

Caring for Widows and Orphans

Fuel Your Faith 10

January 7, 2022

Over the course of this week we have been discussing how love meets needs. God's people are characterized by kindness, compassion, loving care and mercy, as well as generosity.

Today on Fuel Your Faith, we'll take a look at a very important passage that teaches us to focus some of our efforts on those in distressful situations ... looking to help orphans and widows where we can.

I'm not sure about your experience, but for most of my life I have heard preaching and teaching on [James 1.27](#) mostly from the perspective of what it doesn't teach. I'm afraid we may have focused so much on the negative from this passage that in many cases we may wind up doing nothing. And that totally goes against the spirit inside the context in this part of James.

In our text, James has begun to emphasize that faith is much much more than a simple profession, it is the action of our faith that really counts before God. The Christian life not only involves careful observation into the Word ... like our looking into a mirror ... it involves acting on what we see.

[James 1.25](#) says, *the one who looks intently into the perfect law of freedom and perseveres in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer who works—this person will be blessed in what he does.* Note how all of this is continual ... it is a regular part of life. And listen to how he says that those who do this will be blessed.

In the next verse this is all held in contrast to the person whose religion is worthless. It may seem that all is well with their heart, but James says a sure sign of spiritual heart disease is the person who has an out of control tongue. Now this can describe a lot of problems. People can gossip, speak angry words, or malign the character of others. James insists that those life is characterized by these habits has a worthless religion. Pretty serious stuff.

And now, for our main verse today. In contrast again, James says: *Pure and undefiled religion before God the Father is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained from the world,* [James 1.27](#). What should we take away from this verse?

Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of God is to serve others with love and compassion. This fits in nicely with what Jesus said in [John 13.35](#): *by this all will know you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.*

When James says look after orphans and widows ... he is not talking about a Sunday afternoon visit ... he is speaking about exercising care on their behalf and helping them in whatever way is needed. It should be our desire to help, strengthen, and encourage them. We help orphans and widows and people in distress.

True Christianity is revealed from a pure and loving heart by the way we talk and by the way we act. It is manifested by the way we love and care for those in need, not by how we love and care for those we prefer.

Today would be a great day to go through your church directory and make a listing of all the widows and widowers. First you might be amazed at how many there are. Now, pick out one or two persons. How can you pray for them in a specific way? Would they appreciate a card or phone call or even better ... a visit? Could you prepare them a meal? What might be an event that you could invite them to go along with you? The possibilities on what you can do to serve are as plentiful as can be.

All this week we have focused on how love the motivation for serving others and meeting needs. Pure and genuine love always expresses itself in word and deed.

Thank you for listening to Fuel Your Faith. Join us again next week as we talk about how true love always shows mercy.