

IN OUR STUDY OF JAMES, ~ currently looking at his warning ~ against favoritism, ~ 2:1-13.

OUTLINE THIS WAY.

▶▶(vs 1) James' Command against Favoritism.

▷▷My brothers and sisters, ~ as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, ~ never ~ engage ~ in acts of favoritism.

▷▷Our heavenly Father does not want us to fall into this sin ~ or any sin.

↪↪He wants to spare us from the heartaches that result from sin.

→→One of which ~ is the breaking of fellowship with him.

↪↪So he graciously and lovingly exhorts us through James.

▶▶(vss 2-3) Concrete Example of Favoritism.

▷▷Favoring rich over poor. ⇔⇔ Best seat/worst seat . . . .

▷▷But, ~ as noted, ~ we need to understand, ~ ¶¶

↪↪James was using a specific example ~ to illustrate ~ a much larger principle.

→→Namely, ~ all forms of favoritism ~ are wrong and sinful.

↪↪Not just favoring rich over the poor. 1/15 ¶¶

▶▶ In vs 4, ~ James draws his conclusion ~ for when this happens.

▷▷ The congregation that discriminates between rich and poor, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ or shows favoritism in any manner ~ has turned ~ from worshiping God ~ to becoming evil-intentioned judges.

▶▶ Then in vss 5-13, ~ James presents 3 arguments against favoritism.

▷▷ 1<sup>st</sup> argument, ~ vs 5.

↳↳ In the case of James' example, ~ favoritism toward the rich is wrong.

→→ Because it contradicts God's own attitude, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ as revealed in his gracious election of poor people to salvation.

▷▷ In vs 6a ~ James delivers a stinging indictment ~ for when believers favor the rich over the poor.

↳↳ It dishonors the poor ~ and ~ it's an insult to God.

↳↳ What's more, ~ it grieves the Holy Spirit. ⇔⇔ Eph. 4:30

→→ All forms of sin, ~ fav. included, ~ deeply saddens the Holy Spirit, ~

↳↳ whom our gracious God has given to His people ~ ¶¶

↳↳ to indwell them and empower them to live a holy life. 2/15 ¶¶

▷▷ 2<sup>nd</sup> argument against favoritism, ~ vss 6b-7. ⇔⇔ Incongruity of favoring the rich.

▷▷ And 3<sup>rd</sup> argument against favoritism, ~ vss 8-13.

↳↳ Favoritism in general violates God's royal law.

→→ Specifically, ~ to love our neighbors as ourselves.

↪↪ Briefly put, ~ favoritism is sin.

AND TODAY, ~ WE'LL FINISH OUR LOOK ~ at the third argument against favoritism.

STARTED LAST TIME.

BEFORE UNPACKING VSS 8-13, ~ review flow of thought. ⇔⇔ Violates God's royal law.

▶▶ Specifically, ~ showing favoritism ~ violates ~ command to our love neighbors as ourselves.

▷▷ Again, ~ elaborates, ~ detail, ~ but this is the bottom line.

▶▶ To break God's royal law ~ is sin.

▷▷ And to break even one part of it ~ is to break the whole.

▶▶ Since God's royal law will be the standard by which ~ believers will be evaluated at the judgment seat of Christ, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ we should live in light of that coming evaluation.

↳↳ E.g., ~ by not showing favoritism. 3/15 ¶¶

## PERHAPS IT WILL ALSO BE BENEFICIAL ~ ¶¶

▶▶ to review the definition of the law James is talking about ~ before unpacking 8-13.

▶▶ Boiled down, ~ the royal law is referring to Scripture ~ in its entirety. ~ 2 Tim. 3:16-17

▷▷ 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.

▶▶ God's Word ~ in its entirety = The Royal Law. ⇔⇔ Royal because given by the King.

▷▷ And within it, ~ from Gen to Rev, ~ we are told ~ how citizens of God's kingdom ~ are to live.

▶▶ Further, ~ God's word contains ~ the gospel of grace ~ with all its implications.

