

Today We'll Finish This Major Section, ~ Which Comprises 4:1-12.

As know, ~ like the 1st major section, ~ this is a collection of Q/s ~ covering variety of subjects.

▶▶Covers 4 subjects.

▷▷Conflict in the Congregation, ~ 1-3. ⇔⇔ Spiritual adultery, ~ 4-6.

▷▷Submission to God, ~ 7-10. ⇔⇔ & Criticizing other believers ~ 11-12.

▶▶Today vv 11-12

And as we go through all of the subjects in James, ~ we need to keep his overall purpose in mind.

▶▶And i.e., ~ to instill correct thinking & right behavior in believers.

In 4:11-12, ~ James returns ~ to the topic of controlling our speech, ~ 3:1-12.

▶▶That James returned to this topic, ~ indicates that controlling our speech ~ is of great importance.

▷▷As we noted in 3:1-2, ~ the power of speech ~ is one of God's greatest gifts to people.

▷▷And believers ~ must be on constant guard ~ against the perverted use of this mighty gift.

▶▶Also noted, ~ consistently pure speech ~ is to be product ~ of renewed heart. 1/15

In These 2 Vv., ~ ¶¶

James points out the seriousness ~ of chronic harsh criticism ~ and also of judgementalism.

▶▶ Not just simply having a chronically negative attitude toward other believers, ~ which stops there.

▷▷ James clearly shows us that ~ it involves much more serious repercussions.

▶▶ The excuse ~ "As long as it doesn't hurt anybody it's fine," ~ is a denial ~ ¶¶

↪↪ that there are negative consequences to sin.

▷▷ That's bogus.

▷▷ There are always repercussions to sin.

↪↪ Minor, major.

▶▶ In [Jas 4:11-12](#), ~ James shows us ~ ¶¶

▷▷ that having a chronically negative attitude toward other believers ~ carries majorly serious repercussions.

Outline (NET).

James begins ~ with an exhortation.

▶▶^{11a} Do not speak against one another, brothers and sisters. 2/15

Goes on & shows us ~ there are no simple sins.

▶▶ There are always repercussions.

▷▷ David.

▷▷ Joseph.

▶▶ And in the case of having a negative attitude toward fellow believers ~ 77

▷▷ James shows us that ~ there are some majorly serious consequences.

▶▶ 1st, ~ vs 11b (NET).

▷▷ He who speaks against a fellow believer or judges a fellow believer ~ [repercussion:] speaks against the law and judges the law.

▷▷ When you speak against a fellow believer, ~ you are, ~ as a result, ~ speaking against and judging the law.

▶▶ 2nd, ~ vs 11c (NET).

▷▷ But if you judge the law, [repercussion:] you are not a doer of the law but its judge.

▷▷ I.e., ~ when you judge the law, ~ you place yourself outside of and above the law.

▶▶ Notice how the repercussions radiate outward.

▷▷ There are no simple sins. ⇔⇔ All sin involves much more. 3/15

Move on in our outline.

Next, ~ James has a reality check ~ for believers who dare ~ to place themselves ~ outside of and above God and his Word.

▶▶^{12a} (NET) But there is only one who is lawgiver and judge—the one who is able to save and destroy.

And then finally, ~ James poses a rhetorical question that puts us in our place.

^{12b} (NET) On the other hand, who are you to judge your neighbor [believer]?

It Will Be Very Beneficial To Very Briefly Review ~ ¶¶

the definition of the law James is talking about ~ before unpacking vv 11-12.

▶▶It will help us better understand what James is saying.

▶▶Circles of context out to chaps 2 & 1.

▶▶In 2:12 ~ the law of liberty.

▶▶In 2:8, ~ the royal law.

▶▶And back in 1:25 ~ the perfect law, ~ the law of liberty.

▶▶Boiled down, ~ we pointed out ~ that these phrases are referring ~ to Scripture ~ in its entirety.

