

## **James 2:1-10, (11-13), 14-17<sup>vi</sup>**

My brothers and sisters, do you with your acts of favoritism really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ? For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "Have a seat here, please," while to the one who is poor you say, "Stand there," or, "Sit at my feet," have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you? You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. [For the one who said, "You shall not commit adultery," also said, "You shall not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery but if you murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty. For judgment will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.]

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill," and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

---

<sup>vi</sup> **About the Second Reading: James 2:1-10, (11-13), 14-17**

James here focuses on favoritism shown to the rich and on the relationship of faith and works. God regards all people as equal (Job 34:19) and so should we. This is consistent with God's special concern for the poor, a major theme in the Old and New Testaments. The early Church was composed mostly of the poor.

In looking at the section on faith and works, keep in mind that James and Paul use the word faith in different ways: James means intellectual assent to theological statements; Paul means a total loving relationship with God. Thus James's "works" are the practical counterpart of Paul's "fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5:22-23), the result of "faith working through love" (Galatians 5:6). James points out that living faith is demonstrated by works.