

# WOMEN IN THE WORD FELLOWSHIP BIBLE CHURCH

## THE BOOK OF JAMES – Growing up in Christ

Scripture Reference Notes – October 17, 2023

### Lesson Four

### Working Faith – James 2:1-26

The Life Application Study Bible breaks the book of James down by chapter.

Chapter Summary:

Chapter 1: Confident stand - What a Christian has.

**Chapter 2: Compassionate service - What a Christian does.**

Chapter 3: Careful speech - What a Christian says.

Chapter 4: Contrite submission – What a Christian feels.

Chapter 5: Concerning sharing – What a Christian gives.

**James 2:1 – (NIV) My dear brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don't show favoritism. (NASB) "My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism." (NLT) "My dear brothers and sisters, how can you claim to have faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ if you favor some people over others?"**

**Partiality (favoritism) –** inclined to favor one person more than another, biased, showing special favor. Partiality (favoritism) is a sign that we have a foot in the world.

**Evans:** "It makes a value judgment based on unbiblical criteria (such as race, class, or culture) and acts inappropriately toward them."

Favoritism is inconsistent with the Word of God.

**Deuteronomy 1:17 – Do not show partiality in judging; hear both great and small alike. Do not be afraid of any man, for judgment belongs to God.**

**Proverbs 24:23 – These also are sayings to the wise: To show partiality in judging is not good.**

**Acts 10:34 – Then Peter began to speak: I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism.**

**2 Chronicles 19:7 – Now let the fear of the Lord be upon you. Judge carefully, for with the Lord our God there is no injustice or partiality or bribery.**

**Deuteronomy 10:17 – For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes.**

Jesus did not show favoritism/partiality, and neither should His followers.

**Luke 20:21 – So the spies questioned him: ‘Teacher, we know that you speak and teach what is right, and that you do not show partiality but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth.**

**Matthew 22:16 – They sent their disciples to him along with the Herodians. Teacher, they said, we know you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You aren’t swayed by men because you pay no attention to who they are.**

**Galatians 2:6 – As for those who seem to be important, whatever they were makes no difference to me; God does not judge by external appearance, those men added nothing to my message.**

In James 2:1, he is talking about favoritism/partiality in the outward appearance (rich/poor). Could be looks, clothing, social standing, material possessions, people who represented positions of prestige and power, race or culture. The believers had forgotten that the Lord does not look at the outward appearance but the heart.

**1 Samuel 16:7 – But the Lord said to Samuel, do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.**

**James 2:2-4 – 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 you say to the poor man, you stand here or sit on the floor by my feet, have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?**

**Comes into your meeting** - The setting of his illustration was the Assembly (meeting in the NIV) – the word means synagogue “meeting” and referred to any meeting not just Jewish synagogue. After believing Jews were expelled from the synagogue because of Jesus, they met in homes (small clusters of believers) or other places. The term synagogue/meeting described those places.

**FBC book:** “The Jews had a practice of seating the most important people nearest the sacred scrolls, chief seats in the synagogue. Other people were seated in the back, men along the sides and women and children in the balcony. This unhealthy practice was still

carried on by some Christians. James speaks out against this. It is our relationship with Christ that gives us dignity, not our profession or possessions.”

**Galatians 3:28 – There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male or female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.**

**Judges with evil thoughts:** Favoritism of any kind was condemned in the law.

**Leviticus 19:15 – Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great but judge your neighbor fairly.**

**Deuteronomy 16:19 – Do not pervert justice or show partiality. Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous.**

Discrimination results from evil thoughts by making a judgment call as to who was worthy and who was not.

**Roman 2:11 - For God does not show favoritism.**

**Ephesians 6:9 – And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.**

**Colossians 3:25 – Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there is no favoritism.**

**Acts 15:9 – He made no distinction between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith.**

**Job 13:10 – He would surely rebuke you if you secretly showed partiality.**

Jesus came as a humble servant and made no distinction between rich/poor, slave/free, male/female; neither should we.

