

The Royal Law & Faith Motivated Works - James 2:8-17

1. Can you think of a film or story from a book (or even an event in your own life) when someone was completely misjudged and turned out not to be what everyone thought? Remember, this can cut both ways - more could have been thought of someone by the end... Or possibly a lot less.

2. Why is a story like this quite compelling and even satisfying, at the finish?

3. James reminds us that whatever rushed judgements we make about someone, we will undoubtedly not have the whole picture. How had the early Christians been 'wounded' by their hasty choices about people? (see ch2 v6)

4. James points them to a radical new way of thinking, which he calls 'The Royal Law'. What is it and how far-reaching does it turn out to be? (To think about: 'who is my neighbour?' [the Good Samaritan] and 'how much do I love myself?', and 'to what degree has God bound himself by his own Royal Law?')

5. The Royal Law turns out to be Jesus' summing up of the 10 commandments. Had Jesus done away with the Old Testament gold standard and introduced a 'softer' version of God's rules for life and righteousness? Or is there a lot more to it?

6. Take just one of the 10 commandments and imagine for a moment that it could be kept. Follow to its logical conclusion how the keeping of that law would alter life / change the world. How does God's Law look now?

7. How would loving your neighbour as yourself change the world? - Really think of practical, realistic examples. If we believe this is true, are we doing it?

8. "By their fruits you shall know them" - are we challenged to be living demonstrations /sharers of the fruits of the spirit (Gal 5) with those around us and live like that before others?