▷▷ Also contains God's moral law, ~ which is still binding on believers.

▷▷ And, ~ when it comes to the entirety of the OT law ~ and the whole OT as well, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ we must, ~ imp. ~ study, ~ interpret, ~ and apply it ~ through the grid ~ ¶¶

→→ of Jesus' teaching ~ and ~ of the teaching of rest of the NT.

↳↳ If not, ~ run risk of misinterpreting OT. ⇔⇔ Lev. & Heb.

▶▶ My ..., ~ the Bible ~ is our authoritative rule of life. ⇔⇔ Royal law of Kingdom.

▷▷ It reveals God's will for how ~ we should think and live. 4/15 ¶¶

▶▶ Additionally, ~ must stress ~ believers obey the royal law ~ not ~ 77

▷▷ as a means to be right with God, ~ 77

↳↳ but ~ as a natural outflow and proof ~ of genuine salvation.

▷▷ "If you love me, ~ you will keep my commandments."

↳↳ I.e., ~ genuine love for Jesus ~ will result in obedience.

→→ Not left on own . . . .

NOW LET'S UNPACK VSS 8-13.

IN VERSE 8, ~ JAMES SEEMS TO BE ANTICIPATING ~ some of his readers' objections.

THEY: ~ "JAMES, ~ BY SHOWING THE RICH MAN TO THE BEST SEAT, ~ 77

▶▶ we're only following the biblical injunction ~ to show proper honor where honor is due!"

▶▶ "After all, ~ if we were rich, ~ that's how we would want to be treated. ~ 77

▷▷ We're just following the golden rule!"

▶▶ James says, ~ 77

▷▷ "That's fine! If you claim to be fulfilling God's royal law, ~ "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," ~ you're doing well! ~ 77

↳↳ Keep it up!" 5/15 11

AS HIS ORIGINAL READERS BEGIN TO CONGRATULATE THEMSELVES, ~ ¶¶

JAMES BRINGS THE HAMMER DOWN IN VERSE 9.

▶▶ "But ~ if you show favoritism, ~ you are committing sin ~ ¶¶

▷▷ and are convicted by the royal law as transgressors."

IN VS 8, ~ JAMES SINGLED OUT THE COMMAND FROM LEV. 19:18.

▶▶ You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

▷▷ Repeated at least 7x in the NT.

▶▶ God's moral law.

▷▷ Binding on believers.

▶▶ Jesus referred to it ~ as the second great command, ~ after, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

▶▶ Then he added, ~ On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.

▶▶ I.e., ~ the two great commandments summarized the OT law.

▶▶ They also summarize ~ God's royal law ~ under which believers live. 6/15 ¶¶

TO FAVOR ONE GROUP OVER OTHERS, ~ is not to show love for our neighbor as ourselves, ~ James implies in vs 9.

▶▶ But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.

▶▶ To show favoritism to the rich ~ while we treat the poor with contempt, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ or to show partiality to a certain race, ~ while treating those of another race ~ as inferior, ~ ¶¶

↪↪ is to commit sin.

▶▶ In case we didn't understand those plain words, ~ James adds, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ and you "are convicted by the royal law as transgressors."

AND JUST IN CASE SOMEONE THINKS SHOWING FAVORITISM NOT A BIG DEAL, ~ ¶¶

JAMES HELPFULLY CORRECTS THAT THINKING IN VSS 10-11.

▶▶ For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it. For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." ~ ¶¶

▷▷ If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.

▶▶ IOW, ~ someone might say, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ "Maybe I've been showing favoritism, ~ but I haven't cheated, ~ I haven't murdered anyone." 7/15 ¶¶

▶▶ On the contrary, ~ James shows that ~ to violate God's royal law ~ on any level ~ ¶¶

▷▷ is a serious matter.

↳↳ I believe that's his main point here.

▶▶ James is showing us ~ that the royal law is ~ a unity.

▷▷ It's like a chain.

↳↳ A single broken link ~ breaks the chain.

▷▷ Or, ~ it's like a mirror or a window.