**1 Timothy 5:21 – I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism.**

**Proverbs 24:23 –These also are sayings to the wise: To show partiality in judging is not good.**

**James 2:5-7: Listen dear brothers;** (he addresses his brothers and sisters in Christ again) saying (listen, pay attention to this, did you hear me), **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?**

**Rich in faith:** the poor depends on Jesus more.

**Don Den Hartog:** “The more dependence, the deeper our love for him and deeper our faith is. God becomes a reality when he becomes a necessity. These are the most rewarded ones because of their dependency on Him.”

**Luke 6:20** – Looking at his disciples, he said, **Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.**

**Matthew 11:5** – **The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.**

**Luke 4:18** – **The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.**

**Job 34:19** – **who shows no partiality to princes and does not favor the rich over the poor, for they are all the work of his hands.**

**Proverbs 21:13** – **If a man shuts his ears to the cries of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered.**

**1 Corinthians 1:26-28** – **Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things, and the things that are not, to nullify the things that are.**

**Ephesians 1:4** – **For he chose us in him before the creation of the world, to be holy and blameless in his sight.**

**Wiersbe:** “In that day it was easy for rich persons to exploit the poor, influence court decisions, and make themselves richer and these sins blaspheme the very name of Christ. When Jesus died, he broke down the wall that separated Jews and Gentiles (Ephesians 2:11-22). But in his birth and life, Jesus broke down the walls between rich and poor, young and old, educated and uneducated. It is wrong for us to build those walls again; we cannot rebuild them if we believe in the grace of God.”

**James 2:8-11** – **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.**

**Royal law - Leviticus 19:18** – **Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord.**

**Hodges:** “The command to love is royal because it is issued by the King, our Lord Himself.”

**John 13:34** – A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

**Romans 5:5** – And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

**1 Thessalonians 4:9** – Now about brotherly love we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other.

**Matthew 22: 38-40** – Jesus replied, ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and Prophets hang onto these two commandments.

**Mark 12:31** – The second is like this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.

**Luke 10:27** – He answered: Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and love your neighbor as yourself.

**Paul in Romans 13:9-10** – The commandments, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not covet,’ and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: Love your neighbor as yourself. Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law.

**Matthew 5:43** – You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemies. But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

**Psalms 19:7** – The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul.

Sin is an offense against the law and the Lawgiver, God.

**Galatians 5:14** – The entire law is summed up in a single command: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.

**Matthew 5:19** – Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

**Galatians 3:10** – All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written, cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.

**James 2:12-13 – 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.**

**Evans – “Speak and act with the knowledge you will stand before the judgment seat of Christ one day.”**

Jesus told a parable of one who showed no mercy in **Matthew 18:21-32**.

**Matthew 18: 32-35 – Then the master called the servant in. You wicked servant, he said. I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you? In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.**

Be merciful to others, as God is merciful to you.

**Matthew 5:7 - Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.**

**Matthew 6:14 – For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.**

**Matthew 9:13 – But go and learn what this means: I desire mercy, not sacrifice. For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.**

**Matthew 12:7 – If you had known what these words mean, I desire mercy, not sacrifice, you would not have condemned the innocent.**

**Luke 6:37 – Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.**

**Philippians 2:3-4 – Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.**

**Matthew 23:23 – Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices – mint, dill, and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law – justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former.**

**Ephesians 2:8-9 – For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast.**

**John 3:16 – For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.**

**John 5:24 – I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.**

**Romans 3:21-22 – But now a righteousness from God, apart from the law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference.**

**Philippians 3:8-9 – What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things, I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.**

**Romans 3:27-28 – Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. On what principle? On that of observing the law? No, but on that of faith. For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.**

**Romans 4:4-5 – Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.**

**Galatians 2:16 – know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified. Paul taught that justification comes by faith alone.**

**Romans 5:1-2 – Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.**

**James 2:14 – What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such a faith save him?**

James is not saying that a person is saved by works and not by faith. Rather, he is saying, to use Martin Luther's words, "that a man is justified (declared righteous before God) by faith alone, but not by faith that is alone. Genuine faith will produce good deeds, but only faith in Christ saves."

