



# **VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN MINISTRY**

*Weekly Bible Study - 01:07:2009*

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## **STUDY 22: THE LIFE OF OBEDIENCE**

James 2:5-13

In the last study we saw the objection of James to two irreconcilable standards (James 2:1; Matthew 6:24) – the attempt to mix God's word with the ways of the world by any individual professing faith in the Lord Jesus. The way of the world disregards the poor while cultivating the favour of the rich, which results in partiality (respect of persons). Guarding against partiality (James 2:9) in every human situation is adequately stipulated in God's word and demands genuine obedience (James 1:25; Psalms 19:7).

### **A BELIEVER IS SUBJECT TO THE ROYAL LAW**

James 2:8-9; Leviticus 19:15,18; Romans 13:8-9; Galatians 5:14; Ephesians 5:2; 1 John 3:4; Matthew 5:17-18.

As part of our salvation, having been ushered into membership of the kingdom (James 2:5), we are under the law of the kingdom (Exodus 20). This would focus attention on our inescapable obligation and the authority which the Word of God should exercise over us. Love is referred to as the royal law because it is the law which embodies all other laws (Romans 13:8). The law of both the old and new covenants demands that believers love their neighbours. The new covenant or the only perfect law (Hebrews 8:6) is referred to here because James is writing to believers. The law of Moses was imperfect and faulty (Hebrews 7:12, 18-19, 22; 8:6-7). Any individual who lives as if s/he is above the law simply demonstrate either ignorance of divine requirements or moral shortcomings in his professed Christian experiences.

### **A BELIEVER IS SUBJECT TO THE LAW AS PROCEEDING FROM GOD**

James 2:10-11; Psalms 19:7; 1 Peter.1:14-16; Leviticus 19:2; 11 Timothy 3:16-17.

The tendency is for one to pick and choose amongst the word of God, and to do those things which temperamentally suits one. James reminds Christians that the law is not like a heap of stones whereby we may pick some and leave others. The law is like a sheet of glass, and if it is broken it is broken. One sin is enough to damn the soul (Genesis 2:17; Romans 5:12-21). One is guilty of law breaking whether he breaks one or many laws (James 2:11). The law is one great whole, because it proceeds from the single Lawgiver. "He who said----- said also" (James 2:11).

Every law proceeds equally from the mind, character and will of GOD. Therefore every law belongs to the great unity of the divine nature (II Peter 1:3-4). The Word of God is not a ladder by which the unsaved climbs up into salvation, but is the pattern of life which God gives to a redeemed people. He gives it as a reflection of His own nature so that believers lives may reflect His holiness. He has given us His Word, we cannot pick or choose.

Submission to the totality of the Word of God is a manifestation of genuine Christian experience.

**Your Spiritual Welfare Is Our Concern**

## **A BELIEVER IS SUBJECT TO THE JUDGEMENT OF THE LAW**

James 2:12-13; Romans 2:16, 14:10-12; 2 Corinthians 5:9-11.

Concerning this sobering topic, James highlights the following:

- (i) **A judgement before which we are without excuse (v12).** When we stand before the judgement seat of Christ we are judged by what James calls the second time, the law of liberty (James 1:25). It means the law which, in Christ, conveys along with its commands the liberty of obedience to those who obey it. For instance "Thou shalt **not** steal" now means "Thou **shalt** not steal" to a believer. What formerly had a condemning precept (2 Corinthians 3:7,9) now becomes a life-giving (Romans 8:2) promise: "thou **shalt** not steal". So in Christ the precepts of the law become promises to the believer, bringing the liberty of obedience. How then can we stand before God and confess that we have failed, when He shall say, "But I made it possible for you to obey" (Galatians 3:12; Romans 3:27 and Galatians 5:1).
- (ii) **Judged on the matter of respect of persons (v13a).** The teaching of Jesus is here re-echoed (Matthew 18:35). Without a merciful disposition towards others we can neither realistically seek or effectively receive God's mercy for ourselves (Matthew 6:12,14-15). However, the believer who has received mercy (Ephesians 2:8-9) and shows mercy will rejoice (v13b) because of obedience to God's word (Mt 5:7).