

James 2

by Peter Maiden

James argues that favoritism is a serious problem that is contrary to the example of Jesus and the will of God, and that living under God's law leads to perfect freedom.

Duration: 41:12

Scripture: James 1:26 - 2:1, James 2:5, James 2:8, James 2:14, James 2:17

Topics: "James"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the issue of making distinctions and judging others with evil motives. He emphasizes the sin of inconsistency and how it can bring Christians down. The preacher gives a powerful illustration of two men entering a church, one rich and well-dressed, and the other a poor vagrant. He highlights the hypocrisy of treating the rich well and the poor poorly. The sermon also mentions how the rich were mistreating the poor Christians, yet the Christians were still favoring the rich. The preacher concludes by emphasizing the importance of genuine faith, which includes a real concern for those in need.

Transcript

Chapter 2 of James from the New International Version. My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don't show favoritism. Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in shabby 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 and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my dear brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? But you have insulted the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? Are they not the ones who are slandering the noble name of him to whom you belong? If you really keep the royal law found in scripture, love your neighbor as yourself, you are doing right. But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as law breakers.

For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. For he who said do not commit adultery also said do not murder. If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a law breaker.

Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment. What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food.

If one of you says to him, girl I wish you well, keep warm and well fed, but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But what someone will say, you have faith, I have deeds. Show me your faith without deeds and I will show you my faith by what I do.

You believe that there is one God, good. Even the devils believe that and shudder. You foolish men, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that his faith and his actions were working together and his faith was made complete by what he did.

And the scripture was fulfilled that says Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness and he was called God's friend. You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone. In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

And may God help us to understand that very challenging passage of scripture. Now if you'd like to turn back to chapter one just for a quick review of what we looked at last night so that you get the context for this second chapter. We looked for a few moments at the background of the epistle and we came to the opinion that it was James the natural brother of our Lord Jesus Christ who was the author of this little epistle.

And James was very probably a late convert to the Messiah. It seems from 1 Corinthians chapter 15 that it wasn't until the resurrection appearances of our Lord that James was finally convinced that his natural brother Jesus was in fact the Messiah. But if he was a late convert then he certainly rose to a position of great prominence in the church very very quickly and soon became the recognized leader of the main congregation in the early days of the church, the congregation at Jerusalem.

From that position of importance and authority James wrote this letter. It's not a letter to an individual Christian or even to an individual church. It's a letter for all Christians.

It was a circular letter. It would be read by one fellowship and then passed on to the next. And I said last night that it seems obvious that James had perceived that there were great difficulties ahead for Christians and in fact that was to be the case.

James himself the author would be martyred within 18 months of writing the letter. The city of Jerusalem would be destroyed 10 years later in the great destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Massive problems were ahead for these early Christians.

James perceives this and so he writes his letter to prepare Christians for suffering. And we saw in the first chapter James showing how we should appropriate difficulties, how we should handle suffering. So instead of destroying our faith it actually proves to be a blessing in our experience.

And then we get to the real key of the whole book in the last two verses of chapter one. Because James moves to his central theme, the theme of genuine faith. What is really important in days of difficulty? Well of course the answer is, is my faith genuine? If I have real faith in God then whatever the difficulty, whatever the problems, that faith will be standing firm.

But if my faith is unreal, if it's just superficial, then the day of difficulty will find me out. And so throughout this epistle you'll see James challenging the Christians. I want you to check your faith.

I want you to examine your faith. Is it the real article? And when the day of difficulty comes will your faith endure? So James in the last two verses gives us three great proofs of genuine faith. One is the control of the tongue in verse 26 of chapter one.

And secondly verse 27, concern for those who are in need such as the widows and the orphans. And thirdly in the same verse, a desire for holiness, keeping oneself from being polluted by the world. Now we're going to see tonight and in the next two evenings that what James does in the next three chapters is take in each chapter one of these proofs and he explains exactly what he means.

And so tonight we're going to see from chapter two that if we are genuine Christians meeting here in Sandhills Lane, what do you call it now? Brethren Church, isn't it? That's that right? Yes. They're all confused. Used to be the Gospel Hall, didn't it? Sandhills Lane Brethren Church.

