

TO LIVE IS CHRIST**Judges with Evil Thoughts****James 2:1–13**

*“If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself,’
you are doing right.” James 2:8*

Day 1: Read James 2:1–9.

1. In James 1:22–25, James exhorts his readers to be doers of the word and not hearers only. Over the course of his letter, James addresses several areas in which these believers have not been doers of the word. Describe the situation of the two guests at a church meeting and the way in which each is received.
2. Why does James consider showing favoritism to be a serious issue for the believers? (vss. 8–9)

Day 2: Read James 2:1–7.

3. Look up the following verses. What standards is God calling his people to?
 - a. Leviticus 19:15, 18
 - b. Deuteronomy 1:17
 - c. Deuteronomy 16:19–20
4. Why does God call his people to these standards? Whose character are the believers supposed to be reflecting? (vs. 1) What is one of the outstanding characteristics of this Lord of Glory? (Deut. 10:17–18; Acts 10:34–35)
5. How has God treated the believers to whom James is writing? (1:17–18) Did they have to do anything special to attract God’s favor toward them? (Titus 3:4–7)
6. How do you see (or not see) yourself like an orphan, a widow, or an alien (Deut. 10:17–18)? How has God treated you?

Day 3: Read James 2:3–7.

7. How have the believers “deceived” (1:22) themselves with regard to their thinking about the rich man and the poor man among them? Whose values have they been reflecting? (1:27b; 4:4)

8. Where do you have a tendency, like these believers, to show favoritism? Is it in the area of wealth, education, outward appearances, or even spiritual maturity? What particular judgments do you make about individuals who either possess or don't possess these traits?
9. How does James seek to turn their world view upside down with gospel truth? How is it that those who are "poor in the eyes of the world" (vs. 5) are actually rich? (Mk. 10:29-30; Lk. 4:18-19; 6:20; 12:32-34)
10. How does James exhort the believers to "wake up and smell the coffee" when it comes to their partiality toward the rich? (vss. 6-7, see also 1:11.)

Day 4: Read James 2:8-13.

11. Why is it that failing in one point of the law makes one "guilty of breaking all of it" (vs. 10)? (vss. 10-11)
12. Since the believers are guilty of breaking all of the law, being "judges with evil thoughts" (vs. 4), what should their standing before the righteous Judge? (vs. 9) What have they received instead? (vs. 13; 1:17-18)
13. What is the "law that gives freedom" (vs. 12) by which we are to live and by which we will be judged? (vs. 8, 1:21) How is this law one of freedom? (Gal. 5:1, 13-14; 22-24)
14. To what judgment is James referring? What will happen to believers at this judgment? (Rom. 14:10-12; 1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Cor. 5:10)

Day 5: Read James 2:12-13.

15. What does favoritism show evidence of? (vs. 13) How is this true?
16. What is the basis for James' warning in verse 13? (Mt. 18:21-35) What expectation does God have of the people to whom he has shown mercy?
17. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal someone in your life to whom you have not shown mercy (through ignoring, not bearing with them in love, discrimination, etc.). Pray and take a step of faith this week in reaching out to that individual with a merciful spirit.