

## STUDY PACK 5

### JAMES CHAPTER 2 By Dr. Scudder

“Luther and many others failed to note those words, *not before God.*” \_\_\_\_\_  
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But when he went to Mount Moriah and there by faith offered his son upon the altar (Hebrews 11:17-19), he was justified by works before *men*, as he made manifest the reality of his profession of confidence in God and His Word.”

~~ Harry Ironside ~~

“Banish from your minds once for all any semblance of the idea that James repudiates salvation by faith in Christ. He does no such thing. James and Paul must agree on this, as on every other doctrine, since both wrote exactly what the Spirit of God directed them to write.”

~~ Lehman Strauss ~~

***James 2:1-4: My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?***

Once I had the privilege to preach in a pre-civil war church in New England in the state of Vermont. In the days when the church was built, there were doors on the ends of the pews and people paid for the privilege of sitting in certain pews. When I saw those same pews, I observed the actual hinges on them where doors had hung. The wealthiest members of the congregation had their pick of where they wanted to sit and paid for the privilege.

This is exactly what James had in mind in this passage of his book. Jesus Christ is no respecter of persons so partiality should not be shown to someone because he or she is rich, just as disrespect should not be shown to a poor person. Being rich or poor should not matter in the church. We are all one in Christ Jesus.

As I studied this passage, it brought to mind one of my dad’s Methodist churches. A group of orphans attended the services there. One day, the board voted to ban them from coming to church because they were wearing out their welcome. Some of the members had noticed that the carpet was wearing under the pew where the orphans usually sat and dangled their feet. So, my dad said to the board and church, “If the orphans don’t come, I don’t preach!”

In exactly the same way, James teaches a powerful principle to his brothers in Christ. To the brothers then and to us now, he is never referring to salvation, but only to service.

In this passage, we see James throws out a hypothetical question. Suppose a person came to their assembly, and by just observing his clothing and his manner they could tell he was no doubt, very wealthy. Another man comes in dressed very poorly. So poor that the Greek wording here implies he even smells bad. The rich man gets the best seat in the house. The poor man stands, or at best is given a very poor seat in the back.

Then James goes on to answer the question. All people are brothers and sisters in Christ \_\_\_\_\_. This again points to the fact that James was addressing believers or those already saved, otherwise, this wording could never fit.

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***James 2:5–10: Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called? If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.***

It would not be possible to read verse ten with the mindset of believing the passage pertains to salvation. If that were true, of course, no one could possibly be saved. If our salvation depends on keeping the whole law, a person could have no bad thoughts, no hatred and no lust. To break the law at one point \_\_\_\_\_.

In that era, it was important, as it is now, for the believers in the church to treat all other believers with equality regardless of their material possessions. All people of all backgrounds \_\_\_\_\_.

James says many of the rich had a hidden mean streak, oppressing people around them. This was often done in secret. A rich person oftentimes had someone he hired to do his dirty work. He continues by saying to these young believers to fulfill the royal law, treat everyone as Christ would have treated us.

*1 Corinthians 1:26–27: For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;*

*Galatians 3:10–11: For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.*

1 Timothy 6:17–18: *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;* Reminding them of the Mosaic Law, James reiterates, if you break one of the commandments, you break them all. You should at least be able to love your neighbor if you are “in law” to Christ.

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**James 2:11–13: *For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.***

James tells them that believers should live as those who will be judged by God according to \_\_\_\_\_ . This judgment is not to determine salvation, but our rewards as disciples. God will judge us without mercy if we have shown no mercy to others. Even then he reminds us that God’s mercy will triumph. But just so they don’t get overstressed, he adds the judgment of the law of liberty, which is one of mercy.

James could be referring to God’s chastening of his children during this life (Hebrews 12:5–8), or the Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10), or both. It is clear that he is talking to believers about judgment that will be faced only by believers.

Galatians 3:10: *For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.*

To pass judgment upon others in accordance with the rigors of the law will not demonstrate to them you’re a righteous Christian brother. To attempt to interpret this passage as meaning good works can save us, \_\_\_\_\_ . Remember we will be standing before a HOLY GOD.

These verses really speak to us about attitudes in showing mercy to some of those around us and refusing to show mercy to others. If we show mercy, God will show mercy.

It is impossible for us to show mercy that is in anyway comparable to God showing mercy, so don’t be confused about that. However, we know God’s mercy is unlimited. If mercy has to be earned, it’s not mercy.

As saved people, we need to show love toward our fellow man. As disciples, if God finds us to be in rebellion, He cannot show mercy to us. It is clear these verses are not about obtaining eternal salvation but being held accountable by God for how we treat our brothers in Christ.

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**James 2:14–18: *What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.***

There's that word for brother again, "adelphos." Using it shows the writer is writing to the brethren \_\_\_\_\_. Because \_\_\_\_\_, it cannot possibly be used to mean those still in need of salvation. Just as my children cannot become unborn from my family because they might go against my wishes, we cannot become unborn from God's family because we still sin or do not have good works after we are saved.

From the context — that means reading the verses surrounding that passage — it is very clear. Let me repeat that and even say it is super clear. This passage teaches we are to help and protect those who have no means to protect themselves. If we fail to care for those in need of our help, God will judge us as described in verses 12 and 13. Our faith will not deliver or save us from that judgment, which is for believers alone.

