

17 March



### Break the ice

Write down what God is saying to you in today's message:

TOPIC: James – week 4



### Let's hear your story

1. Tell of a time when you had to explain to a friend or family member that God does not show partiality, favouritism or discriminate against people?
2. What should we not do as believers according to v.1? (**My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory.**)
3. Who has God chosen to be rich in faith in v.5? (**Has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the Kingdom...**)
4. How can the believers do well according to v.8? (**By fulfilling the royal law; "you shall love your neighbour as yourself."**)



### Let's go deeper

5. What is James' warning in v.9? (**But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.**)
6. What happens if you only break one of the laws in v.10? (**For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.**)
7. What does James tell the believers to do in v.12? (**So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty.**)
8. What does James tell the believers in v.13? (**For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.**)



### Let's apply this

**9. James 2:8 – 9;** If, however, you are fulfilling the **royal law** according to the Scripture, "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOURSELF [if you have **an unselfish concern for others** and do things for their benefit]" you are doing well. But **if you show partiality** [prejudice, favouritism], **you are committing sin** and are convicted by the Law as offenders.

- How do you treat people when interacting with them?
- What is more important to you the outward appearance, or the heart (internal attitude) of a person?

**Remember;** Christian love means treating others the way God has treated me.

### SUMMARY:

**James:** Week 4 – How do we treat other people?

**Read:** James 2:1 – 13

**v.1;** The faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, should never be with partiality (favouritism or discrimination). The Lord of glory Himself shows no partiality (see Deut. 10:17; Acts 10:34), so neither should those who put their trust in Him. In the ancient world people were categorized because they were Jew or Gentile, slave or free, rich, or poor, Greek or barbarian, etc.

**v.2 – 4;** In Roman society the wealthy wore rings on their left hand, a sign of wealth. There were even shops in Rome where rings could be rented for special occasions.

#### To show partiality reveals three things:

1. We care more upon the outward appearance than we do upon the heart.
2. We misunderstand who is important and blessed in the sight of God.
3. To show partiality reveals that we are selfish.

**v.5;** Though it is easy for man to be partial to the rich, God is not partial to them. The poor of this world simply have more opportunities to trust God. The poor are chosen in the sense that the poor more readily respond to God in faith, having fewer obstacles to the kingdom (see Matthew 19:24). Church history demonstrates that more poor people than rich have responded to the gospel.

**v.6 – 7;** James gave a stern rebuke; when you dishonour, discriminate, or despise the poor man, you are behaving like the unsaved rich people. In that day, it was easy for rich persons to use and abuse the poor, by influencing decisions at court, and make themselves richer. We have the same sins today, and these sins blaspheme the Name of Jesus Christ, who Himself was poor and a victim of injustice.

**v.8 – 9;** James reminds his readers to love your neighbour as yourself (see Lev.19:8). James says that the poor man is just as much our neighbour as the rich man. In His parable of the good Samaritan, Jesus told us that our neighbour is anyone who needs our help (see Luke 10). It is not a matter of geography, but opportunity. The important question is not, who is my neighbour? But to whom can I be a neighbour?

**Why is love your neighbour called the royal law?** God the Father gave it in the law. God the Son demonstrated it to His disciples (see John 13:34). God the Spirit fills our hearts with God's love and expects us to share it with others (see Rom. 5:5). And secondly: it rules all the other laws. "Love is the fulfilling of the law" (see Rom. 13). There would be no need for so many laws if each person loves his neighbour. Christian love means treating others the way God has treated me.

**v.10 – 13;** Our words, deeds and attitudes will be judged. James compares two attitudes: showing mercy to others, and refusing to show mercy. If we have been merciful toward others, God can be merciful toward us. Our beliefs should control our behaviour. One of the tests of our faith, is how we treat other people.