▶▶Messages: ~ Warning Against Favoritism, ~ pts 3 & 4. 4/15

Also Helpful, ~ Is To Very Briefly Review James' 3rd Argument ~ Against Favoritism.

▶▶ And i.e., ~ favoritism wrong ~ because it violates God's royal law.

▷▷ Specifically, ~ the command ~ to love our neighbors as ourselves.

And This ~ Is What James Seems To Have In Mind ~ In Vv 11-12.

▶▶ Namely, ~ the command to love our neighbors as ourselves, ~ when he refers to the law.

▶▶ Because, ~ when we're criticizing and judging other believers, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ we're certainly not ~ loving them as ourselves.

▶▶ Read [vv 11-12](#) this way.

▷▷^{11a} Do not speak against one another, brothers and sisters. ^{11b} The one who speaks against a fellow believer or judges a fellow believer speaks against the command to love our neighbor and judges this command. ^{11c} But if you judge the command to love our neighbors, you are not a doer of it but its judge. ^{12a} But there is only one who is lawgiver and judge—the one who is able to save and destroy. ^{12b} On the other hand, who are you to judge your neighbor?

Ok, ~ In These 2 Vv., ~ ¶¶

James points out the seriousness ~ of chronic harsh criticism ~ and also of judgementalism.

▶▶ Not just simply having a chronically negative attitude toward other believers, ~ which stops there.

▷▷ James clearly shows us that ~ it involves much more serious repercussions. 5/15

As We Observed, ~ James Begins ~ With An Exhortation.

(NET) ^{11a} Do not speak against one another, brothers and sisters.

▶▶ Don't criticize one another, brothers and sisters.

▶▶ The tense of the verb for the command ~ Do not speak against one another ~ shows that this ~ is to be ~ an ongoing thing.

▷▷ It could be read this way:

↪↪ You must never ~ speak against/criticize one another, ~ brothers and sisters.

▶▶ Harsh, ~ and not constructive ~ criticism ~ is in view here.

▷▷ Constructive criticism, ~ done with love and compassion ~ is valid and beneficial for us.

↪↪ Ps. 141:5a ~ Let a righteous man strike me—it is a kindness; let him rebuke me—it is oil for my head; let my head not refuse it.

↪↪ And Eccles. 7:5, ~ It is better for a man to hear the rebuke of the wise than to hear the song of fools.

▷▷ Harsh criticism, ~ however, ~ is not ~ valid and beneficial for us.

▶▶ Harsh criticism is out of place among believers.

▷▷ Rather, ~ we are urged to see each other in the best possible light.

↪↪ Ps. 16:3, ~ As for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight. 6/15

▶▶ Paul also exhorts us ~ not to criticize our brothers & sisters in Christ. ⇨⇨ Rom. 14:10-13.

▶▶ And Solomon gives us some pretty good advice ~ on how to react ~ to harsh criticism.

▷▷ Eccl 7:21-22 (NIV), ~ Do not pay attention to every word people say, or you may hear your servant cursing you— for you know in your heart that many times you yourself have cursed others.

As Mentioned, ~ In The Case Of Having A Negative Attitude Toward Fellow Believers ~ ¶¶

James shows us that ~ there are some majorly serious consequences, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ which radiate outwardly from the initial criticism and judgementalism.

1st, ~ Vs 11b (Use This Trans.).

The one who speaks against a fellow believer or judges a fellow believer ~ [repercussion:] speaks against the command to love our neighbor and judges this command.

▶▶ When you speak against a fellow believer, ~ you are, ~ as a result, ~ speaking against and judging the command to love them.

▶▶ A few preliminary thoughts, ~ and then talk about this 1st repercussion.

The tense of the vb for ~ speaks against ~ expresses chronic or characteristic action.

▶▶ Habitual harshly critical point of view.

▷▷ Whoever makes it their habit ~ to harshly criticize a fellow believer or judges a fellow believer ~ speaks against the law to love our neighbor and judges it. 7/15

Notice the addition of the phrase ~ or judges a fellow believer.

