

James 2:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

Analysis

For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. He who said, "Do not commit adultery" (μὴ μοιχεύεις, μὴ μοιχεύσῃς) also said, "Do not kill" (μὴ φονεύεις, μὴ φονεύσῃς). If you commit no adultery yet kill, you become a lawbreaker. James ties social sins to the Decalogue, showing that partiality violates the same God who gave the commandments.

Reformed theology sees the moral law as reflecting God's character; selective obedience insults the Lawgiver. James urges holistic submission to God's Word.

Historical Context

Jewish believers revered the Ten Commandments, yet some minimized social justice commands. James connects their favoritism to the same law forbidding murder and adultery, aligning with Jesus' Sermon on the Mount that internalizes these commands.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What commands do you prioritize while overlooking others?
2. How does remembering the Lawgiver promote consistent obedience?
3. Where do you need to bring hidden disobedience into the light?

Interlinear Text

ο γὰρ εἰπεν Μὴ μοιχεύσεις, εἰπεν καί Μὴ
G3588 For he that said not Do he that said also not
G1063 G2036 G3361 G3431 G2036 G2532 G3361

φονεύσεις εἰ δέ οὐ μοιχεύσεις, φονεύσεις δέ
Do if Now no Do Do Now
G5407 G1487 G1161 G3756 G3431 G5407 G1161

γέγονας παραβάτης νόμου
thou art become a transgressor of the law
G1096 G3848 G3551

Additional Cross-References

Romans 13:9 (Word): For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

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