



John Battaglia, D. Min.
PO Box 891, Jefferson City, MO 65102
573-355-4161//Twitter @johnabattaglia
John.battaglia@capitolcom.org

“The Royal Way of Love”

Weekly Bible Study Schedule
Tuesday, February 19, 7:00-7:55 AM in HHR #5
(hot breakfast provided)
Capitol Commission is non-partisan and
non-denominational

Chapters 2-5 offer 12 short teachings that call God’s people to full devotion to the teachings of Jesus. The teachings are connected, but are not linear. We begin in Chapter 2:1-13.

2:1 - My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory.

Followers of Jesus show no favoritism. God does not show favoritism. He loves all. God does not simply love, He is fundamentally love. It is His nature to love.

God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them 1 John 4:8

God created humankind in His image. He sees all as people of value.

So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. Genesis 1:27

The image of God brings one worth. Self-esteem, and future security is grounded in God’s imagine in us. You are God’s masterpiece.

For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago. Ephesians 2:10

Whose command? The supreme authority. Triune God. God the father, God the son, God the Holy Spirit. Three distinct roles, yet one God. Our greatest example of other-centered living is the trinity. God, the father elevates the Son (Jesus); God, the son glorifies the Father; God, the Spirit testifies to Jesus.

The other-centered person lives in love; looks like God, and does not look at others for one’s personal gain.

2:2-4 - 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 turns our attention to comparison. Favoritism is comparison between the one with designer clothing and one that purchases clothes from “Good Will”.

However, clothing is not the focus it is the illustration. Distinction is the main character. Distinction is a value statement. Human tendency leans toward selfishness. What is my advantage?

What is it about me that I give opportunity to the designer?

If James reverses his challenge attention is placed on the “shabby”.

Same is true for favoring the poor, although fewer do. To judge the affluent because of material possession or position is just as much favoritism as favoring the rich.

What is it about me that I favor the poor while pushing back on the rich?

2:5 - 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?

Jesus levels the playing field. He is the great equalizer. He calls forth the image of God in each person. He calls us to nobility. He raises the water in the harbor – all the boats rise, but, only boats in the harbor.

God chose the poor, the under resourced on earth, but rich in God’s Kingdom. God’s ways are not human ways.

God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful. 1 Corinthians 1:27



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He has given His promise of true riches found in a faith-filled life to those that love God. They will receive the crown of life.

2:6-7 - But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called?

If you practice favoritism you devalue the poor. You tip the scale in favor of the affluent.

Stop and think – you favor the rich, yet they are the ones that persecute you. You favor the ones with an advantage in life yet they use their influence and power to oppress you. You favor the ones in high position yet they are the ones that throw you into court because of your faith.

Do you really want to favor the ones that curse the name of Jesus?

2:8 – If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well.

Royal law is to “love God and love people”

Notice what James says: **“You shall love your neighbor as yourself,”** Why does James only quote “love neighbor as yourself?” He emphasizes practicing one’s faith.

Love your neighbor is the outward demonstration of your faith. You cannot love God if you do not love others.

2:9-11 - 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. 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.

Law was given to Moses; a set of guidelines and commands to help Israel reflect the character and nature of God distinguishing them as the people of God from other

nations. Fast forward to Jesus, grounded His followers in the 10 commandments. Three laws in the Old Testament.

Ceremonial Law – these speak of cleanliness, rituals, sacrifices, dietary, and festivals. For example: do not eat pork, shellfish, meat and dairy combined.

Civil or Judicial Law – how to live with your neighbor. Social statutes like legislation. How people relate to one another. For example: What is the penalty for manslaughter? What to do with the man whose animal kills another person’s animal? What does the law require of one that steals?

Moral Law – based on God’s character. The 10 commandments. Some of which are: sexual purity, honor, stealing, murder, lying, and monotheism.

Let me put it another way. The law was our guardian until Christ came; it protected us until we could be made right with God through faith. ²⁵ And now that the way of faith has come, we no longer need the law as our guardian. Galatians 3:25

The idea of distinction was God’s plan for Israel. God selected Israel as His special people. Their life, dietary laws, ceremonial laws, moral laws, civil laws each made them distinct from the other nations.

Distinction should lead followers of Jesus to God’s holiness, not judgement of the person different from you.

2:12-13 - So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

Having said all the above live in love. The law of Jesus is love.

The measure you give judgement is the measure you will receive judgment. The measure you give mercy is the measure you will receive mercy.

We choose God’s mercy seat or judgement seat when life on earth ends.

The Lord is merciful and compassionate, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. Psalm 145:8



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Missouri

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