

James – 2:1-13 Quick to Hear – Don't show Partiality

Verse 1

My brethren – 15 times in James the readers are called brethren.

Three of those occurrences are in chapter 2.

Your faith – James is writing to believers to instruct them in proper Christian living.

Personal favoritism – Deference to the rich and disdain for the poor have always been features of worldliness.

Our glorious Lord... Literally, “*our Lord Jesus Christ of (from) Glory.*” The emphasis would be that any kind of earthly wealth or glory is worthless by comparison.

Verses 2-3

Fine clothes vs. dirty clothes – Judgment is made on outward appearance.

You sit here ... you stand over there – Actions reflect incorrect judgment.

Verse 4

Made distinctions – This implies that they have judged the rich man to be better and more worthy as a person than the poor man.

Judges with evil motives – Such judgments are morally wrong and reflect something wrong in our hearts.

Verse 5

Rich in faith – A rich Christian may have less opportunity to trust God for his needs than a poor man who must trust Him day by day. Ironically, a poor Christian may become very rich in the area of personal faith in God while the rich Christian may be poverty-stricken in spiritual experience.

Heirs of the kingdom – The poor man may one day be a co-ruler with Christ in the Millennial Kingdom.

To those who love Him – Heirship in the Kingdom requires us to love God which we express through obedience to Him (John 14:21-24).

Verses 6-7

As a class, rich people were more likely to be the enemies of Christianity and be oppressors. Their tendency was to trust their riches rather than God.

Verses 8-9

The royal law – A quotation from Leviticus 19:18. It is a royal law for two reasons;

1) The command is issued by the King.

2) It is conduct that is worthy of a king.

To be heirs of the Kingdom (verse 5) we must love the King and also love our neighbor. In other words, we must fulfill the royal law.

You do well – They are acting as they should, in a royal way as future heirs and servant-kings.

If you show partiality – This exposes them (us) as transgressors of the royal law and therefore sinners.

Verse 10-11

Stumbles in one point – We cannot think that because we obey the law or that we are good in certain areas, that it balances or cancels out areas where we do not obey.

Guilty of all - One simple sin brings us into condemnation.

Adultery – murder – The point is that your innocence in one area does not excuse you in the other. In the church today some sins, like adultery and murder, are considered too serious to be committed by believers while others, like jealousy, envy, selfish ambition, etc. are condemned but tolerated. However all are listed as works of the flesh in Galatians 5:19-21. It is true that some sins have worse consequences than others but any sin breaks God's law and makes us a lawbreaker guilty of judgment.

Verses 12-13

Judged by the law of liberty – At the Judgment Seat of Christ for our works as believers. We never come into judgment for our justification or eternal life (John 5:24).

Mercy triumphs over judgment – How do we store up mercy at the judgment seat? By showing mercy to our brothers and sisters in Christ. In context here, the poor man.