



**April 26, 2026**  
**Faith in Action - Favoritism & Freedom**  
**James 2:1-13**  
**Pastor Mike Griffin**

My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don't show favoritism. Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in shabby clothes also comes in. 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," have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my dear brothers: 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? But you have insulted the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? Are they not the ones who are slandering the noble name of him to whom you belong?

If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right. But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.

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

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## Questions for Personal or Small Group Use

### Opening

How might you be prone to reflect favoritism toward others? Who might you be tempted to look down upon?

### Discussion

- James once again refers to his recipients as "brothers." How does the understanding that he sees them as family shed light on what he says about favoritism & freedom?
- Why would favoritism be so dangerous to the new church? What are some of the results of favoritism?
- Why should believing in "our glorious Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 1) keep us from showing favoritism?
- How should our relationship with Christ impact the way we relate to the rich and the poor?
- What has God chosen these people who are "poor in the eyes of the world" for? Is God guilty of showing favoritism in this way? Why, or why not?
- What does it mean to be "rich in faith"?
- How is inheriting the kingdom promised to those who love him meant to impact people in the here and now?
- What are some of the practical or particular implications of living out the royal law to love your neighbor as yourself? How can you better do this?
- What does it mean to be a "lawbreaker?" How does that impact your relationship with God? In what sense is violating one law as serious as breaking every law?

### Application

- The cross is the ultimate example of mercy triumphing over judgment. How has the mercy you have received there affected the way you interact with others?
  - Take time to think about the judgmental thoughts and words you have had this week. Confess them to God. Allow yourself to experience his mercy.
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