

SUNDAY WORSHIP GUIDE

JAMES 2:1-13

SECTION 1: Worship Song

Build My Life – Refer to **Section 7**

SECTION 2: Scripture Reading

Leviticus 19:15-18

SECTION 3: Sermon Passage

James 2:1-13 My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. 2 For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, 3 and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, "You sit here in a good place," while you say to the poor man, "You stand over there," or, "Sit down at my feet," 4 have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? 5 Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him? 6 But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? 7 Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called?

8 If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. 9 But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. 10 For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it. 11 For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. 12 So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. 13 For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

Sermon: Video on Facebook and sermon notes in **section 5**.

SECTION 4: Sermon points and questions

Theme: True Religion: Mercy Triumphs Over Judgement

Points:

1. Our faith, Jesus' glory and the sin of favouritism (James 2:1-4)
2. God's perspective: Rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom (James 2:5-7)
3. Mercy triumphs over judgement (James 2:8-13)

Questions.

1. How does showing partiality diminish the glory of Jesus and his supremacy over all?
2. Do you think the poor are really rich in faith? Why would James say that?
3. Luke 6:20–26; Matthew 25:31–46; Matthew 19:16–26; Matthew 6:24; 1 Timothy 6:6–10, 17–19. Based on these passages, what's the problem with wealth? What advantage do the poor have?
4. How does partiality dishonor God?

5. How does experiencing God's mercy and grace change our values? How do these values change the way that we view all people?
6. If we are unwilling to show mercy to others, what does that lack of action reveal about our experience of God's mercy?

SECTION 5: Sermon notes

1. Our faith, Jesus' glory and the sin of favouritism (James 2:1-4)

Last Sunday as pastor Besweri covered James 1:26-27. We saw a picture of the religion, the faith according to God. Religion that is true and that matters, that is pure and undefiled. It is very important to us, because humanly we constantly try to create our religion. That will suite our desires, will make us comfortable and therefore will serve and benefit our own ego. The biggest downfall of it is that this kind of religion is worthless, because it serves, honours and glorifies creation over the Creator. That's why James reminds that we need to hold on to God's definition of what the true religion is. There is a clear and vivid separation between the world and God. So we are to seek and strive to live out the way of our Lord. We need to seek that our faith and actions are defined and shaped by God's word. That's a reason why we are to control our tongues and visit orphans and widows in their affliction. And that is exactly the reason why we are not to show partiality.

James says, **My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory.** James tells us that our faith, the one we hold on to is incompatible with favouritism and what is important is that Jesus's glory is the reason why.

James gives us example of favouritism that happens in the church **For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, 3 and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, "You sit here in a good place," while you say to the poor man, "You stand over there," or, "Sit down at my feet," 4 have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?**

James says that we become evil judges. By the outward appearance, wealth, beauty, fame we judge who deserves better treatment. The reason to why is our own selfish desires. We pursue our benefit that we can get from this wealthy, beautiful, famous, influential person. While neglecting and dishonouring a person we think we won't benefit from.

The problem with it that James raises is that we forget the glory of our Lord. We forget that it is Jesus who is highly exalted by God and granted the name above every name (*Philippians 2:9-11*). And if we truly believe that he is glorified like that we will remember that he is above every person and we realize his supremacy over wealthy, significant and influential of this world. Our comfort, safety and confidence come not from having "big men" and wealthy in our church and friends in high places, even State House. But our comfort, security and confidence come from our glorious Lord. As a result, we view people differently and treat them differently. Differently in a way that is opposite to the way the world would. We are to be people who are fascinated and pursue Jesus' glory not men's.

2. God's perspective: Rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom (James 2:5-7)

Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him? 6 But you have dishonored the poor man.

