

Testing for Genuine Faith
No Partiality and the Law of Liberty (Part Two)
James 2:8-13

Introduction

James 2:1-13 Reading

Recap James 2:1-7

I. The Royal Law (James 2:8-10)

If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well. (vs 2:8)

A. The Royal Law (vs 8)

1. The royal law is the law of love that is sovereign over all law

- a. The law is royal because it comes from the King, the Lord Jesus Christ.
- b. The emphasis is on authority. The royal law has authority because it comes from the King himself.

(1) In 2:5 James says we are heirs to the kingdom.

(2.) As heirs to the kingdom we live under the law of the king.

2. Respect all, love all the same.

a. Matthew 7:12 (NASB95)

“In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

b. Leviticus 19:18 (NASB95)

You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the Lord.

(1) You shall love your neighbor as yourself is cited 6 times in Mark Matthew, and Luke

(2) It's also cited in Romans 13:9 and Galatians 5:14.

c. The second greatest commandment (Matt. 22:37-40.)

(1) Matthew 22:37–40 (NASB95)

And He said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’
“This is the great and foremost commandment. “The second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ “On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”

(2) Leviticus 19:15 (NASB95)

You shall do no injustice in judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor nor defer to the great, but you are to judge your neighbor fairly.

3. Its the the kind of law\love that drives obedience

a. it speaks of motive applied to the situation (love for the visitors will motivate or something else will)

4. The royal law is the whole law interpreted and given to the church in the teaching of Jesus.

a. The royal law reveals God's will (moral will) for how we should think and live as citizens of the kingdom.

b. When we read Scripture and study it, and listen to preaching it should always be with a view as to how it applies. (James 1:22)

B. Violating the Royal Law (vs 2:9)

But if you show partiality, you are committing sin *and* are convicted by the law as transgressors. (vs 2:9)

1. if you show partiality, you are committing sin,

2. conditional direct accusation-sin is the key word and emphasized

3. convicted by the law, as a transgressor

a. means guilty as charged a painful accusation for a Jew

b. It is serious and in vs 10-11 James explains how

II. Why James quotes Jesus (vs. 2:10-11)

A. A Sobering Reminder (vs 10)

For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one *point*, he has become guilty of all. (vs 2:10)

1. "The Jew was very apt to regard the law as a series of detached injunctions. To keep one of these injunctions was to gain credit; to break one was to incur debt. Therefore, a man could add up the ones he kept and subtract the ones he broke, and, as it were emerge with a credit or a debit balance." Barclay

B. For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not commit murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but do commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. Vs. 2:11)

1. "He who said..."

a. "He" refers to God the Father

b. Adultery, murder and partiality are all transgressions of the law.

2. James illustrated this point with a hypothetical case involving two very severe violations of the law.

a. Do not not conclude that all the commands in the law are of equal importance, or that all sins are equally consequential as we live our lives..

b. In Matt. 23:23 Jesus says that the provisions of the law that stress justice, mercy and faithfulness have more weight than tithing table spices!

c. The apostle Paul implies that sexual sins are worse when he wrote (1 Cor. 6:18) "Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, the but the immoral man sins against his own body.

(1) Summary: Mental lust is sin, but it's a worse son to commit immorality. Mental unrighteous anger is sin, but

it's a worse sin to murder someone. Seems obvious to us but we need the nuance lest we fall into a ditch on either side of the issue.)

3. Bottom line: You may be a murderer or a petty thief but either way you are a criminal.

a. Consider Paul's attitude when he had to contemplate the gravity of this reality:

(1) Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! Rom. 7:24-25a NASB95

III. Applying the Principle (James 2:12-13)

So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by *the* law of liberty. (vs 2:12)

A. What is meant by the Law of Liberty? (James 1:25; 2:12)

1. Perfect law of liberty (Psa. 19:7)

a. Law of Moses

b. Not under law but grace (Rom. 6:15)

2. Jesus is the fulfillment of the law (Matt. 5:17)

a. Jesus fulfilled the law and gives a new interpretation (royal law)

b. The law here (Ja. 1:25; 2:12) is equal to the Word (Ja. 1:18, 21, 22)

c. The royal law equates with the law of liberty.

B. So speak and so act (vs 12)

1. means to put on a new habit in speech and lifestyle

2. Obedience to the law of love is critical and the habit of someone expressing a genuine faith

C. What is the law of liberty and What Does it Do?

1. It frees us who place our faith in Christ from the bondage, judgment and punishment of sin

2. It liberates us sinners from falsehood and deception and from the curses of death and hell.

3. It frees unto obey and serve God, to live faithfully according to His Word by the power of the Holy Spirit. (rather than reluctantly out of fear and instead out of love for God and gratitude for such a great salvation

D. What kind of judgment?

1. judgement refers to believer's judgment in 2 Cor. 5:10

2. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. 2 Corinthians. 5:10
NASB95

a. "judged" does not have same meaning as condemned (Romans 8:1-there is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus)

b. "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life."
Jn. 5:24

3. in this situation (2 For. 5:10) the believer is before Christ who will assess their character and conduct by the law of love.

a. The word "bad" means worthless

b. for the genuine believer this seems to be no brainer- because we have received mercy we give mercy and Christ who knows our hearts judges according

c. if a person does not have genuine faith (unbeliever), that too will be revealed

D. Mercy Triumphs

For judgment *will be* merciless to one who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment. (vs 2:13)

1. simply no mercy to the one who shows no mercy

2. mercy is the grace that triumphs over judgment
3. love triumphs over partiality

Questions for CGs

1. Review the entire passage (James 2:1-13) and see if you can summarize how it all fits together.
2. Can you explain the Royal Law and how it applies?
3. Can you explain the law of liberty and what it means to be judged by it.
4. Who do you know has the credit\debit mentality and how can you help them through Scripture to see truth. (What passages in the Bible could you use to supplement the passages in this sermon?)
5. Look at the rest of James 2. How does James 2:1-13 help you understand what is going on in the rest of the chapter?