



Pointers and questions on the book of
James

Session 3

2:1-13

Favouritism Forbidden

Summary

- 2:1-4** We are liable to judge people by their outward appearance of wealth or poverty and show favouritism on that basis. This should not be. We are to remember that 'our glorious Lord Jesus Christ' is among us, and beside him we are all alike spiritually shabby. Our judgmental attitude towards one another must change.
- 2:5-7** The financially poor, if they are believers, are spiritually rich; and the financially rich, if they are not believers, are spiritually destitute. We must focus on a person's spiritual standing, not on his jewellery, big house or flashy car.
- 2:8-11** Favouritism is incompatible with loving one's neighbour in the way God's law requires. It is nothing less than sin and law-breaking. And you only have to break one law to be classified as a law-breaker.
- 2:12-13** By the power of the Holy Spirit we can keep God's law, which will bring us into true freedom, not into bondage. So let's be sure we live that way and thus be assured of Christ's mercy when we stand before him as Judge.

Questions to get you thinking

1. In what ways is our Lord Jesus Christ 'glorious'? (v1)
2. Which visitors do *you* go and talk to over the cup of tea after the meeting? Be frank: wouldn't you be more likely to smile at the visitor in the Armani suit with the Jaguar parked outside, rather than at the guy with acne and a hole in his shoe? (v2-4)
3. What other features are likely to make a person relatively acceptable or unacceptable to us? Trainers by Nike or Reebok rather than cheapos from Ponte market?
4. What does v5 tell us about the financial standing of most of the believers James was writing to? Why do you think this was the situation? What do you think a modern 'prosperity preacher' would make of this?
5. Is it still true that the rich are the most likely people to do the things listed in v6-7?
6. Why is 'Love your neighbour as yourself' called 'the royal law'? (v8)
7. What do you think about the statements in v10-11?
8. As Christians we are going to be 'judged' at Christ's return (v12)—not in regard to whether or not we are saved, but in regard to what we have made of our Christian life since we were saved. What sort of report are you likely to get on your showing so far?
9. What does 'Mercy triumphs over judgment' mean (v13)?

