

The ***RICHES*** OF GRACE

"hath appeared to all men." Titus 2:11

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THE ROYAL LAW

If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:
James 2:8

+ Law of Christ +

The Royal Law, the perfect Law of Liberty, is the law of God or the Law of Christ. This law was binding on those to whom James wrote to (vs. 8), and according to **verses 9-13**, every Christian will be judged by the law of liberty because it is God's unchanging standard of conduct, as one writer clearly states. This is God's Holy Law and it should be the desire of every believer to know what this law is and to follow it. May we as Christians love God's Word and submit ourselves to its precepts. Amen.

"But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

James 1:25

"So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty."

James 2:12

In this brief article, we will consider the meaning of the Royal Law and also the fulfilling and breaking of it.

THE MEANING OF THE ROYAL LAW

The heart of this law is love, for in **James 2:8**, we are told to "*Love thy neighbor as thyself.*" The Royal Law is the supreme law of our Great King (Jesus) which is love. It comes from a King and is the standard of His kingdom. This law originated in the Royal court of Heaven. It is the law of God or the law of Christ. This law governs the kingdom and reveals God's love, holiness, and His perfect will. The word royal is used to show its preeminence and importance, for it speaks of its excellence and majesty. This royal law is taken from the Old Testament Scripture in **Leviticus 19:18**, "*Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.*" The royal law is given to a royal people in **I Peter 2:9**, "*But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.*" The church is a royal family and we have been made kings and priests (**Revelation 1:5-6; Revelation 5:9-10**). This was true of God's covenant people in the Old Testament also (**Exodus 19:5-6**). This royal law is called the law of liberty in **James 2:12**, and the perfect law of liberty in **James 1:25**, showing our freedom from the slavery and bondage of sin. We are free now to serve our King and Lord. Also, in **James 4:12**, there is only one lawgiver and we are to submit to Him; "*There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?*" Please keep in mind, we are not without law, but are under the law of God and Christ and are to keep His commandments (**I Corinthians 9:21; Galatians 6:2; Romans 3:31; 13:10; John 14:15, 23; 15:10, 14; I Corinthians 14:37; I John 2:3-7; Matthew 28:19-20**).

According to **Matthew 22:34-40**, Jesus was asked what is the great commandment of the law. He speaks of loving God and loving our neighbor. In **verse 39**, the Lord is quoting from **Luke 19:48**. In **verse 40** he said, "*On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*" That is, the Ten Commandments are broken down into two tablets, our relationship to our God and to our neighbor. The first four of the commandments relate to God and the last six relate to our neighbor. There are many other places in Holy Scripture where we are commanded to love our neighbor as ourselves (**Romans 13:8-10; Galatians 5:14; I John 4:7-8**).

THE FULFILLING OF THE ROYAL LAW

Again in **James 2:8**, "*If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well.*" He says if ye fulfill the Royal Law ye do well, and clearly proclaims the Royal Law as, "*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*" Our neighbor is anyone God brings across our path, who is in need of help. This is clearly seen in the story of the Good Samaritan in **Luke 10:25-37**. The Lord Himself demonstrated the fulfilling of this Royal Law when he came from heaven's glory, and became our neighbor, to rescue us from perishing. The golden rule of **Matthew 7:12** also illustrated this principle, "*Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.*" In **James 2:8**, we are to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. This tells us how great this love should be, for no man ever hated his own flesh (**Ephesians 5:29**). We already love ourselves, it is natural to do so. Do we seek the good of all men as we seek the good of ourselves? We must ask our self this question. Please keep in mind, the love of God and of neighbor is the fruit of regeneration. God has called upon the Christian to fulfill the Royal Law, anything less is a violation of Holy Scripture. In **James 2:8**, we are told that it is according to the Scripture. When we fulfill this law, we are being obedient to God and His Word.

THE BREAKING OF THE ROYAL LAW

In **James 2:9-13**, to have respect of persons is to commit sin, that is, to show favoritism, partiality, or to be prejudiced based upon appearance such as race, color of skin, culture, nationality, wealth, education, etc. It is a grievous sin and is against the very nature of God (**Acts 10:34**). This is clearly illustrated in **James 2:1-7**, where He deals with the rich and poor in the church. In **verse 10**, the law is one seamless garment and we cannot pick and choose the part we want to obey and ignore the rest. According to **verse 11**, the sin of favoritism, murder, and adultery is all a part of the same law showing us that it is sinful. In **verse 12**, both our words and deeds will be brought into judgment (**Romans 14:10-12; I Corinthians 3:15-16; II Corinthians 5:10**). Now, according to **verse 13**, the one who obeys the Royal Law is delivered from retribution, but the one who does not show mercy will not receive mercy.

CONCLUSION

In **James 2:14-26**, there is a warning against the vanity of a fruitless faith. Genuine faith produces good works; we are not saved by our good works, but we are saved unto good works (**Ephesians 2:8-10**). The tree is known by its fruit and the Christian will be known by the evidence of good works. Please keep in mind; it is only by the power of the Holy Spirit, under the New Covenant, through the Gospel of Christ, that we can obey the Royal Law. The Lord has promised He would give us a new heart and a new spirit causing us to walk in His ways (**Ezekiel 36:26-27; Hebrews 8:10-13**).

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*"And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." Acts 16:31*