It was never the Gospel Hall somebody tells me. Well wherever we are, meeting here this evening is our faith genuine? If it is, well one proof is going to be a real concern for those who are in need. Now the way James makes his point is very very simple.

First of all, he gives us in the first seven verses a very challenging illustration. And then from verse 14 to verse 26 he gives us a very challenging doctrine. And we're going to look at those two things.

First of all, the challenging illustration. It's actually contained in verses two and three and the remainder of the first section is an explanation of the illustration. The illustration itself is very much a real life situation.

I don't know about you, but I find it hurts just to read it. It's the old story of course of judging people on face value. Looking at the outward appearance.

Judging people by the standards of the world. Treating rich and powerful people well simply because they are rich and powerful. And poor people poorly simply because they are poor.

Says James, imagine that two men were to walk into your assembly. One has a pinstripe suit, a rolled umbrella and a Schofield Bible under his arm. The other is a vagrant.

He's just walked in off the street. You can smell him long before he enters the doorway. What do you do? You go across to the man with the pinstripe suit and say, good evening brother.

Please come and sit here right beside me. And then keeping your distance, you point to the far corner of the church and you say to the vagrant, look there's a really comfortable seat right over there. If you do, what are you guilty of? Well look at verse four.

James says, you have made distinctions among yourselves. You have become judges with evil motives. Now the New English Bible is slightly more accurate there I think.

This is how it translates it. Do you not see that you are inconsistent? And that's the great key. You are inconsistent and you're judging by false standards.

The real point of the illustration is the point of inconsistency. It takes us back to chapter one and verse six, doesn't it? That graphic illustration of the surf of the sea. You remember from last night, one moment it's beating against the rock as though it was going to destroy the rock.

But then the tide changes and the sea goes back. The dread sin of inconsistency which so often brings us down as Christians. Well, having given us the illustration, James then gives us four very, very powerful arguments against behaving in this way.

Look at them with me. First of all, if you behave in this way, says James, you're going absolutely against the example of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is what he says in verse one.

My brothers, as believers, or if you are believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don't show favoritism. Now I think you can see what I mean here when I said that in this epistle, James is challenging the believers. Is your faith real? What he's really saying in verse one is this.

How can you say you're a Christian, a follower of our glorious Lord, who though he was rich, became poor? How can you say you're a follower of such a man and have such attitudes towards the poor? It's true of our Lord, isn't it? That he gave his life to the needy. Jesus was concerned for the weak in society. You remember how he said, those who are whole have no need of a physician.

I am looking for those who sense their sickness, who know their need. Right from the commencement of his ministry, Jesus identified himself with the poor. You remember his message in the synagogue, quoting from the prophet Isaiah, the spirit of the Lord is upon me to bring good news to the poor.

Throughout his ministry, Jesus identified himself with the lowly. It was the common people who heard him gladly. He has legion.

He's kept chained under guard in the tombs. No man can handle him. He's a maniac.

And he's exactly the kind of person who draws the attention and the sympathy and the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. All right, says James, you're a follower of this man. You're a Christian.

You're following Christ, who though he was rich, became poor. Now you can't distinguish between people in the way I've suggested in the illustration. That's his first argument.

His second argument is as follows. If you distinguish between people in this way, you're not only going contrary to the example of the Lord Jesus, but you're going contrary to your own experience and to the will of God. Look at verses five and six.

In these verses, James is really saying, if God had had your attitude in the sphere of salvation, you would have been forever damned. And that's true, isn't it? It was when we were without strength that Christ died for the ungodly. It was when we were helpless and without hope that God moved in to save us.

So how can we, who have been delivered from such a position of utter destitution, now turn around and be respecter of persons, treat the poor and the rich in a different way? To do so would be to go against our own experience. But furthermore, it would be to go against the will of God. Though God has not exclusively limited his choice in history to the poor, it's a matter of history that the poor are normally God's

first choice.

Remember Mary's song, Luke 1, 52. He has put down the mighty from their seats. He has exalted them who are of low degree.