↳↳ A single, ~ small crack means that it is broken.

▶▶ You can be a good person in every other way.

▷▷ But if you break the law, ~ you're a lawbreaker.

▷▷ E.g., ~ if a man is guilty of murder, ~ when he goes before the court ~ it does not matter if ~ ¶¶

↳↳ he has been a faithful husband, ~ ¶¶

→→ has never had a traffic ticket, ~ robbed a bank, ~ or beat up his neighbor.

↳↳ All that matters is, ~ did he commit murder?

↳↳ If so, ~ he is guilty of breaking the whole law. 8/15 ¶¶



## TO SUM UP SO FAR.

▶▶ James says to show favoritism is to violate ~ God's royal law.

▶ Specifically, ~ the law to love our neighbor as ourselves.

▶▶ Showing favoritism of any kind, ~ James argues, ~ is a serious matter.

▶▶ No sin is ~ to be taken lightly ~ or ~ to be treated in a flippant manner.

▷▷ In God's eyes, ~ there is no such thing ~ as a minor or insignificant sin.

↪↪ E.g., ~ no such thing as ~ "little white lies."

→→ All lies are sin.

▶▶ How loving of our heavenly Father ~ to explain this to us.

▷▷ He wants us ~ to thrive spiritually ~ and not break fellowship with him.

↪↪ So he spells the things out for us that we need to avoid.

## JAMES CONCLUDES HIS DISCUSSION OF FAVORITISM IN VSS 12-13.

<sup>12</sup> SO SPEAK AND SO ACT AS THOSE WHO ARE TO BE JUDGED UNDER THE LAW OF liberty. ~ ~ ¶¶

▶▶<sup>13</sup> For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment. 9/15 ¶¶

JAMES MAKES TWO POINTS HERE.

1<sup>st</sup>, ~ VS 12, ~ BELIEVERS WILL BE JUDGED ~ BY THE LAW OF LIBERTY.

I.E., ~ THE ROYAL LAW, ~ GOD'S WORD.

▶▶ Some may wonder, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ "I thought that believers would not be judged at all, ~ since Christ bore our judgment on the cross. ~ ~ ¶¶

↪↪ "What does it mean, ~ then, ~ to be judged by the royal law?"

I'LL EXPLAIN.

▶▶ In [Rom.](#), ~ Paul ~ So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus (NLT).

▶▶ And in [1 Thess.](#) ~ he states that ~ Jesus delivers us from the wrath to come.

▶▶ While that is true, ~ Paul also writes in [2 Cor. 5:10 \(NIV\)](#), ~ ¶¶

▷▷ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

▶▶ And let's read what Paul asserts in [1 Cor. 3:10-15](#) . . . .

▶▶ Our sins have been judged and removed from us ~ through the death of Christ.

▷▷ [God] has removed our sins ~ as far from us as the east is from the west. 10/15 ¶¶

▶▶ But ~ our lives as believers ~ will undergo ~ the Lord's heart-level ~ evaluation.

▷▷ Those things ~ that were done ~ out of love for Jesus and for His glory ~ will be rewarded.

↳↳ Represented by ~ gold, ~ silver, ~ and precious stones

▷▷ Those things ~ that were not done for the glory of Christ ~ are worthless in God's sight ~ 77

↳↳ and will be burned as ~ wood, ~ hay, ~ and stubble.

▷▷ The evaluated believer will be saved, ~ 77

↳↳ but like someone barely escaping through a wall of flames.

→→ And it is the abundant mercy of God ~ that has rescued gen believers from the flames.

▷▷ My ..., ~ we need to invest ourselves ~ 77

↳↳ in those things that are done out of love for Jesus and for his glory.

BACK TO JAMES, ~ BOILED DOWN, ~ HIS IMPLICATION HERE IS THIS.

▶▶ Favoritism, ~ for the genuine believer, ~ will result in loss of rewards.