When we see the word "saved," as I said before, it does not always mean saved for eternity. Here are some examples of this.

From Strong's Greek dictionary, we see the meaning of the word "saved." The Greek word is "sozo," meaning to deliver or protect literally or figuratively; to heal, preserve, do well and be whole, do well, or make whole.

Matthew 8:25: *And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish.*

This text in Matthew uses the same Greek word "sozo." The usage means to deliver or protect.

Mark 3:4: *And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace.*

"Save" used in the gospel of Mark, in the Greek, "sozo," means to be made whole.

Mark 13:13: *And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*

If we took the word "saved" in this verse as meaning to endure to the end in order to be saved for eternity, then there is no hope. The context of the passage refers to the time of the Tribulation Period that is yet to come and "saved" means to be physically saved.

Mark 15:30: *Save thyself, and come down from the cross.*

These words were spoken to Christ on the cross as He was being crucified. The Greek word again, is “sozo,” and of course, it could not mean eternal salvation in this passage of Scripture.

Acts 16:31: *And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*

In the words of Paul to the Philippian jailer, the same word for saved is used. We see the absolute clarity of God’s simple plan of salvation to mankind. If this man can be saved in such an easy way, why do we make it so hard? Place this man into James chapter two. What would he be thinking?

When you understand James is writing these verses in order for us to grow in Christ, can you see how easy it is to see the difference?

Because there are many examples of this, I only used a very limited number of verses using the Greek word “sozo.” At times, it is used to mean salvation so I really recommend you do your own study and see for yourself how simple and easy this truth is to understand.

There are many people who are needy and do not have any way to support themselves. Helping others who are in this predicament comes in the form of offering food, clothing and sometimes money. Oftentimes, the situation is only temporary, but for some, asking and begging becomes a permanent way of life.

James’ instructions in this situation are to take care of those who are needy among you, those whom you know and have come to care about as brothers. When you are acquainted with those in your church who have needs and know the situation, you need to help them and not just tell them to be warmed and filled or that you will simply pray for them. What you told them has no effect because words do not fill their stomachs.

However, it does not necessarily mean that everyone who comes to your door begging for money should be given some. In our church, there is always food available for those who don’t have money to buy it and it is always offered to them. How ironic it is that sometimes those who are begging often get very angry and refuse the food.

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***James 2:19: Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.***

Galatians 2:16: *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*

Have you heard this catchy little phrase? Faith alone saves, but genuine, saving faith is never alone. Not only is that an oxymoron, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ .

In order to monitor their congregations for more growth, many genuine and sincere preachers say this or words like it. Their intention, they feel, is to get control of believers and keep their people from going into gross sin.

These preachers say that true, saving faith is always followed by good works and that you can only know that you are saved by showing good works. If you believe in Christ but don't show good works, do they say that you may be saved but cannot have assurance of salvation? No! They say that you are definitely not saved and that your faith is not genuine.

So what does this poor believer need to do to have salvation and assurance? Why, it's obvious, he has to do good works. Therefore, salvation is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. This is the inescapable conclusion of Calvinism and Lordship Salvation and contradicts the entire Bible.

When you understand you don't have to prove you are saved and salvation is really all by grace, you want to serve Christ out of love and not out of fear. This is the result I have seen in my own church, and it is exactly the opposite of doing works to prove you are saved.

Demons lived in heaven and when they rebelled against God, it was not a matter of faith. It was a matter of rebellion. They knew God was God and they rebelled against Him. When this verse is used, it's actually kind of funny because it says, "demons believe." Demons are not saved. We all know a demon can't be saved, so why would this verse be used to say a believer could somehow lose his salvation?

Let's look again at Matthew 7:22–23 since it pertains to this discussion in James chapter two.

*Matthew 7:22–23: Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

Since no demon has ever been saved, there is no comparison between their situation and the plan of salvation. The argument advanced by the "man" who "may say" makes no sense. It's even said that demons show emotion by trembling. Yes, many people may show emotion when they get saved, but it is not the emotion making them saved.

People taking the mark of the beast, the number 666, in the book of Revelation won't be able to be saved. Because they know they're going against God, there is no faith involved. You see, believing in one God has never saved anyone. Believing that Jesus, the Son of God shed his blood which paid for all of our sins and rose from the dead, is the only way to be saved.

Those who teach Lordship salvation, claim from this verse, a person has to have a whole lot of works in order to get saved. Well, these people on the outside all had wonderful works, or at least, they said they did. The Lord says He never knew them even though they were doing many good works with the idea it would ensure salvation. It never says that they accepted Christ as their Savior. Instead, they are relying on their works to save them. It is similar to the idea of

those who teach Lordship salvation. The problem is this verse completely disproves the idea that works would get you to Heaven.

It's ironic this verse mentions the word "Lord" twice, implying it's not what you do or say, it's \_\_\_\_\_ . If you believe Christ paid for all your sin debt and you put your trust in His payment on the cross, believing in the blood, the death, and the resurrection, you have salvation.

If you believe this verse in Matthew seven is about salvation, then you would have to tear out the whole book of Romans. But if you believe that James is about walking by faith as a believer and service for the Christians in the church at Jerusalem, as well as the church scattered abroad, then it all makes perfect sense.