

Reedy Fork Baptist Church

Wednesday, August 12, 2026

BIBLE STUDY

Theme: " Lord Help Me To Show Mercy"

SCRIPTURE: James 2:1-13 NIV

¹My 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?

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. 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?

⁸ If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself,"[a] 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,"[b] also said, "You shall not murder." [c] If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.

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.

I. Key Words:

- Favoritism
- Forbidden
- Discriminate
- Judge
- Dishonor
- Love
- Neighbor
- Lawbreaker
- Mercy

II. People, Places, & Times:

III. Background:

James 2:1–13 commands believers in Jesus Christ to avoid the sin of partiality and favoritism. This passage exposes how social snobbery contradicts God's character, breaks the royal law of love, and fails to reflect the mercy we have received.

IV. In Depth:

1. Lesson Emphasis: 1. 1 The Prohibition of Partiality (James 2:1–4)

- A.** The Core Command: Do not hold your faith in Jesus Christ while showing favoritism to people based on status or wealth.
- B.** The Practical Illustration: Imagine treating a rich person with high honor (giving them the best seat) while treating a poor person with contempt (telling them to stand or sit on the floor).
- C.** The Heart Problem: James calls this making malicious distinctions and acting as judges with evil thoughts.

2. Lesson Emphasis: 2 God's Counter-Cultural Perspective (James 2:5–7)

- A.** The Choice of God: God chose the poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of His kingdom.
- B.** The Reality Check: Believers often fawn over the wealthy who exploit them and mock the name of Jesus, acting illogically against their own community

3. Lesson Emphasis: 3 The Royal Law and the Whole Law (James 2:8–11)

- A.** The Royal Law: "Love your neighbor as yourself" fulfills God's standard.

- B. The Transgression: Showing partiality breaks this law and marks a person as a sinner.
- C. The Unity of God's Law: Stumbling at just one point of the law makes a person guilty of breaking the whole thing, because the Law reflects one indivisible divine character.

4. Lesson Emphasis: 4 Judgment, Freedom, and Mercy (James 2:12–13)

- A. The Law of Liberty: Believers must speak and act as people who will be judged by a standard of freedom, not legalism.
- B. The Power of Mercy: Judgment is merciless to the one who shows no mercy, but "mercy triumphs over judgment".

V. Make It Happen

- What is favoritism and how or why is it destructive to the church?
- What has the gospel done for you?
- How has Jesus loved you? Are you loving others that way?
- What are your motives?
- How would you want to be treated in this situation?
- How can you reflect the mercy you've received in Christ?

VI. Follow the Spirit:

What will you do as a result of this lesson?
