

**>>>>>> James – Lesson 07 <<<<<<<**

- 1) As we concluded last time, we were discussing worshipping with those of the “cultural other” to use Micah’s term. I want to add a comment or two here.
  - a) First, to use a somewhat trite expression, we must love the sinner and hate the sin.
  - b) I feel that this is true regardless of their state of repentance or non-repentance.
  - c) However, when it comes to accepting the sin into our fellowship, we have obligations to God’s word and to our own brothers and sisters not to allow that.
    - i) Those young in the faith and our children might be adversely affected by this whether they actually taught or claimed that the sin was ok or not.
  - d) Regardless of the final outcome of any process that involves unrepented sin, we must still love the sinner and hate the sin.
  - e) Now, these are hard things to deal with, but we have really no choice in the matter.
- 2) One further comment was brought out and rightfully so, that we are all sinners.
  - a) However, I would hope that no one here would be unrepentant of any sin in their lives
  - b) This is one of the points I was making about our looking at sins equally.
    - i) Doing so helps prevent us from ignoring “little sins” and not even asking for forgiveness or trying to stop doing them.
- 3) The point in all this is in truth our hearts response to sin in our lives; to looking in the mirror; do we remove the spinach or ignore it and hope others do not see it or, do we do everything we can to remove it which in the case of sin includes repentance.
- 1) Just to review, I will read 2:8-11 quickly then we will jump into 12 and 13.
  - a) As I said earlier 12 and 13 are connected but really require some extra attention.

**James 2:8-11 (NASB 2020)**

<sup>8</sup> If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scripture, “YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF,” you are doing well. <sup>9</sup> But if you show partiality, you are committing sin *and* are convicted by the Law as violators. <sup>10</sup> For whoever keeps the whole Law, yet stumbles in one *point*, has become guilty of all. <sup>11</sup> For He who said, “DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY,” also said, “DO NOT MURDER.” Now if you do not commit adultery, but do murder, you have become a violator of the Law.

- 1) Now, let’s get into verses 12 and 13...

**James 2:12-13 (NASB 2020)**

<sup>12</sup> So speak, and so act, as those who are to be judged by *the* law of freedom. <sup>13</sup> For judgment *will be* merciless to one who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.

- 2) These two verses are a pivot point in James’ current dissertation and in truth, they are a key to the whole idea of Faith Demonstrated!
- 3) We must get two things here if we get nothing else:

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- a) **First** – what is the “law of freedom”.
- b) **Second** – what it means to be judged by it.
- c) Let’s begin with the law of freedom. Jesus himself addresses this in talking to some Jews who “Believed him”.
  - i) If you read the entire episode, it will be obvious that they did not understand or accept His teaching.
  - ii) In fact, the entire conversation ends with these folks picking up rocks to stone Jesus.

### **John 8:31–36 (NASB 2020)**

<sup>31</sup> So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly My disciples; <sup>32</sup> and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” <sup>33</sup> They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s descendants and have never been enslaved to anyone; how *is it that* You say, ‘You will become free’ ?”

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin. <sup>35</sup> Now the slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever. <sup>36</sup> So if the Son sets you free, you really will be free.

- 4) So, to really understand the law of freedom, we must compare the law of freedom and unfulfilled Law.
  - a) The unfulfilled Law was the law as it was given.

### **What was God’s intent for the original law – the unfulfilled law?**

- b) God’s intent was for it to transfer to the heart.

### **But what actually happened with his people?**

- c) In actuality, what happened was His people turned into a burden, a checklist.
  - i) In truth, it became a form of slavery.
  - ii) There was no heart felt reason for most in trying to obey the Law.
  - iii) Their righteousness came from checking the boxes – no heart required!
- 5) When Christ fulfilled the Law, He made the intent of God’s Law perfectly clear in all things.
  - a) He also provided the ultimate sacrifice so that grace could enter and now, we are free.
  - b) Not free to sin but free to serve God by looking into His perfect law and living it out in our lives with grace to cover the times and things we are unable to do.
- 6) James puts this forth as a command with emphasis; “So speak, and so act”
  - a) We must choose to speak and choose to act as the law of freedom demands.
  - b) Bruce Barton comments on this...

Christians can be held responsible by the world for our bad example. Nothing is sadder than believers whose words and actions demonstrate that they are still under the influence of the world rather than under the influence of Christ.

- c) He continues a paragraph or so later by saying ...

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As Christians, we are saved by God's free gift (grace) through faith, not by keeping the law. But as Christians, we are also required to obey Christ.<sup>9</sup>

- 7) We must always remember that God's grace does not cancel our duty to obey him.
- 8) The law is no longer an external set of rules with provided expansions.
- 9) Instead, it is the heart full of love for Christ and God that makes us want to live to please them in every way.
- 10) James completes his point by indirectly focusing back on that very grace we were just discussing.
- 11) It is an absolute that we must see God's grace (mercy) in all of this and realize that without it we would **not** be able to stand before Him.
- 12) And, as James says here, He expects us to show that same grace (mercy) to others.
  - a) We do this by not condemning the person for their sin but loving them.
- 13) Jesus reintroduced the world to the awesome character of God: holy, just, and gracious.
- 14) The Incarnation was not a revision or change in God's eternal plan – it was God's plan brought to fulfillment.
  - a) In other words, we are no longer just rule keepers we are children of God serving a risen savior keeping the entire intent of the law rather than a mess of rules with no heart.
- 15) Without verses 12 and 13, what James had said before and what he is going to say next would just seem like the same repressive system with no heart – only the burden.
- 16) Looking back at the Matthew passage for a second.
- 17) I think to be clear here since we quoted the entire verse 34, when Jesus says; “everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin”, I think He is saying those who intentionally commit sin are slaves to sin.
  - a) Once we are saved and living under the fulfilled law, we must never intentionally sin.

### **Agree / disagree?**

- b) There is a commitment issue here.
- c) It is what we were talking about earlier – looking at God's law, saying in our heart we don't agree with it, and by doing so, we choose to disobey.
- d) It would also be when we look at what we know God wants and simply say that's too hard and just ignore Him – not turning to Him for the strength we need.
  - i) Not even attempting to accomplish His desires.
- e) Paul says this clearly in Romans:

### **Romans 6:12–23 (NASB 2020)**

<sup>12</sup> Therefore sin is not to reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, <sup>13</sup> and do not go on presenting the parts of your body to sin *as* instruments of

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<sup>9</sup> Bruce B. Barton, David Veerman, and Neil S. Wilson, [\*James\*](#), Life Application Bible Commentary (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1992), 55.

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unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those who are alive from the dead, and your body's parts *as* instruments of righteousness for God. <sup>14</sup> For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under the Law but under grace.

18) Now, that's a lot on verses 12 and 13 but, as I said, they are I think pivotal to this section of the letter – perhaps the entire letter.

19) Again – they are the broad definition of FAITH DEMONSTRATED!

20) Take a minute and think about all that we have been saying.

**Does this click or have we gone down a path to oblivion?**