

# WEEK 10

## JAMES 4:11-12

### READING PLAN

James 4:11-12  
Romans 2:1-16

Romans 14:1-13  
Matthew 7:1-5

## INTRODUCTION

One of the greatest challenges many Christians will face as they begin to grow in godliness and maturity of faith will be what to do with their words as they relate to other believers. As one grows in his faith, it becomes easier to recognize sin in his own life – but at the same time, it becomes easier to see the sin in others' lives as well. Along with that growing awareness can often come a growing sense of self-righteousness and the temptation to put others down and slander their reputation. Clearly, James is concerned with the way believers treat one another, especially as it pertains to what they say about one another (as we have seen already in 3:1-12). Here, James helps us understand how the way we judge and defame one another ultimately reveals arrogance in the way we view others, the law, ourselves, and God himself.

## REFLECTION

*<sup>11</sup>Don't speak evil against each other, dear brothers and sisters. If you criticize and judge each other, then you are criticizing and judging God's law. But your job is to obey the law, not to judge whether it applies to you. <sup>12</sup>God alone, who gave the law, is the Judge. He alone has the power to save or to destroy. So what right do you have to judge your neighbor? **JAMES 4:11-12***

What does James specifically command us not to do in v. 11? Do you think "speak evil" includes saying things that are false, true, or both?

What specific commandment did James quote in 2:8 as a summary of the whole law? How is it that speaking evil against a fellow believer violates that commandment?

In v. 11, how is it that criticizing or judging another believer is equivalent to criticizing or judging the law? (Hint: What does James say in the second half of this verse is our responsibility regarding the law?)

Read Matthew 7:1-5. Who is speaking in these verses? Whose sin should we be concerned with primarily, ours or others'? Are there any particular ways, relationships, or environments in which you tend to be more judgmental of others?

In v. 12, James writes that "God alone, who gave the law, is the Judge" – implying that there can only be one judge. What does our tendency to be judgmental of others reveal about how we view God's ability to judge?

Is James implying that we are not supposed to hold our fellow believers accountable for the sin we recognize in their lives?

In your own words, summarize what James is saying in 4:11-12.

In these verses, James appears to be ending a section of his letter that began in 3:1. Look back through the three previous sections – what was the main idea with each, and how does this section tie them all together?

- 3:1-12
- 3:13-4:3
- 4:4-10
- 4:11-12

## **IMPLICATIONS**

**WINDOWS** What does this teach me about God? How does this text show God's attributes, character, cares/concerns, tendencies, etc.? What does this reveal about what He's like and how He acts?

**MIRRORS** What does this teach me about myself? How does this text show my own attributes, character, likes/dislikes, tendencies, etc.?

**PICTURES** What does this teach me about the way God and mankind should interact? Look for ways we are to live and respond to God for his glory, our good, and the good of others. Specifically...

Starting today, how should I...think?

...feel?

...act?