

## Faith Works: A Study of James

Week 6/James 2:1-13

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Last week we learned that **genuine faith is actively obedient to the Word**. We examined the importance of not merely listening to the Word, but being changed by it. We learned that those who act on God's Word will be blessed in what they do, and we examined the difference between true and false religion.

This week James expands our understanding of genuine faith by examining the way we treat those around us. Read through the entire book of James. Then re-read **James 2:1-13**. Read it in the ESV and NIV before you begin to answer the questions.

1. Look back at your homework from last week. What three tests of true religion did James give in **1:26-27**?
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
2. Which one does he expand on in **2:1-13**?
3. What does it mean to show favoritism or partiality? What are some ways favoritism can occur in the church?
4. Have you ever been treated with positive favoritism? How did it feel?
5. Have you ever been treated with negative discrimination? How did it feel?
6. In **2:1**, how does James describe Jesus? "the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_." How does this particular title fit with what James is going to discuss in **2:1-13**?
7. In **2:2-4**, how were those James addresses discriminating between rich and poor? What clues did they focus on? Are these clues always reliable? Why or why not?

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8. Have you ever chosen your clothing or jewelry with the intent to represent your spending power? What was your motive?

9. What motivates a person or group to treat rich people better than poor ones?

10. Is there anyone to whom you show favoritism? Why have you singled out that person for your favor?

11. Based on your knowledge of scripture, to whom did Jesus show favoritism?

\_\_\_ the scribes and Pharisees

\_\_\_ rulers

\_\_\_ the sick

\_\_\_ poor people

\_\_\_ children

\_\_\_ "sinners and tax collectors"

\_\_\_ rich people

\_\_\_ John the Baptist

\_\_\_ the disciples

\_\_\_ Mary, Joseph, and his family

\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_

12. Based on the context of James's comments, do you think the early church consisted mostly of wealthy people or poor people? Explain how you reached your answer. Look up **Acts 2:45** to see how you did.

13. What segment of the population is James most likely referring to in **2:6-7**? Who was most likely oppressing and blaspheming against early Jewish Christians? Choose one:

— poor Jews

— poor gentiles

— wealthy Jews

— wealthy gentiles

14. In 2:8, what is the "royal law"? Why is it royal? Can you find another place in Scripture where it occurs?

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15. What do verses **2:10-11** tell us about being a lawbreaker? Does it seem fair to you? Why or why not?

16. How do the following excerpts from Old Testament law confirm the truth of **2:9**?

**Deut 1:17**

**Deut 16:19**

17. How does **Romans 13:8-10** reinforce the principles in **2:9-11**?

18. How should the idea that we will be judged by the Law impact our words and actions? List some specific examples for each area below:

In our home	
In our place of work	
In our church	
In our community	

19. Read **Matthew 6:14-15** and compare it to **2:13**. Why do you think our treatment of others affects God's treatment of us?

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20. Look up *judge (verb)* and *mercy* in the dictionary and write definitions or synonyms for them below that best fit the way they are used in **James 2:12-13**:

judge:

mercy:

Now, based on your definitions, rewrite **2:12-13** in your own words:

21. Is there a person in your life to whom you need to extend mercy instead of judgment? What is holding you back from doing so?

22. Glance back though **2:1-13** and try to summarize what James says in into one sentence.

*Close in prayer. Praise God for His son, Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory. Ask God to show you how discrimination has touched your relationships. Ask Him to reveal to you where you have sought glorify yourself by glorifying others. Ask Him to reveal to you where you have sought to elevate yourself by devaluing others. Thank Him that mercy has triumphed over judgment in His dealings with you. Ask Him to help you demonstrate mercy as it has been shown to you.*