

TITLE: James (Lesson 11)

TEXT: James 2:9-13

INTRO: "If we are paying attention to the law, we know that it will not justify us. We know that we will never be able to get into heaven on the basis of our works, because the law reveals to us our filthiness. The law teaches us that by the works of the law, no flesh, no human being will ever be justified in God's sight. Why, then, do people continue to hope that their good deeds are going to be good enough to satisfy the demands of God?"

*R.C. Sproul*

- I. (vs. 9) There are no little sins.
  - A. To show favoritism and discriminate against people is not a minor sin.
    - 1. The church should be a place free from prejudice and partiality.
  - B. The law of God is clear.

NOTE: I John 3:4

- II. (vs. 10-11) God does not grade on the curve.
  - A. James is reminding us to measure ourselves against God's standard.
    - 1. God's standard has never changed!
    - 2. Sin affects our relationship with God and others.

NOTE: Even our attitudes and motives are judged. Matt. 5:22a, 28

- B. According to God's standard we cannot justify our sin.
  - 1. James is not dealing with greater or lesser sins.

NOTE: We tend to see our sin as tearing a fabric as opposed to breaking glass. A chain is judged according to its weakest link. Our "besetting" (prevailing) sin condemns us.

- 2. Believers should strive to put their faith into practice every day.

NOTE: Sin is rebellion against God. God has called believers to trust and obey Him. "We cannot sin lightly and serve faithfully." *Warren Wiersbe*

- III. (vs. 12-13) How to prioritize.
  - A. Prioritize according to the *nature* of God.

NOTE: Illustrated by the story of Cornelius and Peter in Acts chapters 10 through 11:18.

- B. Prioritize the *spiritual* over the material.
  - 1. The law of liberty (James 1:25).

NOTE: Freedom to *speak* and *act* under the influence of Christ. Fulfilling the law by living under *grace*! Rom. 5:20-21; Matt. 5:17; I John 2:15-17

- 2. The basis of our obedience is not external but *internal*.

- C. Prioritize the *eternal* over the temporal.
  - 1. Riches are fleeting (James 1:10-11).
  - 2. Trust in God.

NOTE: Our beliefs control our actions. I Tim. 6:17-19

- 3. Judgment and mercy are in view.

CONCLUSION: As believers we have received God's mercy in that Christ has suffered our judgment. We in turn are compelled by the Word and the Holy Spirit to offer mercy.