

# **“Walking our Talk”**

**How Doctrine is to Guide our Behavior**

**James 2:1-13**

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James teaches us that how we treat other people indicates what we really believe about God!

In our passage James examines four basic Christian doctrines in the light of the way we treat other people.

- 1. The Person and Work of Christ (James 2:1–4)**
- 2. The Grace of God (James 2:5–7)**
- 3. The Word of God (James 2:8–11)**
- 4. The Judgment of God (James 2:12–13)**

# 1. The Person and Work of Christ

<sup>NIV</sup> **James 2:1** My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism.

<sup>2</sup> Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in.

<sup>3</sup> 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,"

# 1. The Person and Work of Christ

<sup>4</sup> have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

- **The doctrine of the Person and Work of Christ teaches us that Jesus loves all people equally and shows us how to treat others.**
- **As truly human, he sets the example for us how to live and respond to other people.**
- **Jesus did not show favoritism to people.**
- Even His enemies admitted, “You aren’t swayed by men, because You pay no attention to who they are” (Matt. 22:16).

# **1. The Person and Work of Christ**

- **We are prone to judge people by their past.**
  - **When Saul of Tarsus was converted, the church of Jerusalem was afraid to receive him.**
  - **It took Barnabas, who believed Saul's conversion to break down the walls (Acts 9:26-28)**
- **We are prone to judge by outward appearance rather than by the inner attitude of the heart.**

# 1. The Person and Work of Christ

- Jesus was a friend to sinners, though He disapproved of their sins.
- It was not compromise, but compassion and love that caused Him to welcome them, and when they put their faith in Him, forgave them.
- We must not evaluate and judge people simply by what we see outwardly. We must also seek to discern what they are inwardly.
- We must learn to see people **as Jesus sees them.**

# 1. The Person and Work of Christ

- If they are not Christians, we can be kind to them because Christ died for them and loves them.
- Jesus Christ is to be the link between us and others.
- And He is a link of love.
- The basis for relationship with others is the biblical doctrine of the person and work of Jesus Christ.

## 2. The Grace of God (James 2:5–7)

- “choosing” involves the grace of God.

<sup>5</sup> Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: 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?

<sup>6</sup> But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court?

<sup>7</sup> Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong?

## 2. The Grace of God (James 2:5–7)

- “choosing” involves the grace of God.
- The doctrine of God’s grace, if we really believe it, forces us to relate to people on the basis of God’s plan and not on the basis of human merit or social status.
- In His birth, life, death, and resurrection, Jesus broke down the walls between rich and poor, young and old, educated and uneducated. It is wrong for us to build those walls again; we cannot have such walls if we believe in the grace of God.

### 3. The Word of God (James 2:8–11)

<sup>8</sup> If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right.

<sup>9</sup> But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers.

<sup>10</sup> For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.

<sup>11</sup> For he who said, "You shall not commit adultery," also said, "You shall not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.

### 3. The Word of God (James 2:8–11)

- Why is the commandment "Love your neighbor as yourself," called the "**Royal Law**"?
  1. It was given by the heavenly King – God Himself.
  2. It was reaffirmed by our spiritual King -- Jesus -- to His disciples – John 13:34.
  3. It rules over and guides all the other teachings in Scripture. "Love is the fulfilling of the Law" – Rom. 13:10.
- If we are obedient to the Word of God, we will love people as we love ourselves.

### 3. The Word of God (James 2:8–11)

- Christian love **does not mean** that I must *like* a person and agree with him on everything.
- I may not like his vocabulary or his habits, and I may not want him for an intimate friend.
- ***Christian love means treating others the way God has treated me.***
- It is an act of the will, not an emotion that I try to manufacture.
- **The motive is to glorify God.** The means is the power of the Spirit within (“for the fruit of the Spirit is love”).

## 4. The Judgment of God (James 2:12–13)

<sup>12</sup> Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom,

<sup>13</sup> because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

- **God will treat us just like we treated others.**
- He will judge our words, deeds, and attitudes toward other people.
- God's Word – His law – frees us from sin and teaches us how to be free from prejudice.

## Summary of James 2:1-13

- There is one obvious message to this section: our beliefs should control our behavior.
- If we really believe that:
  - **Jesus is the Son of God**, and that
  - **God is gracious**,
  - **His Word is true**, and
  - one day **He will judge us**,then our conduct toward others should demonstrate our beliefs.
- Let's be sure to “walk our talk.”

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