**Matthew 7:21 – Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my father who is in heaven.**

**Proverbs 11:19 – The truly righteous man attains life, but he who pursues evil goes to his death.**

**Proverbs 12:28 – In the way of righteousness there is life; along that path is immortality.**

**Proverbs 13:14 – The teaching of the wise is a fountain of life, turning a man from the snares of death.**

**James 1:22 – Do not merely listen to the word and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.” James’ theme – doers of the Word!**

**Ephesians 2:10 – For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”**

**Matthew 7:26b – But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice.**

**Acts 4:35 – and put it at the apostle’s feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need.**

**Acts 6:1 – In those days the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food.**

**Acts 11:27-30 – During this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. One of them, named Agabus stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world. The disciples decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea. They did this, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.**

**1 John 3:17-18 – for a similar picture: If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.**

**We demonstrate our love for the Lord by serving Him, no matter what the cost.**

**1 John 4:7-11 – Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is made complete in us.**

**Luke 12:33a – Sell your possessions and give to the poor.**

**Galatians 2:10 – All they asked was that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing I had been eager to do all along.**

**James 2:15-16 – Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, ‘Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it?**

**Matthew 25:35 – For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.**



**Matthew 25:40** – The King will reply, I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.

**Luke 3:11** – John answered, the man with two tunics should share with him who has none, and the one who has food should do the same.

**Galatians 6:10** – Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

**James 2:17** – In the same way (NIV); even so (NASB), so you see (NLT), faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

**James 2:18-19** – But someone will say, ‘You have faith; I have deeds.’ Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. You believe there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that and shudder.

**FBC book:** “Faith lives in the action it generates; actions require faith to gain a particular motivation.”

**You believe there is one God:** The statement God is One comes from the Shema (the ancient confession of Judaism) which the Jewish believers would understand.

**Deuteronomy 6:4** – Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is One.

**David Jeremiah:** “Having a faith that meets the barest minimum of standards does not change us or set us apart in any way.

Faith James says, without deeds is a dead stagnant faith.”

**James 2:20** – You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? James now speaks in this verse and addresses the imaginary objector. You foolish man – **foolish:** lacking good sense, behavior befitting a fool.

**James 2:21-23** – Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. And the scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness. And he was called God’s friend.”

**Genesis 15:1-6** – After this, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: ‘Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward. But Abram said, O Sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus? And Abram said, you have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir. Then the word of the Lord came to him: This man will not be your heir, but a son coming from your own body will be your heir.

**He took him outside and said, look up at the heavens and count the stars, if indeed you can count them. Then he said to him, so shall your offspring be. Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.**

**Genesis 22:2 – Then God said, take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about.**

**Hebrews 11:19 – Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from the dead.**

**Don't you see** – addressing the objector.

**And the Scripture was fulfilled** – Genesis 15:6 – **Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.**

James now addresses the brethren, the Jewish believers by saying, “You see.”

**James 2:24: You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone.**

**Moody:** While one is justified (declared righteous) before God by faith alone, one is justified (demonstrates his godliness) before people by his or her works.” It is a demonstration of his faith.

**James 2:25 – In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction?**

Wiersbe: “True saving faith is also seen in activity (vv. 14-26). Faith is not something you only talk about; it is something that motivates your life so that you think of others and serve them. Abraham was saved by faith (Genesis 15:6), but he proved that faith by obeying God and offering his son (Genesis 22). Rahab was saved by trusting God (Hebrews 11:31), but she showed the reality of her faith by protecting the spies (Joshua 2; 6:17-27).”

**James 2:26 – As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.**

**Tony Evans:** “Many of us have spiritual life, yet we're spiritually sick. We attend church to hear what the Great Physician has to say and leave feeling good about his prescription. We remain spiritually unhealthy though, because we don't swallow the medicine. Once we hear God's Word, we must act on it to be transformed by it.”

*Next Lesson: October 24 – Lesson 5 – The Tongue (James 3:1-12)*