

**James**  
**Lesson #8, Chapter 2:8-17**

Take a moment and ask the Lord's help in studying His Word, and for the Holy Spirit's aid in applying it.

1. Summarize the contents of James 2:1-7. Now choose one or two words to describe the main point James makes in this paragraph.
2. How can you tell in verse 8 that James intends to continue discussing the same topic he addressed in verses 1-7?
3. What is the "royal law" as described in verse 8?
4. What else do you learn about the Royal Law from the following verses? See Luke 10:25-37; Romans 13:8-10; Galatians 5:14; 1 John 3:13-18.
5. What commendation in verse 8 is given for keeping this law?
6. How is love for the brethren *the* answer when partiality and favoritism are at work?
7. What contrast to verse 8 is given in verse 9 that would *not* be good for us to do?

8. What sweeping statement from verse 10 levels the playing field so that everyone is included? Be sure that your comment shows the connection between verses 9 and 10.

“The command against favoritism, or positively, the imperative of neighbor love, especially toward the poor, so embodied the spirit of the law that to stumble on this point was to offend the law at its heart. It must never be forgotten that wisdom, the law, and love are all inseparably bound together. Any separation of these three is the result of calculated self-deception that looks for man’s favor rather than God’s and withholds the love that is due one’s neighbor.”<sup>1</sup> Kurt Richardson

9. James further illustrates his point in verse 11. What is he trying to get people, like us, to understand and take to heart in this paragraph? Why is this important to understand when we’re dealing with less obvious sins like partiality or favoritism?
10. Sometimes those less obvious sins can really get a foothold in our lives, especially in how we deal with one another. Try listing some of those more “respectable sins”<sup>2</sup> and see if James’ admonitions apply to them as well. Here’s a couple to get you started: defensiveness, a competitive spirit in places where there shouldn’t be competition. Can you think of more?
11. What is the answer to any of those type of “relationship” sins we’re prone to committing according to verse 12?
12. What is the law of liberty that James references in verse 12? See also Galatians 5:1; James 1:25; 2:8.

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<sup>1</sup> Kurt A. Richardson, *James*, vol. 36, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1997), 122.

<sup>2</sup> For further study on this, read Jerry Bridges’ excellent and convicting book, *Respectable Sins*.

13. Based on what you just learned, describe what our lives should look like, especially in speaking and acting, when we are submitted to the *Law of Liberty*?
  
14. What do we learn about the judgment that comes by the *Law of Liberty* in verse 13? See also Matthew 6:14-15 and 18:21-35.
  
15. If you didn't already say so, what do we learn about mercy from verse 13?
  
16. What interesting things do you learn about the word *triumphs* [Strong's #2620] from verse 13? Please define.
  
17. James continues to hammer away at some wrong attitudes showing up in the believers. What new "argument" does he introduce in verse 14?
  
18. Explain what verse 14 has to do with verses 8-13.
  
19. How does James illustrate his verse 14 comments in verses 15-16? How is that illustration an appropriate one for the subject he introduced in verses 1-13?
  
20. What challenging statement does James give in verse 17 as he pulls his thoughts together for this paragraph?

21. How would you summarize James' *underlying assumption* about what our lives should look like, as well as what "having faith" really means?

"We only believe as much of the Bible as we practice."<sup>3</sup> Warren Wiersbe

"There is one obvious message to this section: our beliefs should control our behavior. If we really believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and that God is gracious, His Word is true, and one day He will judge us, then our conduct will reveal our convictions. Before we attack those who do not have orthodox doctrine, we must be sure that we practice the doctrines we defend. Jonah had wonderful theology, but he hated people and was angry with God (Jonah 4). One of the tests of the reality of our faith is how we treat other people. Can we pass the test?" Warren Wiersbe<sup>4</sup>

"Oh! may we all tonight go to Christ to be our complete Savior in very deed and truth. Then we will be saved; and then, being saved, we will seek to serve Christ with heart and soul and strength."<sup>5</sup> Charles Spurgeon

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<sup>3</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, [\*The Bible Exposition Commentary\*](#), vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 352.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 353.

<sup>5</sup> Charles H. Spurgeon, [\*A Collection of Sermons\*](#), electronic ed., Logos Library Systems (Simpsonville, SC: Christian Classics Foundation, 1996), 261.