

James 2:1-13

Intro: • What is the general theme of these verses?

- Is this a theme that James has mentioned previously in this letter? (cf. 1:9-11)
- How does the final verse of chapter one (1:27) serve as a lead-in to the theme of these verses?

Vs. 1 • Why is “faith in Jesus Christ” incompatible with “personal favoritism”?

- How do these verses explain that the character of God is not that of preferential partiality?
Lev. 19:15,16
Deut. 10:17-19
Acts 10:34
Rom. 2:11; 10:12
Eph. 6:9
Col. 3:25

Vss. 2-4

- Why is the action represented in verse 2 & 3 contrary to Christian character and conduct?
- Does “making distinctions among yourselves” (vs. 4) mean?
 - judging according to the standards of the world?
 - a divided consciousness, not focused on Jesus Christ?
 - social snobbery based on status and social standing?
 - discrimination that devalues an individual?
- What does it mean to “become judges with evil motives”?
 - diabolic discriminatory determinations?
 - usurping God’s role of Judge of all men? (cf. Rom. 14:10-12)
 - determinations based on character other than character of God?

Vs. 5 • How does James use this verse as an argument against social favoritism?

- Are the “poor of this world” poor...
 - economically?
 - materially?
 - attitudinally?
 - spiritually?
 - socially?
- What does it mean to be “rich in faith”?
- How does being “heirs of the kingdom which God promised to those who love Him” serve as an antidote to social discrimination?

Vss. 6 & 7

- The “poor man” of verses 2 & 3 was “dishonored.” How?
 - insulted?
 - despised?
 - shamed?
 - demeaned?
 - disgraced?
- What were the “rich” doing to the Christians to whom James wrote?
 - economic exploitation?
 - legal tyranny?
 - religious persecution?

Vs. 8

- What is the “royal law”?
 - How does the “royal law” correlate with...
 - “the law of liberty” (cf. 1:25; 2:12)?
 - “the law written in our hearts” (cf. Heb. 8:10; 10:16)?
 - “the law of Christ? (cf. Gal. 6:2)?
 - Does Leviticus 19:18 provide a summary of the “royal law”? (cf. Lk. 10:25-27; Rom. 13:8-10)

Vs. 9

- Is James saying that “playing favorites is sin”?
 - By what “law” are we “convicted as transgressors”?

Vss. 10 & 11

- How can it be that a single stumble makes one guilty of violating the entire law?
- Is there any qualitative difference in sin?
- Is there any qualitative difference in the features of God’s character?

Vs. 12

- What does it mean to be “judged by the law of liberty”?
 - determination of our eternal destiny?
 - evaluation of behavioral expression?
- Since “law” and “liberty” are often antithetical, what is the “law of liberty”?

Vs. 13

- Does James mean that the absence of merciful behavior evidences that the Merciful One (Jesus Christ) does not live in you, and this makes one susceptible to the judgment of God?
- How does “mercy triumph over judgment”?

Conc.

- Do Christians today still cater to the rich? Give examples.
- Are Christians today still embarrassed by the poor? Give examples
- How can the Christian think, talk and act in a way that maintains consistency with the character of God?