You remember how Paul underlined that in 1 Corinthians chapter 1. He said to the Corinthians, you see your calling, brethren. There are not many wise according to the flesh. There are not many noble.

God has chosen the foolish things in the eyes of the world to shame the wise. He has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong. The base things of the world, God has chosen.

The things that are not, he has made to nullify the things that are so that no man can boast in his presence. Thomas Menton, in his great commentary on James, writes the following. The first choice that God made in the world was of poor men.

Therefore, we often read that the poor received the gospel. Not only poor in spirit, the poor in purse. God chose fishermen to preach the gospel.

He chose poor people to receive it. Only very few were one who were of any rank and quality in the eyes of the world. This was partly that we might not think that the wonderful increase in the spread of the gospel was due to the advantages of human power.

So, to discriminate between the rich and the poor in the way the illustration suggests is not only to go against the example of Jesus, but it's to go against your own experience, and it's to go against the will of God in history. And then, fourthly, James argues that it's total madness to treat the rich and the poor in this way. This is what he says in the second half of verse 6 and verse 7. He says, the very people whom you are flattering, the rich, are the people who are actually dragging you into court.

Now, you can see more of this in chapter 5. If you'd just like to flick over and read verse 4, you'll see what the rich were doing in these days to the poor. James says, behold, the pay of the labourers who mowed your fields and which has been withheld by you cries out against you. Then, verse 6, you have condemned, he says, to the rich.

You have put to death the righteous men because he does not resist you. This is what the rich were doing to the Christians, and yet the Christians were treating the rich in a manner much better and giving far more position to the rich than they were to the poor. It's total folly to do this, says James.

Now, it's obvious from the Acts of the Apostles that the rich often found it in their interests to oppress the early Christians. For example, in Acts 4, in the first three verses, you read that it was the rich Sadducees who laid their hands on Peter and John. Acts 13, it's the chief men of the city who stir up persecution against Paul and Barnabas.

And, of course, the spread of Christianity led to a decline in prophets in certain industries. You can imagine the anger of the owner of the slave girls with the spirit of divination in Acts chapter 16 when Paul delivered her from that evil demon. You can imagine the anger of the silversmiths of Acts 19 as their prophets were destroyed because no longer was there any worship of Artemus, the god of whom they were making silver effigies.

And these were the very people whom these Christians were giving special honor and respect to. Says James, you're not only going against the example of Jesus, you're not only going against your own experience, you're not only going against the will of God, but you're doing something absolutely foolish. I think it's important to see here that James is not just suggesting tit for tat.

He's not saying they are oppressing you, so you oppress them. Not at all. He's already shown that all flattery is wrong.

It's inconsistent. He's merely adding now that in that particular position, it's utter folly as well. And then, fourthly, his final argument contained in verses 8 to 13 is that their actions in treating the poor in this way is against the law of God.

This is the most basic argument of all. We should not be respecters of persons because to be so is against the law of God. That law, he refers to in verse 8 as the royal law.

It's the law that we must love our neighbor as ourselves. Why does he call it the royal law? He calls it the royal law because it was given by the king of kings. And it's the law which rules in this king's kingdom.

The citizenship of heaven is a kingdom where this law rules. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. So says James.

If you're a Christian and you've become a citizen of the kingdom of heaven, how can you live contrary to the very law which rules the kingdom you claim to be a member of? So there's the challenging illustration. You mustn't distinguish between the rich and the poor in this way because it's against the example of Jesus. It's against your own experience.

It's against how God has worked in history. It's totally foolish and it's utterly contrary to the royal law of the kingdom of heaven. Now before we look at the challenging doctrine, just look at verse 10.

Because here James deals with one possible excuse before it arises. It's a well-known verse. We often use it in gospel preaching.

Whoever keeps the whole law, says James, and yet just offends in one point, he has become guilty of everything. You see, James is seeing that someone might try and excuse themselves. They might say something like this.

Well, we all have our strong points, don't we? And we all have our weak points. We can't be perfect, can we? We can't keep the whole law. And it just happens that I fail in this matter of caring for the poor.