Here James brings God's view of the poor. He reminds us that though in the eyes of the world they have nothing and they are "nobodies" they are chosen by God to be rich in faith and heirs of the Kingdom. Poor doesn't automatically equal to saved and rich in faith nor as the rich automatically means doomed. It is those who love God. The advantage the poor have over the rich is that they as all of us should daily rely on God for provision and care. God cares for them, they are chosen by him and exalted by him. Jesus says:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. Luke 4:18

And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Luke 6:20

We are to have God's view and his perspective. To view and treat the brother or sister as fellow heir of the kingdom. But it is only possible when we ourselves view eternal life as the true riches and pursue to store our treasure in heaven (*Matthew 6:19-20*). When we are ready to forsake what the world offers because of the surpassing worth of Christ and his promises.

Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? 7 Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called?

James raises here an overall point of how in this world rich exploit poor, how even judicial system is corrupt to support that. So, the question to us is why would you who belong to God support that? Why would you take part in it, when you are to be and live radically different from it? Why would you join those who blaspheme the honourable name of Jesus Christ by which you are now called and join to dishonour the poor?

3. Mercy triumphs over judgement (James 2:8-13)

If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. 9 But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. 10 For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it. 11 For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.

It might seem confusing at first why James starts talking about the law. You remember that people who James is writing to are very religious people they know the law. They are very much like us. In the church Sunday in and Sunday out. Bible study during the week. And they much like today, consider themselves quite righteous. And this is what James addresses. He says that favouritism is serious, it is part of the royal law, it is part of the verses in *Leviticus 19:15-18* And don't neglect it and minimize it as something not important. You cannot say that you uphold the law while you keep one commandment that you are more comfortable with and break the other. He says that you become a transgressor. It is sin and you are condemned by it. If you break part of window glass the whole thing shatters.

So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. Do we really live like we are going to be judged? We will give an account for every word we have spoken and every deed of ours.

I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, 37 for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned. (Matthew 12:36-37)

He will render to each one according to his works: 7 to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; 8 but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. 9 There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, 10 but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. 11 For God shows no partiality. (Romans 2:6-11)

Do you feel the weight of it? Do you see that you are doomed? Because that's what the gospel calls us to so that we can come to Christ because he is the only way we can be right with God. It is only because of the cross that our sin is paid for and we receive mercy.

And this is what James reminds us of. The mercy that we have received from God and we can only realize how great it is when we remember who we are. That apart from Jesus we are condemned. And the sin isn't a light thing, but the wrath of God awaits the sinners.

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

James wants to know that it is only when we get the mercy of God when we receive that we can pour out and give it to others. If you don't show mercy it means you have never received it yourself.

Remember the parable that Jesus told his disciples about unforgiving servant in *Matthew 18:21-35*? After master had forgiven enormous debt of 10,000 talents to his servant. The servant went and imprisoned his fellow servant for a little debt 100 denarii. And Jesus tells that *32 Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. 33 And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' 34 And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. 35 So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."* (*Matthew 18:32-35*)

Favouritism that all of are guilty of though often we are not ready to except that. How can we live to display God's mercy?

James calls us to listen to the Word and put it to practice. Faith works. So, how can we put these verses to practice as individuals, families, church?

SECTION 6: Response

- 1. Two songs:** All to us & Make Us One - **Section 7**
- 2. Prayer:** Prayer requests
- 3. Creed:** Apostle's Creed.

SECTION 7: Worship songs

1. Build My Life

Worthy of every song we could ever sing
Worthy of all the praise we could ever bring
Worthy of every breath we could ever
breathe
We live for You

Jesus, the Name above every other name
Jesus, the only One who could ever save
Worthy of every breath we could ever
breathe
We live for You
Oh, we live for You

Holy, there is no one like You
There is none beside You
Open up my eyes in wonder
And show me who You are
And fill me with Your heart
And lead me in Your love to those around me

Worthy
Worthy of every song we could ever sing
Worthy of all the praise we could ever bring
Worthy of every breath we could ever
breathe
We live for You
Oh, we live for You
Jesus

Jesus, the Name above every other name
Jesus, the only One who could ever save
Worthy of every breath we could ever
breathe
We live for You
Oh, we live for You

And holy, there is no one like You
There is none beside You
Open up my eyes in wonder
And show me who You are

