

James 2

Scriptures:

Notes:

In the last chapter, James introduced the idea of the 'law of liberty'. Later in this chapter he will tell us the role of love is the law of liberty.

James 2:1-13 - Living Right without Partiality!

Scriptures:

Romans 2:11 - For there is
no partiality with God.

Leviticus 19:15 - You shall
do no injustice in judgment.
You shall not be partial to
the poor, nor honor the
person of the mighty. In
righteousness you shall
judge your neighbor.

¹ **My** brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord

2192 -
possess

4102 -

Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with partiality.

4382 – favoritism –
“partiality n. — an
inclination to favor one
group or view or opinion
over alternatives;
especially considered as
an injustice.

Notes:

One of the challenges of living right
in this wrong way world is
understanding the relationship
between faith and works. The Bible
gives us instruction and examples of
both what to do and what not to do.
In this section James is telling us
what shouldn't be seen in our faith –
partiality.

Partiality - unfair bias in favor of one
thing or person compared with
another; favoritism.

Partiality is contrary to the nature of
God ([Rom. 2:11](#)). God calls it unjust
and unrighteous ([Lev. 19:15](#)).

Scriptures:

² For if there should come into **your** assembly a

4865 –
“synagogen” –
synagogue

Notes:

A modern illustration might be showing partiality to the person who drives up in a brand new Bentley versus the person who drives a 1996 Honda Civic.

man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there

should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes,

Scriptures:

³ and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine

1914 – take
special notice

Notes:

“The way we behave toward others indicates what we really believe about God!” Wiersbe - 350

Jesus would have looked more like the poor man than He would have the rich man.

clothes and say to him, “You sit here in a good

place,” and say to the poor man, “You stand

there,” or, “Sit here at my footstool,”

Scriptures:

Proverbs 28:21 -

To show partiality is not good,

Because for a piece of bread a man will transgress.

Proverbs 22:2 -

The rich and the poor have this in common,

The LORD is the maker of them all.

⁴ have you not shown partiality among yourselves,

1252 -

Notes:

There are many things wrong with partiality. It is born out of ‘evil thoughts’ that produce wicked acts. It judges people on their outward appearance and not on who they are in God’s kingdom. It implies that the rich man’s soul is of more value than the poor man’s soul.

Money, power, status, or any other human form of measurement does not determine a person’s worth or righteousness.

and become judges with ~~evil~~ thoughts?

2923 -

4190 -

1261 - reasoning

Scriptures:
Matthew 5:3 -
Blessed are the poor in
spirit,

For theirs is the
kingdom of heaven.

Luke 12:21 - "So is he who
lays up treasure for himself,
and is not rich toward
God."

⁵ Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not

chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith

1586 -

and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to

1861 -

those who love Him?

Notes:

This does not suggest that all poor people are automatically saved. A poor person is much more aware of their needs than is a rich person. The poor are more inclined to the gospel because of this ([Matt. 5:3](#)).

'rich in faith' – because of their dependence upon God, the poor lean more heavily on their faith. The rich are more likely to lean on their riches.

While the poor are poor in this world, they are rich in heaven. And chances are that because of their faith they will receive greater rewards in heaven than the rich will.

What we do with what God has given us, whether it is much or little, makes a difference in our relationship with God ([Luke 12:21](#)).

Scriptures:

⁶ But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not

818 – disgrace,
degrade

the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts?

2616 - dominate

Notes:

By treating the poor person with partiality, they have devalued their soul.

Scriptures:

⁷ Do they not blaspheme that noble name by

987 – insult,
curse, slander

Notes:

Their blasphemy is in degrading the poor person as not as worthy of Christ's sacrifice as a rich person's soul.

which **you** are called?

Scriptures:

Leviticus 19:18 - You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.

Matthew 22:35-40 - Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, 36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" 37 Jesus said to him, " 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

1 Samuel 16:7 - But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

Mark 12:41-44 - Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many who were rich put in much. 42 Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans. 43 So He called His disciples to Himself and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; 44 for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood."

1 John 4:7-11 - Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 In this the

⁸ If you really fulfill the royal law according to the

5055 - complete

937 -

3551 -

Notes:

'royal law' – only occurrence of this phrase in the Bible.

This phrase is repeated several times in the New Testament, most emphatically in ([Matt. 22:35-40](#)).

