

WOMEN OF GRACE

Lesson 3 | James 2:1-13

*“James alerts us to the importance of the subject he is about to tackle: partiality or favoritism, or treating people in different ways according to their outward appearance or worldly advantages. To do so is not simply to fail to conform to a desired ‘religious’ pattern or behavior. It is to deny our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.” – J. Alec Motyer, *The Message of James*, p. 80*

MEMORIZATION VERSE

James 1:4

And let endurance have its perfect result,
so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

DAY 1 | God’s Impartiality | Read James 2:1-13

1. What was one thing that stood out to you in James 1?
2. In James 2:1, what is commanded?
3. What do the following verses teach about God’s impartiality?
 - a. Deuteronomy 10:17
 - b. Acts 10:24-28
 - c. Romans 2:11

d. Galatians 2:6

e. Colossians 3:25

4. From Leviticus 19:15 and Proverbs 24:23, how does God regard His people showing favoritism?

DAY 2 | Favoritism in the Church | Read James 2:2-4

1. In James 2:2–4, what example did James give of the early church displaying favoritism?

a. What examples of favoritism do you see in the church today?

2. In verses 4, 6, 9, and 11, how did James describe those showing favoritism? How does that help you understand God's perspective on showing partiality?

a. According to Philippians 2:3–4, what motivates favoritism, and why is that evil?

- b. In Philippians 2:3–8 and Romans 15:5–7, what behavior is the opposite of favoritism? What example is given for believers to follow?

3. Consider where in your life that favoritism might be evident, and how you can fight against that. Take time to pray for your church, specifically that it might show the impartiality that God demonstrates toward His children.

DAY 3 | How Believers Should Treat the Poor | Read James 2:5-7

1. From James 2:5–7, what reasons did James give for why the church should be impartial?

2. In verses 6–7, how did those who received special treatment treat believers in the early church?

3. How does Matthew 22:32–40 deepen your understanding of the sin of partiality and favoritism by believers?

4. Using a concordance or other resource, find two or three other verses that show God's care for the poor or downtrodden.

5. Scripture calls on believers to show compassion to the poor, so what are two or three specific ways you can obey this command.

DAY 4 | Love Your Neighbor | Read James 2:8-13

1. Sometimes believers consider certain sins more significant than others. How does James' argument in verses 9–13 correct that way of thinking?
2. According to God's command first given in Leviticus 19:18 and reiterated by Jesus in the New Testament in Mark 12:30–31, what law should the church exemplify?
3. According to Romans 3:20 and 8:1–8, what is the purpose of the law?
 - a. Are believers able to keep God's law?
 - b. From Matthew 5:17, who perfectly kept and fulfilled God's law?

4. Though Christians are not under the Mosaic Law, believers are called to follow Christ and live in a way that displays their new nature, reflecting God's character and holy standards that are seen in the Law. How can you grow in your own devotion and obedience to God, and encourage other believers to do the same?

5. From John 13:34–35, Romans 12:9–10, Galatians 5:13, and 1 John 4:7–21, how important to God is the love believers have for one another?

6. What "little" sins might you justify or excuse in your own life? How can this passage help you grow in understanding that all sin is offensive to God?

DAY 5 | Reflections on James 2:1-13 | Read James 2:1-13

1. What stood out to you most in James 2:1–13, and why?

2. How can understanding and obeying James 2 help you grow in wisdom?

3. What sin is at the root of partiality or favoritism?

4. Why is it so harmful to the body to "ma(k)e distinctions among yourselves"? Read Eph. 4:1-3.

5. In your own life, do you show preferential treatment to some, and prejudice against others? Identify one or two specific ways that you can love people as God loves them, in your home, at work, or in the church.

James 2:1-13

I. The Big Idea: James 2:1

II. The Big Sin: James 2:2-3

III. The Big Definition: James 2:4-7

IV. The Big Thing: James 2:8-12

V. The Big Mercy: James 2:13