I find the poor so difficult to deal with. I was talking to a lady like this a few months ago. She looked me in the face and she said, you know, it's my upbringing.

I'm different from these people. I just can't relate to the poor. I don't feel any concern for them.

It must be my upbringing. And she was trying to excuse herself. She was saying she had strong points and weak points.

And this was one of her weak points. I says, James, the law isn't like that at all. I think Machia's illustration is magnificent.

He says the law is not like a heap of stones. You don't pick up some and leave others. He said the law is like a sheet of glass.

If it's broken, it's shattered. That's the law of God, isn't it? You can't pick and choose the law as Christians you're going to live under. You either accept the whole of God's law or you offend in every point.

And it's a solemn thing to realize as verses 12 and 13 show that the Christian is subject to judgment by the law. Now this is important and it's often misunderstood and neglected. We rejoice, of course, that we're not going to be condemned by the law.

There's no condemnation. We are in Christ Jesus. But every one of us is going to stand before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ.

That verse was not written for the non-Christian. It was written for the Christian. Every one of us is going to stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

The law of God will be there. The issue will be, since we came to know Jesus Christ, have we lived under his law? Have we fulfilled his law? To do so, James argues, leads to perfect freedom. That's right, isn't it? If you get a new machine, what do you do? If you have any sense, you look for the instructions.

If you want that machine to operate effectively, you look after it according to the instructions. And God made you and God made me. And if you want to really live in this world, what do you do? You get the maker's instructions.

And the maker's instructions are the law of God. If you want to know life, if you want to know joy, if you want to know true freedom, says James, get the law of God. Live under it.

You'll glorify your father and you'll know the perfect freedom because that's how God intended your life to be lived. Well then, that's the challenging illustration. And I think you'll agree, it really is extremely challenging.

But let's move on to the challenging doctrine. It's in the second half of the chapter, commencing with verse 14. And it's the doctrine of true faith.

Verse 24 is, at first reading, an extremely startling verse, isn't it? You see, says James, a person is justified by what he does, the authorized version, I think, has by works and not by faith alone. Now, we have to admit that at first reading, it seems to be directly contrary to other scriptures. Let me just quote Romans 3.28 to you.

Paul says, we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. And some people would say this is clearly contrary. James says a person is justified by works.

Paul says a man is justified by faith without works. And it was this difficulty which caused Martin Luther and many of the early reformers to want to rip the epistle of James out of their Bible completely. As they were emerging from the darkness of Catholicism, and they'd just come to realize the marvelous truth of justification by faith alone, they just couldn't understand what James was saying.

And no one can blame them when you consider from whence they came. Now, I think much of the confusion has arisen from the last phrase of verse 14. It's the verse or the phrase which in the authorized version is translated, can faith save him? This is the fundamental question of the chapter.

And if we're honest, James seems to be saying, no, faith cannot save him. There must be works as well. But the true translation of the question which James is asking immediately deals with the problem.

The question is not, can faith save him? But the question is, can that faith save him? That's how the revised version has it and the New English Bible has it. Can that faith save him? The RSV translates it, can his faith save him? The New English Bible, can such faith save him? So the question is not, can faith save a man? The question is, can such faith, which doesn't produce works, save a man? And the answer of the chapter is quite obviously and definitely no. Now, the Lord Jesus Christ taught this as well, didn't he? The Lord Jesus said it's by their fruits that you know the true Christian.

Even the Apostle Paul taught the same truth. You remember 1 Corinthians 13 verse 2. He's speaking there of faith which can remove mountains. And he says a man can have that kind of faith but if he doesn't have love, it's absolutely worthless.

So after posing the question, James proceeds to give the answer. And he does this by using a number of examples. First of all, he gives us two examples of faith which is obviously not genuine.

The first example is in verses 15 and 16. A brother is naked and hungry and a Christian goes up to meet him and says, good afternoon brother. Please go and get warm and have a good meal.

And yet the Christian doesn't do anything to help him. Is that a sign of a man with genuine faith, says James? And the answer is, of course not. Verse 17, faith if it has no works is dead.

