

James 2:1-13 ~ Favoritism Forbidden ~ Discussion Questions

1. To who was James writing and how does he describe them? What was their economic situation?
2. Where is James prohibiting discrimination specifically (vs 2:2)?
3. Is the church the only place he intends us to welcome the poor?
4. How does the world regard the wealthy vs. the poor?
5. Why would first-century believers find James' concept revolutionary? (Deuteronomy 7:12-14, Joshua 1:8)
6. Is James condemning the wealthy and exalting the poor?
7. Whose side is God on?
8. What is the obvious contradiction in Verse 2:5?
9. How does one inherit God's Kingdom? (John 1:12)
10. What is the insult to the poor in Verse 2:6?
11. What is the big difference between the society of the first century and that of today in this context, i.e., the rich exploiting and not caring for the poor?
12. Do we experience the prejudice and abuse that James describes in Verses 2:6-7?
13. Since there was no "social policy" in the first century as there is today, what was James suggesting about the "royal law" in Verse 8? (Matthew 7:12, Leviticus 19:15-18)
14. If we show partiality or favoritism based on worldly measures of worth, what do we risk? (Matthew 7:13-14)
15. What is the point of Verse 2:10?
16. What does James mean when he says we will be judged by the law that gives freedom? (Matthew 5:17, Deut 11:1, Romans 14:10, 2 Corinthians 5:10)
17. What does James mean when he says, "mercy triumphs over judgement?" (Matthew 5:7, 6:14-15)

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1. Where do you see prejudice being practiced today?
2. How have you been a victim of favoritism or prejudice?
3. How have you shown favoritism or prejudice to other people?
4. How do we use physical appearance, job status, wealth, and athletic ability to show favoritism toward some people and not others?
5. What does practicing favoritism do to a person who is trying to keep the law or walk in the ways of God?
6. Why is favoritism or prejudice often overlooked as a sin?
7. If you just inadvertently stumble at one point, do you think it's fair that James says you are guilty of breaking the entire law? (James 2:10)
8. What is the greatest accomplishment of your life? Is there anything you hope to do that would be even better?
9. What do you most strive for in your life:
 - A) accomplishment
 - B) security
 - C) love
 - D) power
 - E) excitement
 - F) knowledge
 - G) money
 - H) something else (what?)