

October 11, 2026

Pastor Andy McClellan

Series Title: James

Sermon Title: “There are No VIP Boxes in Church”

Text: James 2:1-13

When we show favoritism in the Church...

1. We align ourselves against the **HEART** of God, vv. 1-7 (*see also Proverbs 24:23; Zechariah 7:9-10; Matthew 5:3, 7:1-5; Acts 10:34-35; Romans 2:11, 10:11-13; 1 Corinthians 1:26; 2 Cor. 8:9; 1 Peter 1:17*).
2. We sinfully break the **LAW** of God, vv. 8-11 (*see also Leviticus 19:15; Matthew 5:18-19, 22:37-40, 23:23; Mark 12:30-31; Romans 13:8-10; Galatians 3:10-14, 5:13-14; Titus 3:4-7*).

Therefore...

3. Show to all the **MERCY** you've received from God, vv. 12-13 (*see also 1:25; Micah 6:8; Matt. 5:7, 6:15, 25:34-40, 18:32-35; Luke 6:36, 10:25-37; Romans 8:2, 14:10-12; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 John 4:17; Jude 22-23*).

FOR FURTHER STUDY & DISCUSSION

1. What are some ways that we might correctly and defensibly make distinctions among people today? How are those different from the favoritism/partiality that James speaks against in the Church? Where might we see it today? What are some other ways that we make “distinctions among ourselves” and divide ourselves where Jesus doesn’t? Why is that wrong, and how does it align us against the heart of God (use the cross references in point 1 above for help)?
2. What sins are usually listed as the “big sins” that Christians might be tempted toward? According to James 2:10, what sins are considered big sins? With that in mind, why is showing favoritism such a big sin? How does it break God’s royal law of love, even if we are being obedient in many other ways (see also Mark 12:30-31)? How have you broken this law in your life? Confess your sin to God and take comfort in Titus 3:4-7.
3. What does it mean in v. 12, to be “judged under the law of liberty?” Does this mean that we are free to do whatever we want? What does it free us from, and what does it free us to? How are we evaluated based on the law of liberty, and how does this point us to our need for Jesus, and our goal of becoming more like Jesus?
4. Some have used the phrase in v. 13 “mercy triumphs over judgment” to argue that even unrepentant sinners will be saved and go to heaven in the end. How is that both an incorrect understanding of this verse in its context, and contrary to the rest of the Bible? What kind of judgment is James referring to here (see 2 Cor. 5:10)? How does Christ’s mercy on us triumph in that judgment? How does our showing mercy to others demonstrate Jesus working in us, and therefore, give us confidence when we face this judgment?

NEXT WEEK: James 2:14-26, Pastor Andy McClellan

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