

The book of James

2:8-13

Welcome back to this week's study in the book of James. Last week we learned about judging others, This week we will continue on this subject, as well as following God's law.

✠ **James 2:8-13** *If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well; but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.*

The first question you may have is, "what is this so called royal law?" We find the answer in the book of Leviticus.

✠ **Lev 19:17-18** *'You shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall surely rebuke your neighbor, and not bear sin because of him. '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.*

You see the Jews took God's laws and added to them by giving their own interpretation and additions to the law.

Like concerning the Sabbath day God said:

✠ **Ex 35:1-3** *Then Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together, and said to them, "These are the words which the LORD has commanded you to do: Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh day shall be a holy day for you, a Sabbath of rest to the LORD. Whoever does any work on it shall be put to death. You shall kindle no fire throughout your dwellings on the Sabbath day."*

The children of Israel took what God said and added to it. Did you know that a Jewish person can't even drive a car on the Sabbath day? They consider that as kindling a fire. If a fly were to land in your mouth you had to swallow it because to remove it from your mouth was considered doing work.

Even when Jesus spoke to the religious leaders, He explained what God meant by this law of loving your neighbor.

† Luke 10:25-37 *And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" So he answered and said, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind," and "your neighbor as yourself." " And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, "Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you." So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."*

Did you ever notice that Jesus never said that this person was rich or poor or was just a common person? No, He just said a man was robbed and beaten. So to love your neighbor as yourself is not to judge a person on what they have or even who they are.

James goes on to say that if you do judge a person because of what they have or even who they are then you have broken God's law.

✠ *but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.*

There are people who say that they have never sinned (Which is a lie and another sin they just committed), but they will judge others or look down on others. Therefore, they are truly sinners according to God's law. And as James points out that if you break one law then you are guilty of all.

✠ *For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.*

Say for example that you have never broken the law where you live. You always go 65 mph or under on the freeway, you don't steal from anyone and you haven't hurt anyone physically.

But what if an emergency came up, like your wife was about to have baby and you needed to get her to the hospital like right now?
So to get her there you drive 60 mph in a 35 mph zone. You have just broken the law. Sure you could make up all kinds of excuses, but the fact is that you broke the law. And for breaking that law if you are caught then you have to pay a fine.

Now you may have never murdered anyone or committed adultery, but have you ever lied? What about judging someone as we have been talking about for the last two weeks? If you have, (and we all have at one time or another) then you are guilty of breaking God's law.

We tend to say that one sin is worse than another. But no matter what the sin is, without Jesus you have to pay the price for that, or those sins. What's the price? We all know that it's to spend eternity in hell, but even worse, it's to be separated from God for all eternity. I know what life was like for me before I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior, and I was separated from God because of my sins.

But now that I am saved through Jesus Christ and have a relationship with the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, I could not imagine what life would be like without them for all eternity. But I know that it would be worse than what I have ever experienced here on this earth.

You may read this and think, *“Well that's not fair. I'm not that bad of a person. Why should God reject me?”*

I have a question for you. Why would you reject someone who died for you? Why would you reject the Father who was willing to give up His Son's life for you? We have to understand that it's not God rejecting us, but rather us who have rejected God.

✠ ***Deut 6:4-5 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.***

To love the Lord with all your heart, soul and strength is to not reject His Son Jesus. When you reject Jesus, you are telling the Father that you are not really loving Him!

✚ ***So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.***

Simply put. James is saying to walk your talk, or in even simpler terms, if you teach or tell someone to do something, then you should do the same thing yourself. The religious leaders in Jesus' time were known for teaching others God's law, but they didn't practice what they preached. Maybe you know someone who teaches God's word, but they don't always practice what they preach. Should you then use that as an excuse for not listening to them? Let's see what Jesus says:

† **Matt 23:1-3** *Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, saying: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do."*

No matter what someone does, we are not to follow man, but God! We will not stand before God and say, "well so and so did it so I thought it was ok."

People say that there are too many hypocrites in church and use that as an excuse for not going to church or even becoming a Christian. But God never said to follow man (other than Jesus). No we are to follow God's word and what God says, regardless of who speaks it.

I remember reading of a story of a pastor and how he came to know Jesus Christ as his Savior. It happened that he was into partying and drugs and alcohol etc. One day he got tired of it all and wanted to start searching for God. So he was at a party and asked one of the people there about God. In a drunken stupor the reply came, "I don't know. I remember learning in Sunday school that God so loved that world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever should believe in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Little did this drunk know but he was quoting scripture.

† **John 3:16** *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

Through this verse, this now pastor, came to know Jesus as his Lord and Savior. We have heard of pastors or teachers falling into sexual sin. Does that mean that everything they said quoting God's word you should now ignore?

† **2 Peter 2:15-16** *They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; but he was rebuked for his iniquity: a dumb donkey speaking with a man's voice restrained the madness of the prophet.*

God can use anyone, or sometimes anything to bring His word to people.

So you have a choice, you can listen to your pastor at church or to me here in these studies as God's word is being taught.

The other choice is you can wait for God to send a donkey to speak to you. It's very unlikely that God will send a donkey to speak to you, so take the next best thing, which is church or these teachings, or the best thing is to read God's word for yourself and find out how much God really does love you. Find out the truth to eternal life, which you will find is through Jesus Christ.

I am a sinner, but if you have read through any of these studies you have read God's word. You will not be able to stand before God and say, "Steve was a sinner so I ignored what he said in the teachings."

God's word is throughout all these teachings, taken straight from the bible, word for word. So go ahead and ignore my words, but don't ignore God's words!

Finally, to end this week's teaching.

✎ ***For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.***

Before we came to know Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we were destined to be judged by God for our sins. But in God's mercy, He sent His Son Jesus to save us, therefore we will no longer be judged because of God's mercy.

You have been shown mercy by God Himself. Shouldn't you go and do likewise? As we read in the story of the Good Samaritan, did you catch what Jesus said at the end?

✝ ***Luke 10:37 And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."***

Today, Jesus is saying to you and me ***"Go and do likewise."***

May God richly bless you in His love grace and MERCY, and may you show the same to others.

Next week we will get into faith.