

**STUDYING THE BOOK OF JAMES**  
**IN SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS**

**Lesson 3 - Favoritism Forbidden - James 2:1-13**

Read the following verses in the New International Version or a translation of your choice. Then discuss the questions that follow. Questions should be studied by each individual before your discussion group meets.

*Materials may be copied and used for Bible study purposes. Not to be sold.*

JAS 2:1 My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don't show favoritism. [2] Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in shabby clothes also comes in. [3] If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," [4] have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

JAS 2:5 Listen, my dear brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? [6] But you have insulted the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? [7] Are they not the ones who are slandering the noble name of him to whom you belong?

JAS 2:8 If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself,"\* you are doing right. [9] But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. [10] For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. [11] For he who said, "Do not commit adultery,"\* also said, "Do not murder."\* If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.

JAS 2:12 Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, [13] because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment!

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**Lesson 3 - Favoritism Forbidden - James 2:1-13**

23. What practical example did James use to illustrate how favoritism was practiced in the church? (2:1-4)
24. What has God promised to the poor of this world? (2:5)
25. What does the church do to the poor person when it shows favoritism toward the rich? (2:6)
26. What do rich people have a history of doing to people in the church? (2:6-7)

27. What is the royal law found in Scripture? (2:8)
28. What does practicing favoritism do to a person who is trying to keep the law? (2:9)
29. What does a person have to do to be considered a lawbreaker? (2:10-11)
30. By what standards should a person speak and act? (2:12)
31. What promise is made to people who judge without mercy? (2:13)
32. Why should we be merciful? (2:13)

#### **Lesson 4 - Faith and Deeds - James 2:14-26**

JAS 2:14 What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? [15] Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. [16] If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? [17] In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

JAS 2:18 But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds."

Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. [19] You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that--and shudder.

JAS 2:20 You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? [21] Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? [22] You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. [23] And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend. [24] You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone.

JAS 2:25 In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? [26] As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

#### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

#### **Lesson 4 - Faith and Deeds - James 2:14-26**

33. What is the relationship between faith and deeds? (2:14)
34. What illustration did James use to explain how real faith affects a person's deeds? (2:15-17)

35. How did James describe faith that has no accompanying deeds? (2:17)
36. What is wrong with having faith without deeds? (2:18-26)
37. What do the demons believe about God? How does it affect them? (2:19)
38. What did Abraham do to show his faith? (2:21-23)
39. What made Abraham righteous? (2:23)
40. How is a person justified before God? (2:24)
41. What did Rahab do? (2:25)
42. How did Rahab show faith? (2:25)
43. How are faith and deeds like the body and the spirit? (2:26)