▷▷ TPID, ~ Showing favoritism, ~ falls under category of ~ 77

↳↳ wood, ~ hay, ~ and stubble. 11/15 77

AND NOW THE 2<sup>nd</sup> POINT JAMES MAKES IN VSS 12-13, ~ SPECIFICALLY VS 13.

For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

HOW DOES THIS FIT WITH JAMES' WARNING AGAINST FAVORITISM?

▶▶ James implies that showing favoritism ~ is akin ~ to not showing mercy.

AS I UNDERSTAND IT, ~ the first part of vs 13 ~ refers to unbelievers. ⇔⇔ In every cong.

▶▶ For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy.

▶▶ What James says about mercy in the first part ~ can only ~ refer to unbelievers.

▷▷ For genuine believers ~ have already received mercy in judgment ~ through the blood of Christ.

▶▶ Eph. 2:4-5, ~~ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved.

▶▶ Titus 3:4-7, ~~ But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

▶▶ 1 Pet. 1:3-5, ~~ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 12/15 ↓↓

(VS 13a) SO THE FIRST PART OF VS 13 ~ REFERS TO UNBELIEVERS. ⇨⇨ Final judgment.

▶▶ For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy.

▷▷ IOW, ~ a habitual, ~ lifestyle thing.

↪↪ Judgment will be merciless ~ to one who consistently ~ showed no mercy.

▶▶ Keep in mind, ~ though, ~ that the unbelievers described ~ ¶¶

▷▷ in the first part of the verse ~ ¶¶

↪↪ may profess to know Christ and be in the church, ~ as noted earlier.

▷▷ But their deeds ~ show them to be those with dead faith, ~ not genuine saving faith.

↪↪ As James will go on to explain.

▷▷ Paul describes this type of person in [Titus 1:16](#).

↪↪ They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

▶▶ If one professes to know Christ, ~ but continuously shows no mercy to those who are needy, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ their profession of faith ~ is worthless.

↪↪ When they stand before God, ~ they will not receive mercy. 13/15 ¶¶

THE LAST PART OF VS 13 ~ REFERS TO BELIEVERS. ⇔⇔ Mercy triumphs over judgment.

▶▶ Only recipients of God's saving mercy ~ will escape his wrathful, ~ merciless judgment.

▶▶ What James says here ~ is actually a great word of encouragement to believers.

▷▷ Paul: ~ there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.

↳↳ The point Paul is making here ~ is that condemnation is, ~ in every sense, ~ ¶¶

→→ out of the question for those who genuinely belong to Jesus.

▶▶ And no doubt ~ James also meant it ~ as an evangelistic plea ~ to unbelievers in cong.

▷▷ Wants them to turn to God ~ and receive God's mercy . . . .

▶▶ God's saving mercy ~ has triumphed over judgment.

▷▷ Because Jesus took it upon himself.

▶▶ When believers stand before the judgment seat of Christ, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ it is God's mercy ~ through Jesus ~ that will save us from ultimate destruction.

▶▶ There is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.

▷▷ Because ~ God's mercy, ~ working through his beloved Son, ~ has triumphed over judgment! 14/15 ¶¶

▶▶ Again, ~ as Paul says, ~ Jesus has rescued us from the terrors of the coming judgment.

▷▷ This fact alone ~ should make us joyful every day of our lives, ~ 77

↪↪ no matter what we go through in this life.

## BELIEVERS DO NOT HAVE TO FEAR THE COMING WRATH.

▶▶ However, ~ that is for the future. ⇔⇔ Our present life ~ is different.

▶▶ Sinning and not repenting ~ opens us up to God's discipline.

▷▷ Ananias and Sapphira . . . .

▷▷ Heb. 12:5-6, ~ NLT, ~ And have you forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you as his children? He said, "My child, don't make light of the Lord's discipline, and don't give up when he corrects you. For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child."

▷▷ The Corinthian church was partaking of the Lord's Supper in an unworthy and sinful manner. ~ 1 Cor. 11:29-32.

↪↪ For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.

▶▶ On the other hand, ~ 77

▷▷ 1 Jn. 1:9, ~ 2:1, ~ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness . . . My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 15/15