▶▶ In the context of harsh criticism, ~ judges here ~ no doubt refers ~ to having a judgmental attitude.

▷▷ I.e., ~ having ~ an excessively ~ disapproving point of view ~ toward fellow believers.

▶▶ Read: ~ ¶¶

▷▷ Whoever ~ makes it their habit to harshly criticize other believers ~ ¶¶

↳↳ or ~ has a judgmental attitude toward them, ~ speaks against and judges the command ~ to love our fellow believers.

▶▶ Suggest also express this way.

▷▷ Whoever makes it their habit to ~ harshly criticize other believers ~ ¶¶

↳↳ or judges them wrongly, ~ speaks against and judges the command ~ to love our neighbor.

In a diff. context, ~ but a applicable generally, ~ Jesus warned about judgmentalism.

▶▶ Jn. 7:24, ~ NIV, ~ Stop judging by mere appearances, but instead judge correctly.

▶▶ Jesus had no time for judgementalism.

▶▶ Rather, ~ he's calling for moral and theological discernment in the context of obedient faith. 8/15

▶▶ For instance in regarding his teaching he said, ~ 77

▷▷ If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority (Jn. 17).

And in Matt. 7:1 (CSB), ~ Jesus issued this command.

▶▶ Do not judge, so that you won't be judged.

▷▷ The tense of the verb indicates ~ a prohibition ~ that forbids judging others at any time.

↪↪ Don't ever judge another.

▶▶ We must carefully note the exact meaning of judge here.

▷▷ In this context ~ it does not mean ~ a court trial or admonition.

▷▷ It cannot refer ~ to discerning or evaluating right and wrong.

▷▷ All such are valid for believers.

↪↪ And Jesus would not forbid us from doing that.

▷▷ In this context, ~ like in James, ~ it's referring to a judgmental outlook.

▷▷ It means ~ looking down on a person with a superior attitude, ~ 77

↪↪ criticizing or condemning them without a loving concern. 9/15

▷▷ The key component ~ is the absence of love.

↳↳ Genuine admonition or constructive criticism ~ has a humility that says, ~ ~ 77

→→ "I love you enough to want to help you, ~ ~ and tomorrow you will need to correct me."

↳↳ There is ~ no sense of superiority, ~ 77

→→ no desire to make yourself look good at the expense of another.

Now let's talk about ~ the 1st repercussion.

▶▶^{11b} The one who ~ speaks against a fellow believer ~ or judges a fellow believer ~ 77

▷▷ [repercussion:] speaks against the command to love our neighbor and judges this command.

▶▶ I.e., ~ Whoever makes it their habit to ~ harshly criticize other believers ~ 77

▷▷ or has a judgmental attitude toward them, ~ 77

↳↳ as a result, ~ has the same negative attitude ~ toward the command ~ to love our neighbor.

▶▶ Namely, ~ they are harshly criticizing and wrongly judging this command.

▶▶ Believers who are guilty of such a negative attitude toward their fellow believers ~ 77

▷▷ act as if this command does not apply to them ~ and treat it ~ as if it's wrong. 10/15

But It's Even Worse Than That.

The repercussions continue to radiate outward.

▶▶ 2nd, ~ vs 11c (NET).

▷▷^{11c} But if you judge the command to love our neighbors, ~ ¶¶

↳↳[repercussion:] you are not a doer of it but its judge.

▶▶ I.e., ~ when you judge the law, ~ you place yourself outside of and above the law.

▶▶ So not only ~ is this type of believer acting as if the command ~ ¶¶

▷▷ does not apply to them and the command is wrong, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ they are actually ~ disobeying the command ~ ¶¶

→→ and elevating themselves to a place of authority over the command.

▶▶ And this is a very dangerous position to place oneself.

▷▷ Give some thought to the implications of why it's a dangerous position to place oneself.