Partiality looks at the outside, but God looks at the heart ([1 Sam. 16:7](#)). Only God can see what is inside the human heart. Since we can't see what is in someone's heart, we are told to love them 'as yourself'. And since we love ourselves only one way, we are called to love everyone equally. And because James is focused on a faith that works, we don't need to feel love but are called to express love through our actions. The account of the widow's mites in [Mark 12:41-44](#) is an example of that.

The obvious question then is, 'Who is my neighbor?' Jesus replied to that very question with the parable of the Good Samaritan. The conclusion is that we are called to love any needy human God gives us an opportunity to help. And that is regardless of their outward appearance or behaviors.

Love is the key to living right in this wrong way world. Love is God's nature ([1 John 4:7-8](#)) and it is how He relates to mankind ([Rom. 5:8; 8:35-39](#)) and it is how He expects us to relate to other humans made in His image ([John 13:34](#)). Responding to the needs of others is one of the proofs that God's love is in us ([1 John 3:16](#)).

Scripture, *"You shall love your neighbor as*

1124 -

yourself,' you do well;

2573 -

love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Romans 5:8 - But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 8:35-39 - Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written:

"For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from

the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 John 3:16 - By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 17 But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?

John 13:34-35 - A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

Scriptures:

⁹ but if you show partiality, you commit ~~sin~~, and

4380 – show
favoritism

2038 -

266 -

Notes:

Showing partiality is not loving your neighbor and therefore is sin.

James doesn't pull any punches. Partiality = sin. If you do it, even a little bit, you are guilty and need to repent. Replace partiality with love.

are convicted by the law as transgressors.

1651 -

3848 – deserter,
apostate

Scriptures:

Galatians 3:10 - For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them."

¹⁰ For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet

5086 – observe,
obey

3650 -

Notes:

stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.

4417 – sin
Gal. 3:10

1777 – guilty and
deserving of a
penalty

Word study

Scriptures:
John 14:6 - Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

¹¹ For ^AHe who said, "*Do not commit adultery,*"

Notes:
Implied in this is the elevation of sins like partiality to the grossness of murder and adultery.

Some people imagine a set of scales to determine if their good deeds outweigh their bad so that they will get to heaven. That is not how it works. We are bound to God by a great chain that is the law. Each commandment is a link in that chain. If you break one of the commandments, you break the chain linking you to God and there is no way to get to heaven. There is nothing any human can do to repair the chain. Only by faith in Christ and His perfect righteousness can anyone get to heaven ([John 14:6](#)).

also said, "*Do not murder.*" Now if **you** do not

commit adultery, but **you** do murder, **you** have

become a transgressor of the law.^M

3848 -

Scriptures:
1 Corinthians 3:9-15 - For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. 10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. 11 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

¹² So Speak and so do as those who will be judged

3551 - VPAM

4160 - VPAM - act

2919 - make legal decision

by the ^Mlaw of liberty.

1657 - freedom

Notes:
All humanity will be judged by God. Unbelievers will be judged by the law and condemned as guilty because they rejected the only way to be acquitted for their sins – the sacrificial death of Jesus. Believers will not be judged for their sins because Jesus took all our sins to the cross and took our condemnation. All our sins are washed away by His blood. But all our works will be judged to determine if they were worthy of heaven. For example, anything we did with partiality will be burned up and receive no reward. Everything we do as an expression of God's love will pass through the fire of judgment and be rewarded ([1 Cor. 3:9-15](#)).

Scriptures:
Proverbs 21:13 -
Whoever shuts his ears
to the cry of the poor
Will also cry himself and
not be heard.

¹³ For judgment is without mercy to the one who

2920 –
condemnation,
justice

448 - merciless

Notes:
This is a verse that we don't want to
believe is true. Humanly speaking,
we don't like the idea that there is a
point of no return when it comes to
mercy from God.

How we treat those are needy
around us will impact our
relationship with God ([Prov. 21:13](#)).

has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over

4160 -

2620 – 'boasts'

God in His perfect righteousness
must judge sin – all sin. Because God
is love He made a way for sinners to
receive mercy, but there is only one
way – Jesus Christ. When someone
receives Christ as their Savior, they
receive mercy rather than the
judgment they deserve.

judgment.

2920 -

[Top of Section](#) [Top of Chapter](#)