

September 6, 2026

CFBC... “Real Faith For A Real World” (James)

“SPIRITUAL SNOBBERY”

James 2:1-13

What is true religion? That’s the question that connects chapters 1 and 2. . .

James 1:26–27... If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his *own* heart, this man’s religion is worthless. **27** Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of *our* God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, *and* to keep oneself unstained by the world.

When James wrote this letter, he did not include chapter divisions. The thought of true religion continues into chapter 2 where he addresses a problem that was prevalent in the first century and remains to this very day. It’s the problem of “SPIRITUAL SNOBBERY.” Are you a spiritual snob? Do you show preference to people based on external characteristics?

September 6, 2026

CFBC... “Real Faith For A Real World” (James)

Believe me, the early church wrestled with this. These early believers were quick to make snap judgments of people based on superficial stuff . . .

- **Jews and Gentiles**
- **Rich and poor**
- **Slave and free**
- **Male and female**
- **Young and old**
- **Circumcised and uncircumcised**

Here’s a truth about God’s nature that we’ve got to grasp . . .

1 Samuel 16:7... But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God *sees* not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”

Deuteronomy 10:17–18... “For the LORD your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God who does not show partiality nor take a bribe. **18** “He

September 6, 2026

CFBC... “Real Faith For A Real World” (James)

executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and shows His love for the alien by giving him food and clothing.

Matthew 22:16... And they sent their disciples to Him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that You are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and defer to no one; for You are not partial to any.

Acts 10:34–35... Opening his mouth, Peter said: “I most certainly understand *now* that God is not one to show partiality, **35** but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him.

Romans 2:11... For there is no partiality with God.

Partiality or spiritual snobbery can come in many forms. Are you partial to . . .

- thin people?
- people your age?
- well-educated people?
- those who identify with you politically?

September 6, 2026

CFBC... “Real Faith For A Real World” (James)

- **people of your race?**
- **who are financially blessed?**

Making snap judgments based on externals is incompatible with true religion. In fact, James reveals the heart of God when he challenged the church to focus on internals. Here’s what we must do if we want to honor the Lord our God . . .

TREAT EVERYONE WITH LOVE AND RESPECT!

To make this point, I want you to focus on . . .

1. THE LORD’S REGULATION

James 2:1... My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with *an attitude of personal favoritism*.

This is one of the many commands we find in this letter, and it is in the present tense. Since there is not one shred of partiality with our Lord and since the Holy Spirit is conforming every believer to the image of Jesus, then the idea that true religion allows for

September 6, 2026

CFBC... “Real Faith For A Real World” (James)

personal favoritism or Christian snobbery is totally indefensible!

Jesus reached out to the poor, to lepers, and to widows. He shared His teachings with the rich religious leaders (Nicodemus). He called poor fishermen to be His disciples and the backbone of the church He would build. He reached out to the Gadarene demoniac. He forgave a career criminal who was dying next to Him. Don't be a Christian snob!

TREAT EVERYONE WITH LOVE AND RESPECT!

Okay, we've been introduced to the Lord's regulation. Next, I want you to see . . .

2. THE PERTINENT ILLUSTRATION

James 2:2–4... For if a man comes into your assembly with a gold ring and dressed in fine clothes, and there also comes in a poor man in dirty clothes, **3** and you pay special attention to the one who is wearing the fine clothes, and say, “You sit

September 6, 2026

CFBC... “Real Faith For A Real World” (James)

here in a good place,” and you say to the poor man, “You stand over there, or sit down by my footstool,”

James presented a hypothetical situation that could rapidly escalate into a hypocritical situation.

A rich man decked out in the finest clothes and flashing a gold ring receives red carpet, preferential treatment from the members of the church. He gets the best seat in the church. Everyone is thrilled that he came to church.

A poor man also came to church. He was immediately judged to be a loser and was told to stand up or to sit on the floor. Church members and maybe even the pastor gave him the cold shoulder.

James’ word cut like a two-edged sword . . .

James 2:4... have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil motives?

He nailed them for their inconsistency. The question they had to face and the question we must face is simply this—are we going to adopt the standards of the world where success and acceptance is based on one’s material possessions, physical appearance,

September 6, 2026

CFBC... “Real Faith For A Real World” (James)

academic degrees, or social prominence? James is making the case for adopting the standards of God’s kingdom which focuses on the heart—*internals* vs. *externals*. God forbid that we divide the church into the “haves” and the “have nots.” The point of our text is plain . . .

TREAT EVERYONE WITH LOVE AND RESPECT!

This truth must become a core value in this church and in our individual lives as believers. I say this because of the Lord’s regulation and the pertinent illustration. Thirdly, I want you to get a feel for . . .

3. THE PRACTICAL JUSTIFICATION

James 2:5–7... Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose the poor of this world *to be* rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him? 6 But you have dishonored the poor man. Is it not the rich who oppress you and personally drag you into court? 7 Do they not blaspheme the fair name by which you have been called?