And fill me with Your heart
And lead me in Your love to those (around
me)
Holy
Oh, holy, there is no one like You
There is none beside You
Open up my eyes in wonder
And show me who You are
And fill me with Your heart
And lead me in Your love to those around me

Lead me in Your love
Lead me in Your love

And I will build my life upon Your love
It is a firm foundation
I will put my trust in You alone
And I will not be shaken
I will build my life upon Your love
It is a firm foundation
I will put my trust in You alone
And I will not be shaken

You are holy

Holy, there is no one like You
There is none beside You
Open up my eyes in wonder
And show me who You are
And fill me with Your heart
And lead me in Your love to those around me
(You are holy, Lord)
And holy, there is no one like You
There is none beside You
Open up my eyes in wonder
And show me who You are
And fill me with Your heart
And lead me in Your love to those around me

And I will build my life upon Your love
It is a firm foundation

I will put my trust in You alone
And I will, I will not be shaken

All my life for You, Lord
All my days for You, Lord
You can have it all
You can have it all
You can have it all

And I will build my life upon Your love
It is a firm foundation
I will put my trust in You alone
And I will not be shaken (I will build my life upon)
I will build my life upon Your love
It is a firm foundation
I will put my trust in You alone
And I will not be shaken
I will not be shaken
I will not be shaken

2. All To Us

Precious cornerstone, sure foundation
You are faithful to the end
We are waiting, on You, Jesus
We believe You're all to us

Precious cornerstone, sure foundation
You are faithful to the end
We are waiting, on You, Jesus
We believe You're all to us

Let the glory of Your name be the passion of
the Church
Let the righteousness of God be a holy flame
that burns
Let the saving love of Christ be the measure
of our lives
We believe You're all to us

Only Son of God sent from Heaven
Hope and mercy at the cross
You are everything, You're the Promise
Jesus You, are all to us

Yeah you're all
So let the glory of Your name, be the passion
of the Church
Let the righteousness of God, be a holy flame
that burns
Let the saving love of Christ, be the measure
of our lives
We believe, You're all to us

Let the glory of Your name, be the passion of
the Church
Let the righteousness of God, be a holy flame
that burns
Let the saving love of Christ, be the measure
of our lives
We believe, You're all to us

Yeah, You're all to us
You're all to us
You're all to us
Yes you are,

When this passing, world is over
We will see You, face to face
And forever, we will worship
Jesus You, are all to us
Jesus You, are all to us

Yeah You are all
You're everything to us

3. Make Us One

One with the father
One with the spirit
One with the son of God
One with our sister
One with our brother
One family by the blood

Make us one, make us one
Your will be done
Make us one

One heart with heaven
One mind connected
One body unified
Bind us together
Now and forever
Jesus be glorified

Make us one, make us one
Your will be done
Make us one
Oh, make us one, make us one
Your will be done
Oh, make us one

We confess all our offenses
We confess we've been afraid
We repent of all the pride
Let all the hurt be washed away
For all the wars and violence
Against our enemies
Come heal our land with your great river
Restore the family
Make us one, make us one
Your will be done

Make us one
Oh, make us one, make us one
Let your kingdom come
Make us one
Oh, make us one

Should we sing this again?

Like a declaration over you and your family,
over your churches, over this nation
ultimately

We will be the prayers and God will be the
had, the sinner of this church again
And every war would be turned down, there
would be no more division, no more strife
Ey man, do we believe that tonight? Do we
just lift our hands?

Father, that's our cry

If You just would make us one, if You would
unify us through the spirit
Then You would be glorified again through
Your body

Make us one, make us one
Your will be done

Make us one

Make us one, make us one
Your will be done

Make us one

Make us one, make us one
Your will be done

Make us one

Oh, make us one, make us one

And Your will be done

Make us one

We confess all our offenses

We confess we've been afraid

We repent of all the pride

Let all the hurt be washed away

For all the wars and violence

Against our enemies

Come heal our land with your great river

Restore the family

Make us one, make us one

Let Your kingdom come

Make us one

Oh, make us one