

**Read: James 2:1-13**

## The Royal Law

### **James 2:8-9**

If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing right. But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers.

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Many of you hearing this devotion have recently started a new school year. One of the most popular questions students are asked at the beginning of a new school year is, “What was your favorite memory from summer?” Your favorite memory might have been a vacation with your family, winning a baseball/softball tournament, not having homework, or just playing with friends. In the Bible, God doesn’t command us to not have a favorite summer memory or a favorite flavor of ice cream, but he does warn us against the sin of favoritism. When we unfairly treat some people better than others, we are showing favoritism.

During James’ time, favoritism was a real problem in the church. The church members were giving much more respect and attention to church members who were rich than those who were poor. It’s the temptation to value members who give the most money, volunteer the most time, or are the most talented.

Jesus tells us that there is no place for favoritism in the life of a believer—ever. It is a sin to treat one person better than another person because of what they look like, how much money they have, or what that person can do for us. To help guide us from falling into the sin of favoritism, God’s Word gives us what is called the “royal law” in our reading, “Love your neighbor as yourself.” It is much better to humbly show love and kindness to all people than to use others for our personal gain.

How blessed we are that Jesus doesn’t offer his grace and love only to those who can help him out. As sinful people who enter this world separated from God, we have nothing to offer him. Yet, he showed no favoritism. He died on the cross to save all people, not just some people. May we follow the example of Jesus by showing love and respect to all people and by sharing the good news of the Gospel with everyone we meet!

*The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.*

### **Questions for the Younger Children**

- What was your favorite memory from summer?
- What is your favorite story about Jesus in the Bible?

### **Questions for Elementary Age Children**

- What are ways that students show favoritism at school?
- How does the royal law “Love your neighbor as yourself” help us fight the sin of favoritism?

### **Questions for Middle School and Above**

- Have you ever been treated unfairly by another person because of what you look like or because of who you are? How did that make you feel?
- Think of a classmate who is affected by the results of favoritism and come up with some ways you can show them kindness.

### **Closing Prayer:**

Dear Lord, help us to stand strong against the temptation to show favoritism. We thank you for the undeserved love you showed all people by dying on the cross. Lead us to follow your example and to love our neighbor as ourselves. Amen.