

# How We Are to Speak and Act

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: James 2:12

In our text, James talked about being “judged by the law of liberty.” This is not liberty to do as we please, it is the freedom from sin and any obligation to follow any law over Christ’s. Christ still has authority over us. God will judge us based upon how we have spoken and acted according to His law. What are we to do? In this lesson, we will focus on what James described in his letter.

## How We Are to Speak

- Recognizing our accountability before God (James 3:1) – this “stricter judgment” is not just from God, it also includes higher scrutiny from others; but we will be judged by our words (Matthew 12:36); we must be careful what we say (Ephesians 4:29) and what we teach (1 Peter 4:11; 3:15)
- From a pure heart (James 3:5-8) – James warned that we cannot tame the tongue; yet we are to control our speech (James 3:9-12); we do this by purifying our hearts (Matthew 12:34); we must bridle our tongue (James 1:26) and use it as God wants us to use it
- With clarity and consistency (James 5:12) – we should not have to swear or take oaths (Matthew 5:33-37); we should always tell the truth and be honest so people can trust what we have to say (Proverbs 20:6)
- In prayer (James 5:13-16) – in our suffering (Philippians 4:6-7); for one another (James 5:16); for forgiveness (Matthew 6:12); pray while fully trusting in God (James 1:5-8), knowing that He can do beyond what we think (Ephesians 3:20; cf. 1 John 5:14-15)

## How We Are to Act

- As doers of the word (James 1:22) – the word must be implanted in our hearts (James 1:21); then we must put it into practice (Colossians 3:17; Matthew 28:19-20); this will cause us to act in wisdom (James 3:13, 17-18)
- According to our faith (James 2:17-18) – it is not enough to claim to have faith; our works must prove it; even the demons believed, but that alone is not enough to please God (James 2:19); a faith without works is a dead faith (James 2:26); we are justified by works (James 2:24)
- In a way that helps others (James 2:15-17) – this can include helping those with physical needs (James 1:27); it can also include helping those with spiritual needs (James 5:19-20)
- With the understanding that life is short (James 4:13-17) – it is good to make plans, but not to forget God; we may never accomplish what we plan to do (cf. Luke 12:16-20); we need to be ready for judgment (Hebrews 9:27; John 12:48)

## **Behaviors to Avoid**

- Following after our own lusts (James 1:13-16) – this leads to sin, which leads to death (cf. Romans 6:23); we must learn to deny self (Luke 9:23-24); we must resist the devil (James 4:7), and we can do this (1 Corinthians 10:13)
- Showing partiality (James 2:1-4) – all are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27); showing partiality is a violation of the law (James 2:9); it is a problem just like some “bigger” sins (James 2:10-11)
- Making ourselves a friend of the world (James 4:4) – this makes us an enemy of God; we do this by giving in to temptation (1 John 2:15-16) and focusing on material things (Matthew 6:24)

## **Conclusion**

- This lesson was not meant to be an exhaustive study of the book of James
- There are also other points we could make from other passages in the Bible
- However, this gives us a picture of how we are to speak and act
- Why is this important? – because God will judge us; we need to be prepared for this