September 6, 2026

CFBC... “Real Faith For A Real World” (James)

James posed 3 different questions to make his case for non-discrimination in the Body of Christ . . .

Question #1—Did not God choose the poor of this world *to be* rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?

James recognized that the poor Christians of the first century were more likely to be rich in faith even though they did not have much of this world’s stuff. God delights in taking the hopeless and helpless people of this world and saving them, changing them, and using them for His glory. Listen, the way we treat the poor is important to God!

Proverbs 14:31... He who oppresses the poor taunts his Maker, But he who is gracious to the needy honors Him.

Question #2— Is it not the rich who oppress you and personally drag you into court?

Here’s James’ point. Why give favorable treatment to those who have the power and the resources to discriminate and to oppress poorer believers?

September 6, 2026

CFBC... “Real Faith For A Real World” (James)

Question #3—Do they not blaspheme the fair name by which you have been called?

In verse 1, the Son of God is referred to as, “Our glorious Lord Jesus Christ.” Here in verse 7, He is referred to as, “The fair name by which you have been called.” You called out to Him when you were saved. His name was spoken over you at your baptism. You close your prayers with His name. One day you will bow your knee to Him and declare that He is LORD to the glory of God the Father!

Those who are Christians must not cater to any—*rich or poor*—who blaspheme our Lord’s name. Neither should we as believers mistreat the poor!

Is God against the rich? Absolutely not. Job, Abraham, Joseph of Arimathea, Levi the tax collector, and Zaccheus were all rich believers. Anybody who believes in Jesus will be saved!

Glory to God. It’s clear. We must . . .

TREAT EVERYONE WITH LOVE AND RESPECT!

September 6, 2026

CFBC... “Real Faith For A Real World” (James)

This truth must become a core value in this church and in our individual lives as believers. I say this because of the Lord’s regulation and the pertinent illustration and the practical justification. Fourthly, I want you to wrestle with . . .

4. THE GUIDING PROCLAMATION

James 2:8–11... If, however, you are fulfilling 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 and yet stumbles in one *point*, he has become guilty of all. **11** For He who said, “DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY,” also said, “DO NOT COMMIT MURDER.” Now if you do not commit adultery, but do commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.

The guiding proclamation for the Christian church and the believers who are a part of it is called here “THE ROYAL LAW.” This reflects the nature and character of God. This is a quote from the Old Testament that Jesus Himself picked up and shared with His listeners . . .

September 6, 2026

CFBC... “Real Faith For A Real World” (James)

Leviticus 19:18... You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD.

Matthew 22:36–40... “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” **37** And He said to him, “ ‘YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’ **38** “This is the great and foremost commandment. **39** “The second is like it, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’ **40** “On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”

Jesus is our Lord and our King. He sets the standards. We don’t. This is what He expects out of CFBC and every one of its members. Listen, CHRISTIAN SNOBBERY IS A SIN! You must confess it and forsake it.

TREAT EVERYONE WITH LOVE AND RESPECT!

This truth must become a core value for you and this church. I say this because of the Lord’s regulation, the pertinent illustration, the reasonable

September 6, 2026

CFBC... "Real Faith For A Real World" (James)

justification, and the guiding proclamation. Finally, I want you to receive . . .

5. THE STRONG MOTIVATION

James 2:12–13... So speak and so act (imperatives) as those who are to be judged by *the* law of liberty. 13 For judgment *will be* merciless to one who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.

Everyone will be judged by God. For those who reject Jesus, they will stand before Him at the White Throne Judgment where they will receive their final condemnation. To hell they will go for eternity.

For those who receive Jesus, they will appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ where their words, actions, and motives will be judged to determine their rewards in heaven along with their responsibility in the Lord's eternal kingdom.

2 Corinthians 5:10... For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

September 6, 2026

CFBC... "Real Faith For A Real World" (James)

Obedience opens the door to the freedom to experience the abundant life Christ offers to the believer. Sadly, we often fail to speak and act the way believers should speak and act. Thank the Lord that James goes ahead and points to God's mercy which He makes available to those who show mercy to others!

CONCLUSION

Here's the crux of the matter for us today . . .

TREAT EVERYONE WITH LOVE AND RESPECT!

This is a credible challenge for all of us. I say this because of . . .

1. THE LORD'S REGULATION (1)

2. THE PERTINENT ILLUSTRATION (2-4)

3. THE REASONABLE JUSTIFICATION (5-7)

4. THE GUIDING PROCLAMATION (8-11)

5. THE STRONG MOTIVATION (12-13)

September 6, 2026

CFBC... "Real Faith For A Real World" (James)

Do you have some Christian snobbery in you? Ask the Holy Spirit to examine your heart. Confess and forsake your sin!

This passage ends with a reference to God's mercy. This is so important for the sinner who has not received Jesus as Savior and Lord. You need the mercy and grace of God more than you need the next breath. Turn from your sins and place your faith in Christ alone!

Believe me. I'm not being a Christian snob when I tell you that Jesus is your only hope!