



FAITH IN ACTION Series

James 2:1-13 - Poor in Spirit, Rich in Faith!

- Last week, we saw that faith is something we do.
- Ended in vs 26 with 3-fold duty towards self, neighbour and God.
- 1) We must control our tongue - that's self-control (vs 26).
- 2) We must care for orphans and widows (vs 27a).
- 3) We must keep from being polluted by the world, in love and worship due alone to God (vs 27b).

James 2:1-7

- Vs 5-7: We must not look down on the poor or favour the rich - who are quick to exploit you (cf James 1:9-11).
- Jesus said in Matthew 5:7 - "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

"Wealth, and the power that typically travels with it, often deceive and corrupt (Matt. 13:22; Mark 4:9; 1 Tim. 6:9-10), making it harder for the rich and powerful to humble themselves in dependence on God (Mark 10:22-25). The poor, by contrast, are far more conscious of their need and thus more willing to entrust themselves to God."

Daune Litfin, *Word and Deed*, Crossway, 2012.

James 2:8-13

- Vs 8 - The Royal Law – as interpreted by Jesus, the Lord of glory (see vs 1).
- For the Jews, neighbour referred only to fellow Israelites.
- Jesus expanded it to include foreigners (Luke 10:25-37) and enemies (Matthew 5:44).
- Vs 9-11 – Breaking a part of the law = breaking all of it.
- Vs 12 – Both speaking and acting in the light of the law of liberty – of Christ.
- Vs 13 – God is merciful (Exodus 34:5-6) and that we ought to also show mercy to each other (Hosea 6:6, as Jesus taught in Matthew 5:7; Luke 6:36).
- "Mercy triumphs over judgement" – particularly on the cross.

Application

"Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Philippians 2:3-11).