

# Judged by the Law of Liberty

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: James 2:12-13

James said we will be “judged by the law of liberty” or “the law that gives freedom” (NIV). This should affect how we “speak” and “act.” So what does this mean? What is the “law of liberty”? How does recognizing this affect our lives? And how does this impact our view of others?

## What Is the Law of Liberty?

- It is the law by which we will be judged – the words of Christ (John 12:48); the gospel (Romans 2:16)
- It is what we are to DO (James 1:25, 22)
- This “liberty” is not the freedom to do whatever WE want (1 Peter 2:16; Galatians 5:13) – we are under the authority of Christ (Matthew 28:18), so we must do what He commanded (Matthew 28:19-20)
- What we have been freed from – the bondage of sin (John 8:34-36; Romans 6:18); the punishment for sin (Romans 6:23; Hebrews 2:14-15); any obligation to submit to another law in religious matters (Colossians 2:20-23)

## How We Speak and Act

- Do what the word of God teaches (James 1:22) – this requires humility (James 1:21); it also requires us to study to know what is required of us (2 Timothy 2:15; Acts 17:11)
- Point people to Christ’s perfect standard (Philippians 2:15-16) – we want them to follow God, not us (1 Thessalonians 2:13)
- Refuse to pass judgment on matters of opinion (Romans 14:1-4) – this involves anything beyond what God has revealed; we might give counsel (cf. 1 Corinthians 7:25-26), but we must recognize the difference between God’s wisdom and ours
- Speak out against those who would bring others into bondage (Galatians 2:3-5)

## Showing Mercy to Others

- Recognizing that we will be judged by the law of liberty should lead us to show mercy to others – mercy is not a tolerance of sin (Jude 22-23); instead, we give others space to grow, improve, or correct before immediately condemning them
- Remember God’s mercy for us (Ephesians 2:4-5) – this gives us time to repent (Romans 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9); mercy involves an expectation of repentance; sin will be punished, not tolerated forever (Romans 2:5-8)
- Remember that we cannot judge others in the place of God (James 4:11-12) – we must not judge according to our standard (cf. Matthew 15:8-9); we must not judge according

to appearance (John 7:24; cf. James 2:1-4); we cannot know the hearts of others (1 Corinthians 2:11), so we judge based on their fruits (Matthew 7:15-20)

- This should produce humility in us – “every knee will bow” before Him (Philippians 2:10); we need to make sure we are right before turning our attention to others (Matthew 7:1-5); it is easy to see the sins of others, but be blind to our own sins (cf. 2 Samuel 12:1-7, 13)

## **Conclusion**

- We will be judged by the law of liberty – this is the law of Christ
- We need to make sure we are following it as we should
- We should teach and encourage others to do the same – point them to Christ and His standard, not hold them to our standard; show mercy as God has shown us, not to tolerate sin but to patiently lead others to repentance