The repercussions won't stop at this point either

▶▶ Disobeying and elevating oneself over one of God's commands ~ implies, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ disobedience to ~ and elevating oneself above ~ the whole word of God. 11/15

▷▷ Because it's a slippery slope ~ once we begin to criticize and wrongfully judge just one part.

▶▶ And, ~ placing oneself in authority above God's word is, ~ in effect, ~ 77

▷▷ placing oneself above God's authority itself.

↪↪ IOW, ~ the chronic judgmental critic ~ has usurped a position of authority ~ 77

→→ that is reserved for God alone

All Of This ~ Should Make Us Think Twice.

Before we engage ~ in chronic harsh criticism and judgmentalism ~ toward our fellow believers.

▶▶ In principle, ~ [Prov. 17:14](#) applies here.

▷▷ The beginning of strife is like letting out water, so quit before the quarrel breaks out.

▶▶ The image involves ~ a small leak in a container or water tank ~ that starts to spurt out water.

▷▷ The problem will get worse ~ if it is not stopped. ⇔⇔ **Strife is like that.**

▶▶ And so is a ~ critical and judgmental spirit ~ toward other believers.

▷▷ The problem will only get worse ~ if not stopped ~ as soon as it starts.

↪↪ As James vividly showed us, ~ if it continues, ~ majorly serious repercussions will radiate out. **12/15**

Next, ~ Reality Check For Believers Who Dare To Place Themselves Above God And His Word.

^{12a} (NET) But there is only one who is lawgiver and judge—the one who is able to save and destroy.

▶▶ One is the lawgiver and judge. ⇨⇨ Fronted to stress the uniqueness of God.

▶▶ Emphasizing one, ~ & only one, ~ lawgiver and judge. ⇨⇨ Not plural.

▶▶ God, ~ and God alone, ~ gave the command ~ to love our fellow believers as ourselves.

And God alone ~ gets to determine ~ if it's a good law and who it applies to.

▶▶ Consequently, ~ since he is all-good, ~ this command is good.

▶▶ Furthermore, ~ only he ~ has the authority to choose ~ to whom it applies.

▷▷ And he ~ has declared that it ~ applies to every believer.

In addition, ~ since he and he alone gave the command, ~ he is the only one qualified ~ ¶¶

▶▶ to judge those who are responsible to keep it.

▶▶ That he is "able to save and destroy" ~ is proof ~ ¶¶

▷▷ that he is in a position to enforce the law, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ rewarding those who keep it, ~ and punishing those who violate it.

▶▶ God alone ~ stands supreme ~ as giver of the law ~ and as its judge. 13/15

And this of course, ~ applies to all of Scripture.

▶▶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

▶▶ Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:20-21; NIV).

▶▶ God alone ~ stands supreme ~ as giver of his word ~ and as its judge.

Lastly, ~ James Poses A Rhetorical Question ~ That Puts Us In Our Place.

^{12b} (NET) On the other hand, who are you to judge your neighbor [believer]?

▶▶ Should remind us of when God spoke to Job out of the whirlwind.

▷▷ Job 38-42

▶▶ With shattering bluntness, ~ James crushes any right ~ 77

▷▷ believers may claim they have ~ to sit in judgment over our fellow believers.

▶▶ This is not to rule out civil courts and judges.

▶▶ Instead, ~ it is to root out the ~ harsh, ~ unkind, ~ critical ~ spirit ~ 77

▷▷ that continually ~ finds fault with others. 14/15

Tough words.

▶▶ But again, ~ loving words.

▶▶ The Lord doesn't want us ~ to suffer the heartache and the inevitable consequences of sin.

▶▶ He loves us too much ~ to let us go blindly on our way in life.

▶▶ So he spells out for us ~ the chain reaction that sinning will spark.

▶▶ Basically he says in this passage, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ "If you go down the road of harsh criticism and judgmentalism, ~ this is what's going to happen.

↳↳ So, ~ don't start down that road."

▶▶ Hallelujah, ~ what a Savior! 15/15