



Epistle of James

James 2:8-13 Favoritism, Royal Law, & Law of Liberty Part 1

- **James 2:8 - If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you do well;’**
 - How should we interpret ‘*if*’ here followed by the verb *fulfill*?
 - 1st (indicative mood, since) or 3rd (subjunctive mood, if) class conditional?
 - The verb *fulfill* here is present active indicative which helps.
 - *Fulfil* (*τελειῶν*), is stronger than the more common word *τηρεῖν*, *observe* or *keep*, which appears later in James 2.
 - » *James 2:10- For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.*
 - What do you think of when you see the term *royal* (*basilikos*)?
 - My first thought is of a king.
 - » *John 4:46 - So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum.*
 - » *Acts 12:21 - So on a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat on his throne and gave an oration to them.*
 - But here, *basilikos* is best translated as *principal* or *chief*.



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- We need to think to whom James is writing – newborn Jews who are schooled in the law.
 - » *Rom 2:17 - But you are called a Jew, and rest on the law, and make your boast in God,*
 - Yet they like we have a new form of royalty.
 - » *1 Peter 2:9 - But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;*
- *according to the Scripture – what scripture?*
 - I think we've seen this before.
- *“You shall love your neighbor as yourself,”*
 - Do not interpret this that James meant that Christians should ignore the rich.
 - However, we are called to love our neighbors and because is preceded *by in the scripture*, the OT is strongly suggested, but the OT has only one verse.
 - » *Lev 19:18 - ‘You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.*
- But we see this 6 times in the NT!
 - » *Matt 19:19; Matt 22:39; Mark 12:31; Luke 10:27; Rom 13:9; Gal 5:14.*



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- James tells us if we apply this *royal law* that *we do well*.
 - First, how are we doing here, and this love is *agapaō*?
 - Isn't this only the kind of *love* that comes from the Godhead?
 - And this is the exchanged life!
 - » *Phil 1:21 – For to me to live is Christ, ...*
 - What does it mean *to do well*?
 - To be free of illness, abundantly endowed with riches, regarded as important?
 - Here, *to do well* is best interpreted as being *honest* and *upright*.
 - Isn't this identification, i.e., the Spirit-led life we live in the Lord Jesus?
 - » *John 13:13 - Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.*
 - » *Rom 8:16 - The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:*
 - » *James 1:25 - But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.*
- **James 2:9 - but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.**
 - Back to *if you show partiality (prosōpolēmpτεō)* or *respect of persons*.



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- Another 1st class conditional which presumably implies ‘no respect?’
- Reminds us of verse 1 and is an antithesis of the way God works.
 - » *James 2:1 - My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality (prosōpolēmpteō).*
 - » *Acts 10:34 - Then Peter opened his mouth and said: “In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality.*
- *you commit (present middle indicative) or work sin,*
 - *Work* - assumes on ongoing presence.
 - And how do we define *sin*?
- *and are convicted (present passive) by the law as transgressors.*
 - By what *law*?
 - *Burdick* – “Anyone who shows favoritism breaks the supreme law of love for his neighbor, the law that comprehends all laws governing one's relationships to one's fellowmen.”
 - *transgressors* means those who *step across* and here from the truth of the word of God expressed anew to the believer.
 - » Gal 2:19 - “For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God.”
 - Therefore, how do we respond?
 - » *James 1:22 - But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*



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- ***James 2:10 - For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.***
 - *For whoever shall keep the whole law – is this possible?*
 - The Jew may have tried.
 - *and yet stumble in one point*
 - » *Gal 5:3 - And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law.*
 - » *Rom 2:25 - For circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law; **but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.***
 - » *Gal 3:10 - For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.”*
 - » *Rom 3:23 - For all have **sinned** and fall short of the glory of God,*
 - *he is (becomes) guilty of all*
 - *McCalley – ‘The Law issues only two grades: pass or fail. James is attacking the kind of thinking that believes that obedience in one area will somehow compensate for disobedience in another. The Law is like a pane of glass—when any part is broken, it is all broken.’*



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» *Gal 5: 1-3 - Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. Indeed I, Paul, say to you that **if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing.** And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised **that he is a debtor to keep the whole law.***

– But now in God’s atmosphere of grace because of their *partiality* they have broken the *law of liberty* or of love!

