

The Book of James Part 5 – James 2:9-19

So far in James chapter 2, James has spoken about showing partiality, showing favoritism to people, some because they are rich and others because they are poor, some because they have possibly good clothes and others that do not have such good clothes. What the Lord is speaking to our hearts about today is we should not favor one person over another. We should not show partiality to individuals. We are to fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, according to James 2:8. That royal law says to love your neighbor as yourself. Sometimes, that's not easy to do and we really can't do that unless we know Jesus as our Savior, and then He works through us and helps us through that.

As we pick up our study today in James chapter 2, we look at verse 9. It says, *But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.* That's pretty plain. If you show partiality to people, you sin, according to this verse, and you are guilty of breaking the royal law.

Then we move into verses 10-11 and it says, ¹⁰*For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.* ¹¹*For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.*

All sin is sin. God sees sin as sin, and we need to understand that. Breaking one law of God is the same as breaking all the law, according to verses 10-11 of James chapter 2.

In James 2:12, it says, *So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.* ¹³*For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and*

mercy rejoiceth against judgment. In other words, so speak and do as one who is judged by the law of liberty. Love thy neighbor as thyself.

In Galatians 5:1, it says, *Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.* In other words, God has made it possible for us to be free from this sin of partiality, of showing favoritism to people, and it's through the law of liberty. Love thy neighbor as thyself. We cannot do that on our own. It has to be through the working of the Lord Jesus Christ in our lives.

Now, the person who shows no mercy, according to James 2:12, will receive judgment without mercy. In Galatians 6:7, it says, *Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*

It doesn't mean if you're not showing mercy or if you are showing partiality or favoritism towards someone or a group of individuals that you're lost if you've been saved. It simply means that you are without excuse in the sight of God. There is no excuse for doing that.

In verse 13, the Bible goes on to say that mercy produces joy in judgment. Doing what is right in this life produces joy. Doing what is right in order to have joy now and forever is to receive Jesus as Lord and Savior. Remember, verse 13 says, *For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.*

In other words, you need to receive Jesus Christ as your Savior because, when this life is over with and you've not received Christ, God cannot show mercy toward you. There will be

no mercy. His mercy is right now. He's showing mercy toward individuals who need Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. He showed His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Now we move over into a different section here. I would call this faith becomes visible by works, and this is seen in James 2:14-26. We're going to try to cover those verses now.

Faith and works, James 2:14-19 talks about this. Verse 14 says, *What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?* In other words, what is gained, Christian, if you do nothing? That's what it's saying here in the first part of that verse, and can faith save in verse 14 and the rest of that verse. Can faith save him? Well, let's keep reading.

James 2:15-16: *15If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, 16And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?* What is gained by simply saying empty words? This is what these verses are teaching here. You can say I'm going to give you \$100 to help you out with your mortgage or whatever and then you walk away and you don't do that. You've lied and not only that, you've not helped that individual if that person says, "I need \$100 to help with my mortgage," and you're able to do it but you look at that individual and you say, "God bless you," and you turn around and you walk away. I'm just giving you an example here. It could be a number of things.

But I want to look back where it talks about works here in verse 14. This is not speaking of the fact that a person who does not do good works, it does not mean that you're not saved if you don't do good works. It's saying here that men see the outward sign of a Christian.

And we're going to see that in just a few moments here as we keep studying in the book of James chapter 2.

Look at verses 17-18: *17Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. 18Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.*

What James is saying here is that faith without works is lifeless. It's by itself. In verse 18 the first part of that verse, it says, *Yea, a man may say...* Yes, a man could say, "You have faith, but I have works." And then a man could say, "Let me see your faith without your works." The rest of that verse 18, a man could say, "You will see my faith by my works."

I believe the man spoken of in verse 18 is an unsaved individual or a saved person who is confused, not grounded in the Word of God. Remember, Hebrews 11:1 says, *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* Things not seen by man, the natural eye.

And then we read in Hebrews 11:2: *For by it the elders obtained a good report.* By "it." The "it" is faith, something not seen by man. The elders received a good report. If unseen, faith was good enough for the elders. We have to understand this, that God sees the heart. God sees the faith. Man sees the works. It's by works that a man sees another man. In other words, we can say all day long that we're a Christian to this lost and dying world, but unless it's evidenced in our lives as saved people, then the man on the outside looking in doesn't see the Christian. He sees a person who is really lifeless, a person who says, "I'm saved and on my way to Heaven," but that person is showing no evidence of that salvation.

Remember, God sees the heart. Man receives Jesus with his heart. He receives Christ by saying, "Come into my heart. I receive You as my Savior." But man cannot see the heart. Only God sees the heart. So, therefore, what James is trying to show us here, we need to have that outward sign of being saved, that outward appearance... not to be saved, but so that this world can see that there is evidence that we have passed from death unto life.

Verse 19 of James chapter 2 says: *Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.* Now, it is good that you believe in your head, James seems to be saying here, that there is a God. He goes on to say demons also know about God and the evidence of their belief is uncontrollable shaking. In verse 19 it says, *the devils also believe, and tremble.*

So many people today, I believe, have a head knowledge of Jesus. They have a head knowledge of God. They know that Jesus existed. They know that He was crucified, buried, and resurrected. They have that head knowledge from reading accounts of the crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, but they have never actually asked Him to come into their hearts, and that's what the Bible is speaking of here. You do well if you realize all this, but that's not enough. You must receive Him as your Lord and Savior. The demons believe, but they are not saved. In other words, they believe that He was crucified, buried, and resurrected, but of course, we know they cannot be saved, but they believe. They know. But yet, they're not saved and James is comparing that to a person who knows all about God. They've read about Him and they're still not saved. They have that head knowledge but they do not have Him living within their heart.

Well, next time, we're going to pick up with verse 20 of James chapter 2, and we're going

to continue on reading about evidences and faith and works and things that a saved person is to exhibit and what the unsaved people of this world see in our lives. They see us, but do they see us as a saved person living for the Lord? Or as someone who is just like them? They do not have Christ as their Savior.

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Well, it's been good being with you today, and let me invite you to tune in again when you'll hear me say, "It is a good life." Until that time, may the Lord bless you richly is my prayer.