



# The Kingdom Perspective

## True Religion

Hello, this is Pastor Don Willeman of Christ Redeemer Church. Welcome to the Kingdom Perspective.

The New Testament writer James defines “pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God” as caring for “orphans and widows in their distress.” “Orphans and widows” is a reference to the most vulnerable in society; in the ancient world they were the “poster children” for the needy and marginalized. Thus, we as Christians are called to be most concerned for those that are most vulnerable—first, within the church, and then also outside the church. This may take some thought: who are the most physically/financially/socially vulnerable, and how can I care for them, practically?

One most basic way you can do this is through financial giving to your local church. Many churches have a benevolence or mercy fund from which they help the needy. You should contribute to this generously—above and beyond your regular giving to the church’s gospel ministry.

Now, James seems to suggest that those that have this “pure and undefiled religion” (i.e. James’s term for true understanding of the gospel) are particularly drawn to care for the neediest. Why? Because a genuine experience of the gospel brings us to a deep and true recognition of our own neediness before a holy God. We are spiritual paupers (sinners) in need of His mercy—and it is precisely His mercy that He has so freely and generously lavished on us in Jesus. Thus, experiencing His kindness makes us kind.

Something to think about from The Kingdom Perspective.

“Now concerning the collection for the saints: as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do. On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come. And when I arrive, I will send those whom you accredit by letter to carry your gift to Jerusalem.”

~ 1 Corinthians 16:1-3 (ESV)

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