

# Coach House Church

# BEACONS

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## FAVOURITE AND FAVOURITISM

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What is your favourite colour? Or maybe, what is your favourite dish? I'm sure that, like most of us, you have a favourite place to go on holiday. Perhaps under the current circumstances your favourite place might be somewhere in your house? Now if you have ever watched a TV program called "The Big Bang" you would know that Sheldon, one of the characters has a favourite place on the sofa "The list could go on and on - favourite fruit, film, jumper and so on; We are all born with the capability of having favourite things.

So we have a question "why do people have favourite things?" This is how "Quora.com" answers that question- "our brains natural reaction to light, sound and touch creates feelings that we usually attach to positive emotions or connections of past experiences to those 3 things - light, sound and touch. Favourite is a form of attachment to something you really really like."

This other word - Favouritism - has its root in the word favourite which comes from the Latin word "favare" which means to show kindness to.

Favouritism is explained in the dictionary as follows: "the noun "favouritism" can simply describe the habit of preferring one particular person or group of people over another person or group; it implies that favour is given at the expense of other people."

Favouritism has a negative connotation- it is associated with bad feelings emotions and experiences. When parents show favouritism towards one of their children, it leaves the others feeling unloved, excluded, lonely, insecure.

In the work place it can be hard to advance in your career if the bosses show favouritism towards a category of people to which you do not belong to. My husband recruits new staff from time to time and as a recruiter he is trained to

avoid favouritism or unconscious bias, and the recruitment process is designed to avoid favouritism as in these situations this can happen unconsciously.

In the bible, we hear for the first time about not showing favouritism in Exodus when the Jews were given the Law by God. In chapter 23 v3 it says "...do not show favouritism to the poor person in a lawsuit". Poor people were prevented from having justice delivered, like in many cases today, because the rich often bribed the court to have their way. But God's command does not stop there, it carries on from equality to kindness. Verse 4 in the same chapter says "if you come across your enemy's ox or donkey wandering off, be sure to return it"

This was mind blowing in a society that was still functioning on the "an eye for an eye" principle; showing kindness to an enemy was unheard of. And what is more, it was not a mere rule or tradition, it was the Law!

As people we are drawn towards other people that are the same as us. The unknown and the unfamiliar is a bit scary and a bit uncomfortable. James in his letter towards the believers outside Palestine wrote this in chapter 2:

" My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism. 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. 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," have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

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?

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? Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong?

If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right. But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. For he who said, "You shall not commit adultery," also said, "You shall not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker. Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment."

James 2:1-13 NIV

There is little I could add to what I just read. Maybe just this "don't judge a book by its cover"

Show mercy and be kind to everyone, especially people that you don't get on with or who you regard as your enemies. After all, it is God's command.

Lord Jesus , give us the strength to love and show kindness even when the society around us would expect "an eye for an eye". You Lord, when people were crucifying you, you prayed- "Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing" - Give us the same attitude Lord. Help us never to forget who and what we are in you, even when we are hurt by others. Help us Lord Jesus to always mirror you.

Amen



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