Now it's vital that we in the body of Christ do not sidestep the challenge of this illustration in verses 15 and 16. Faith exposes its true nature. Faith can truly be seen not by our words.

Don't judge my Christian life by what I'm saying to you from this pulpit. Faith exposes its true nature, not by our words, not by our testimonies, not by our smiling faces or our hearty singing or our attendance at assembly meetings. Faith, says James, exposes itself by its reaction to human need.

When a Christian meets someone in need, what does he do? You can see his faith by what he does. If you find James challenging, then the apostle John is going to absolutely blow your mind, as our American friends like to say. Listen to 1 John 4 17.

Whoever has this world's goods and sees his brother in need and his heart doesn't go out to him, how dwells the love of God within that man? Now you remember that all of this is a commentary on that statement at the end of chapter 1. This is pure religion. This is undefiled, undiluted, genuine religion before God. It's that religion which produces concern for the widows, for the orphans, for the needy in our society.

If faith does not result in such compassionate action, then we have to question whether it's genuine. In a world of one billion hungry people, this is an enormous challenge for 20th century Christians. I wonder if you've read Ronald Sider's penetrating book, Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger, and let's realize every one of us in the Western world is rich.

You might not feel it, but in terms of world economic position, we in the West are rich. In his book he presents the facts of our one billion hungry neighbors. David Watson, in the forward to his book, writes the following.

Certainly there are numerous issues that call for our attention at the present time. There's confusion amongst evangelicals over basic doctrines, over questions of church government, over the role of women in the church, over the unity of the church, over the place of spiritual gifts, over methods of evangelism. These and many other matters hammer insistently on the doors of the church.

Nevertheless, whilst we continue to have our internal theological dialogue within our ranks, the harsh inescapable fact is this. Every day while we talk, 500 million men, women, and children throughout the world are literally starving, and double that number are badly undernourished. It's a challenge which every evangelical Christian must face, because James says, if your faith is genuine, and you see your brother in need, and you do not respond, then something has gone sadly wrong.

That then is the first example of spurious faith. Look at the second much more briefly in verse 19. It shows how utterly foolish it is to believe that a faith which does not result in works will ever save a man.

What does James say? He says, even the demons have such faith. Yes, the devil has faith. He believes in God, but he trembles.

Now there in passing is another evidence of genuine faith, and that is peace. The demons believe, but they shudder. The Christian believes, and a glorious peace floods into his life.

Romans 5.1, therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. So those are the two illustrations of spurious faith. Let's have a look in closing at two illustrations of genuine faith.

The first is the faith of Abraham, recorded in verses 21 to 24. And in this passage, you can see further reasons for the confusion and the charges of contradiction which have raged over the years concerning the teaching of Paul and James. Let's just turn back to Romans chapter 4 for a moment, and to verses 20 to 22, Romans chapter 4. If you look at those verses, you'll see that when Abraham was given the promise concerning a son to be born to him through his wife Sarah, even though she was barren, Paul says, Abraham staggered not at God's promise, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God.

And then look at verse 22. Therefore, it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now that's the argument of the apostle Paul.

Abraham believed the word of God concerning a child, even though all the signs were against it. And because he believed God's word, Paul says he was justified. Now let's just look back to verses 2 and 3 of the same chapter, Romans 4. If Abraham was justified by works, he has something to glory about.

But not before God, because what does the scripture say? Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. So Paul is absolutely adamant. Abraham has nothing to boast about.

There were no works involved whatsoever. It was sheer faith which justified Abraham. And then you come to James, and what do you find? Well, of course, he takes exactly the same example to prove that a man is justified by works.

He too takes the example of Abraham. He says, So you get the problem. I hope you're clear.

Paul says, look at Abraham. He's an example of justification by faith. James says, look at Abraham.

He's an example of justification by works. It seems to be contradictory, doesn't it? But of course, it isn't in any sense. What you have to realize is that Paul and James are talking about different incidents.

