

# James 2 :1-13

Living Free from Prejudice

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Live a transformed life of equality, not one of prejudice and discrimination v1-7

Remember that you will be judged by the law that sets you free, so live free! v8-13

# Culture and context

## James' style of writing

Hard hitting and direct  
*"Consider it pure joy" 1:3*

Intended to shock  
*"You adulterers! Don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God?" 4:4*

He challenges our preconceptions to get us to take action  
*"Anyone who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins." 4:17*



# Rich and poor

The social and economic policy of the Roman Empire could well be summarised in a phrase: **'the Roman system of inequality'** (Garnsey & Saller 1987:125).<sup>1</sup> Governing the entire Mediterranean world, Rome maintained its domination through judicial institutions developing legislation concerning property ownership and labour control - and through the use of brutal force. **The whole system was based heavily on the inequality of people, which was thought to be either natural or at least inevitable**, in order to secure peace and stability in the society.



# Rich and poor

To respect a poor person was very hard for them: “If you're poor, you're a joke, on each and every occasion. What a laugh, if your cloak is dirty or torn, if your toga appears a little bit soiled, if your shoe has a crack in the leather. Or if several patches betray frequent mending! Poverty's greatest curse, much worse than actually being poor, is that it makes man objects of mirth, ridiculed, grumble, embarrassed...Sons of freeborn men give way to a rich man's slave” .

**That Christianity should follow a *poor* man and His poor disciples was a real challenge to society. And yet, Christianity spread amongst rich and poor alike.** When Paul commands to place the poor brother in a position where he can make judgments between wealthy brothers who are disagreeing with each other, he was really asking a lot. But he never baulks. He always goes for it, and fearlessly, without any embarrassment, lays down the implications of Christ and demands our response.

# Live a transformed life of equality, not one of prejudice and discrimination v1-7

- Jesus centred transformed life of equality
- Guard against prejudice and discrimination

*Romans 12v1-2 - don't conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind*

*Galatians 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

Remember that you will be judged by the law  
that sets you free, so live free! v8-13

The law that gives freedom  
v12

- Recognise
- Repent
- Receive
- Rebuke
- Replace