

James – A Portrait of Living Faith

Memory Challenge: James Chapter 1: 1-18...

Lesson 5: Tests of Pure Religion – Impartiality Toward All (James 1:26-2:4)

In our scripture passage this morning we are given a three-fold test of pure and holy manifestation of our faith in the sight of God (1:26-27) and look at a life example to see how we fare in these tests (2:1-4).

Three Signs/Examples of Pure and Undefined Religion (1:26-27)

- I. True religion ***controls the tongue*** (v.26). angry talk, gossip and deceptive speech are leading failures of speech and can be found among believers and non-believers alike.
- II. Pure and undefined religion before God, will ***care for the poor***, chief among them being the widows and orphans in the church (v. 27a). While mankind exploits the defenseless, God protects them. Psalm 68:5: ***“He is a father to the fatherless and a defender of the widows.”*** .
- III. Holy and righteous religion before God will ***keep a man unstained or unspotted by the world***. Those who belong to God are to be characterized by moral and spiritual purity, while living **in** the world but being unstained **by** the world.

A Test of Pure Religion: Favoritism/Partiality (2:1-4)

An attribute of God that is not often discussed is His impartiality. God is absolutely impartial in His dealings with people. God states in Deut. 1:17 and John 7:24: ***“You shall not show partiality in judgment.”***

Here we have an example illustration to test our partiality. James begins with a principle or an admonition. “Do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism.” Those who are true disciples of Christ should not show partiality in their dealings with others. James suggests that faith and favoritism are incompatible.

The only favoritism that the Lord honors is that in which we show favor with humility in highly regarding others as more important than ourselves (Phil. 2:3)