makes the difference here ... the reason why we belong: we're walking into completeness already prepared. Therefore, we can be weak; we can be honest with ourselves, with one another, and with the Lord, and he says, "We belong."
Welcome.

So, to all who are weary and need rest;
To all who mourn and long for comfort;
To all who fail and desire strength;
To all who sin and need a Savior;
This church opens wide her red doors in the name of Jesus, the friend of sinners. Welcome, I'm glad you're here.

#1: Exhortation: Show No Partiality (2:1)

² My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory.

#2: Illustration: Showing Partiality in the Assembly (2:2-4)

²For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, ³and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, "You sit here in a good place," while you say to the poor man, "You stand over there," or, "Sit down at my feet," ⁴have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

Rebecca McLaughlin, "Three Rules of Engagement"

(1) An alone person in our gathering is an emergency. (2) Friends can wait. (3) Introduce a newcomer to someone else. Let's all be missionaries at church today!"

#3: Explanations: Reasons Why We Must Not Show Partiality (2:5-13)

It Doesn't Reflect God's Grace (2:5a)

⁵Listen, my beloved brothers, 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?

It Doesn't Reflect God's Kingdom (5b-7)

⁵ Listen, my beloved brothers, 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? ⁶ But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? ⁷ Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called?

It Doesn't Reflect God's Royal Law (8-12)

⁸ If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. ⁹ But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it. ¹¹ For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. ¹² So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty.

D. It Doesn't Reflect God's Mercy Toward Us (13)

¹³ For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.