




Face in a Mirror: A Study in the Letter of James



Part 3 of 7
October 23, 2022



Every Sunday until Nov 20

Oct 23 Chapter 2 Part I

Oct 30 Chapter 2 Part II

Nov 6 Chapter 3

Nov 13 Chapter 4

Nov 20 Chapter 5

Slides posted on church sunday school page.

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James Chapter I Part I Review

25 But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

James Chapter I Part II Review

2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. 4 Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

James 2:1-3

1 My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism.

2 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. 3 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," 4 have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

Chapter 1

True faith must be lived out

If not, religion is worthless. Example: unbridled speech

True religion is lived out in care for those in need and in holiness

Chapter 2

True faith must be lived out

True faith keeps the royal law: love your neighbor as yourself.

True experience of mercy makes us keep this law in speech and action, especially towards the poor.

Four reasons why believers in Jesus must not show favoritism

1. God chooses the poor to be rich in faith
2. The rich exploit Christians
3. Believers in Jesus must keep the royal law: love your neighbor as yourself
4. When we show favoritism, we become judges with evil thoughts

James 2:5-6

5 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? 6 But you have dishonored the poor.

James 1:12

12 Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.

Luke 6:20-25

20 "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

21 Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied.

Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.

24 "But woe to you who are rich, for you have already received your comfort.

25 Woe to you who are well fed now, for you will go hungry.

Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep.

Matthew 19:21-24

21 Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." 22 When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth. 23 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly I tell you, it is hard for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. 24 Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."

James 2:6-7

Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? 7 Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong?

James 2:8-11

If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right. 9 But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. 10 For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. 11 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.

Leviticus 19:1-18

1 The Lord said to Moses, 2 “Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: ‘Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy...

13“Do not hold back the wages of a hired worker overnight. 14 “Do not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block in front of the blind, but fear your God. I am the Lord. 15 “Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly..”

18 “Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord.

Galatians 5:3

Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law.

James 4:11-12

Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it. 12 There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor?

People with true faith in Jesus must not show favoritism because:

- a. God gives his kingdom to those who love him, regardless of how the world sees them
- b. Those who persecute Christians should not be honored in the church regardless of their power/wealth
- c. Believers in Jesus must keep the King's law: love your neighbor as yourself
- d. There is only one true Judge

James 2:12

12 Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, 13 because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

Galatians 5:13-14

13 You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. 14 For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

1. Believers in Jesus live according to the law that gives freedom
2. We have been given freedom to serve one another in love, not to indulge in sin
3. We will be judged according to this law. That is, there is an expectation that our lives bear out evidence of this freedom to love one another.
4. God's mercy triumphs over judgment of this law by enabling those with true faith to fulfill expectations of this law

Prayer