

*February 9, 2020*

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## **TIME OF REFLECTION**

“Look, the insidious thing about these forms of worship...is that they are unconscious. They are default-settings. They’re the kind of worship you just gradually slip into, day after day, getting more and more selective about what you see and how you measure value without ever being fully aware that that’s what you’re doing. And the world will not discourage you from operating on your default-settings, because the world of men and money and power hums along quite nicely on the fuel of fear and contempt and frustration and craving and the worship of self. Our own present culture has harnessed these forces in ways that have yielded extraordinary wealth and comfort and personal freedom. The freedom to be lords of our own tiny skull-sized kingdoms, alone at the center of all creation.”

“The really important kind of freedom involves attention, and awareness, and discipline, and effort, and being able truly to care about other people and to sacrifice for them, over and over, in myriad petty little unsexy ways, every day. That is real freedom. The alternative is unconsciousness, the default-setting, the ‘rat race’ — the constant gnawing sense of having had and lost some infinite thing.”

~David Foster Wallace (1962-2008), American author and professor

“While clearly Jesus was preaching the good news to all, he showed throughout his ministry the particular interest in the poor and the downtrodden that God has always had. Jesus, in his incarnation, ‘moved in’ with the poor. He lived with, ate with, and associated with the socially ostracized.”

~Timothy Keller (1950-present), NYC pastor and author

“God always moves toward us. And as his servants, we do the same... Sin scatters people, grace draws us toward each other.”

~Ed Welch (1953-present), counselor and author

“I have always found that mercy bears richer fruits than strict justice.”

~Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865), 16<sup>th</sup> President of the United States

“The Gospel takes away our right forever, to discriminate between the deserving and the undeserving poor.”

~Dorothy Day (1897-1980), American journalist and social activist

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## *Worship through the Word*

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**SERMON** – “A Faith that Makes us Merciful” – *Scott Sottosanti*

**SERMON PASSAGE** – *James 2:1-13 (ESV)*

<sup>1</sup>My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. <sup>2</sup>For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, <sup>3</sup>and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, “You sit here in a good place,” while you say to the poor man, “You stand over there,” or, “Sit down at my feet,” <sup>4</sup>have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? <sup>5</sup>Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him? <sup>6</sup>But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? <sup>7</sup>Are

they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called?

<sup>8</sup>If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well. <sup>9</sup>But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. <sup>10</sup>For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it. <sup>11</sup>For he who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. <sup>12</sup>So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. <sup>13</sup>For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.