Paul is talking about Abraham believing the promise of God concerning a child. James says, Abraham took that very child whom God had promised, and he was willing to sacrifice him. James is saying we can only see that the faith of Abraham was genuine, because he actually took the child, and he was willing to sacrifice him.

He so believed the word of God that he was willing to sacrifice his own son, believing that God would raise him from the den. So it's not contradictory at all, is it? It's complementary. It's what James is saying throughout the second chapter.

He's saying faith will save a man, but if it's real faith, it will show itself in works, such as being willing, in Abraham's case, to sacrifice his only son. In fact, it takes us back to chapter one, doesn't it? What a crisis it must have been in Abraham's life, when God said to him, take now thy son, thine only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest, and offer him up as a burnt offering. Can you imagine the challenge? Can you imagine the pressure, the promised seed of Abraham, in whom all Abraham's desires and future, it was all in that young man.

But in the crisis, Abraham's faith stood firm. It was genuine faith, and that's all about chapter one, isn't it? Genuine faith is seen in the crisis. Then you have the second example of genuine faith, and this time we have a lady.

Rahab, verses 25 and 26. Now there's one interesting difference in this example. Mattiah explains it like this.

Abraham's faith was productive Godward. Because of his faith, he was willing to hold nothing back from God, even his own son. But Rahab's faith was productive manward.

Because of her faith, she was ready to put herself in a position of grave personal danger, in order to rescue the messengers. Whenever you come across faith in the Bible, there's always that two-way result. Faith does two things in a man.

First of all, it makes him totally available to God. If you're a man or a woman of faith, you've put your life in God's hand, and you've said, I am willing God to be taken wherever you want to take me, to do whatever you want me to do. That's faith, and that's seen in Abraham.

But faith must be more than just Godward. If you're a man or a woman of faith, then you're also willing to put yourself at personal risk for the cause of Christ. Just like Rahab, she was willing to risk her life because of the cause of God's people.

If you're a man or a woman of faith, you'll be willing to take the step of faith, willing to go into areas you may never have gone into before. You're fearful about them, but your trust is in God, and for the sake of the lost, you're willing to take such a stem. I wonder how many of us tonight are living, if we're honest, comfortable Christian lives.

We can handle our Christian life perfectly well. I sometimes feel that that's why our prayer meetings aren't throbbing with life very often, because we can handle everything we're doing. We've been doing it for years, and we've got into the way of it, and there's no real sense of needing God.

Many of the assembly in Carlisle would tell you of how our fellowship was greatly affected by the Dick Saunders crusade a few years ago. All of a sudden, the assembly was out on a limb. It had £9,000 to find for this crusade, on top of its normal expenditures.

It had hired a huge tent. Would the people come, or would it be the biggest flop imaginable? And as the day drew near, the fervency in the prayer meeting grew. I wonder if we're living too comfortably.

I wonder if God is not saying to us, why don't you take a step out for me? A step into an area you might not be sure about. You wonder if you'll survive. Will you have the ability? Will you have the courage? Will you have the stickability? God says, I want you to trust me.

I want you to put your reputation on the line. I want you to put yourself at risk for the cause of my people. That's faith, isn't it? Making yourself totally available to God, as Abraham did.

But like Raham, being willing to put yourself at risk for the cause of God's kingdom. That's genuine faith. If you're a real Christian, says James, it's going to be seen in a very, very practical way.

It's not just meetings. It's not just prayer. It's not just Bible study.

All those three things are essential. But Christianity is much more than that. It's a very, very practical thing.

The Christian is a man or a woman with both feet on this earth, in one sense. He sees a world in need. And his heart, inspired by the love of God, goes out to those in need.

And one consequence is that that faith results in works. It doesn't allow the man who is cold and hungry to pass by with a pat on the back and say, go on your way, brother. But where we have the resources, because of love, we respond practically, sensibly, to meet the needs of the person in difficulty.

That's the first proof of genuine faith. Tomorrow, we'll look at another, which is potentially, for many of us, even more challenging, certainly for me. And that is the control of the tongue.

That's what chapter three is all about. And I hope you can be with us to look at that tomorrow evening.

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