

Pure Religion

Description

[RG AUDIO 102514](#)

James 1:19-27

James, the brother of our Lord, reminds the Church that holiness is more than living free from this world's sinfulness—it is evidenced by justice and acts of compassion toward the needy. “Believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism. Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, ‘Here’s a good seat for you,’ but say to the poor man, ‘You stand there’ or ‘Sit on the floor by my feet,’ have you not discriminated among yourselves?” (James 2:1b-4a)

The church must be careful to not organize events that exclude the poor. We often want events to be “self-supporting,” but in so doing, we are guilty of favoring the wealthy that can afford to attend. Practical compassion in the church means never excluding anyone from any event: “All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need” (Acts 2:44-45).

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Date Created

2014/10/25