

Fulfilling The Royal Law

James 2:1-13

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“The Faith” Does Not Allow Favoritism James 2:1

“*The faith*” – Objective sense.

- “*One faith*” Ephesians 4:5; Galatians 3:23-24
- “*The faith*” may be preached. Romans 10:8; Galatians 1:23
- “*The faith*” may be obeyed. Acts 6:7; Romans 1:5; Romans 16:26
- We may stand in “*the faith*.” 1 Corinthians 16:13
- We may continue in “*the faith*.” Acts 14:27; Colossians 1:23
- We may strive (or contend) for “*the faith*.” Philippians 1:27; Jude 3

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“The Faith” Does Not Allow Favoritism James 2:1

“My brethren, hold not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, (the Lord) of glory, with respect of persons.”

Prosopolepsia: “partiality, the fault of one who when called on to requite or to give judgment has respect to the outward circumstances of men and not to their intrinsic merits, and so prefers, as the more worthy, one who is rich, high-born, or powerful, to another who is destitute of such gifts: Rom 2:11; Eph 6:9; Col 3:25; plural (which relates to the various occasions and instances in which this fault shows itself.” (Thayer)

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Forbidden in the Old Testament: Leviticus 19:15; cf. Deuteronomy 1:17

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Impartiality is a characteristic of God and Jesus.

Luke 20:21 “And they asked him, saying, Teacher, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, and acceptest not the person (of any), but of a truth teachest the way of God”

Acts 10:34 “Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons”

Galatians 2:6 “But from those who were reputed to be somewhat (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth not man’s person).”

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“The Faith” Does Not Allow Favoritism James 2:1

Impartiality is a characteristic of God and Jesus.

1 Peter 1:17 “And if ye call on him as Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to each man’s work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear”

Romans 2:10-11 “but glory and honor and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek: for there is no respect of persons with God.”

Ephesians 6:9 “knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with him.”

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“The Faith” Does Not Allow Favoritism James 2:1

They had demonstrated partiality: (James 2:4-6)

“Made distinctions”

“Become judges with evil thoughts”

“Dishonored the poor man ...”

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“The Faith” Does Not Allow Favoritism James 2:1

How is favoritism shown? James 2:2-3

- Jews & Gentiles. Acts 11; 15; Galatians 2
- Rich & Poor. James 2
- Background. Luke 15
- Occupation, friends & standing. John 12

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“The Faith” Does Not Allow Favoritism James 2:1

Their error: *“Become judges WITH evil thoughts.” James 2:4*

- Judged on the basis of outward appearance. (cf. Matthew 7:1-5; John 7:24)
- Evil judging comes from evil hearts. Matthew 12:24-37
 - Evil hearts prevented them from seeing the power of God. Matthew 12:28
 - cf. Judgment of the apostles. Matthew 15:1-20

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“The Faith” Does Not Allow Favoritism James 2:1

➤ The “unlikely” just may listen & obey

- **Prejudice** – Woman at the well. John 4
- **Religious/Gentile** – Cornelius. Acts 10
- **Non-Religious** – Simon. Acts 8:9-13
- **Worldly** – Corinthians. Acts 18:8; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11
- **Ignorant** – Jews. Acts 2:23; 3:17
- **Persecutor** – Saul. Acts 8:3; 9:1-2; 1 Timothy 1:15
- **Political** – Jailor. Acts 16:31-33

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Two Arguments Against Partiality

The Social Argument. James 2:5-7

- Poor have the gospel preached unto them. Matthew 11:5
- Elihu observed: *“That respecteth not the persons of princes, Nor regardeth the rich more than the poor; For they all are the work of his hands” Job 34:19*
- God has chosen *“the poor of this world to be rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to them that love him.” James 2:5*

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Two Arguments Against Partiality

The Social Argument. James 2:5-7

- The poor of this world are:
 - Chosen of God. cf. 1 Corinthians 1:26-29
 - Rich in faith. cf. Revelation 2:9
 - Heirs of the kingdom. cf. Matthew 5:3; 11:5
- BUT YOU have dishonored them. James 2:6

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Two Arguments Against Partiality

The Social Argument. James 2:5-7

- The rich of this world ...
 - Oppress you. cf. Acts 4:1-3
 - Drag you into court. cf. Acts 8:3
 - Blaspheme the name by which ye are called. cf. Acts 4:12

BUT you have honored them. James 2:6

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Two Arguments Against Partiality

The Moral Argument: James 2:8 *“Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself”*

- *Royal law – basilikós:* “of or belonging to a king, kingly, royal, regal; of a man, the officer or minister of a prince, a courtier: John 4:46,49 befitting or worthy of a king” (Thayer)
- Received of the sanction of our king, Jesus Christ. cf. Matthew 22:39; Luke 10:26-28

Demands overlooking outward distinctions!

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Showing Partiality Is Sinful James 2:9

- Judgment must be righteous. cf. Leviticus 19:15
 - John 7:24
 - Matthew 7:1
- Partiality violates the law, therefore sinful. 1 John 3:4
 - Makes one a lawbreaker. James 1:10-11; cf. Galatians 3:10
- Brotherly love & mercy to be exercised. James 2:13

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Conclusion:

- Do you *“fulfill the royal law”* in all your relationships?
 - The gospel is for all. Matthew 28:19ff

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