

The Religion God Wants

by Theodore Epp

The sermon emphasizes that true religion is the outward expression of an inward faith in Jesus Christ, characterized by selfless love for others.

Scripture: James 1:26

Topics: "Love in Action", "True Religion"

Description

Theodore Epp emphasizes that true religion, as described in James 1:26-27, is the outward expression of an inward faith in Jesus Christ. This faith naturally manifests as love for others, especially for those who cannot reciprocate, reflecting the pure and undefiled religion that God desires. Epp highlights that genuine Christianity goes beyond giving to receive and instead focuses on selfless love, mirroring Christ's love for the helpless. The evidence of being a child of God is the new desire to express this love outwardly. Ultimately, pure religion is characterized by actions rooted in faith and love for others.

Transcript

James 1:26,27

When Jesus Christ is really indwelling a person, it will result in true religion. The word "religion" as used in James 1:26,27 is not synonymous with the word "salvation." James used it in the sense of an outward expression of that which is inward. The inner faith in Jesus Christ as one's personal Saviour results in salvation; expressing that faith outwardly is one's religion, according to the way James used the word. When one has faith in Jesus Christ, it is only normal and natural for this faith to express itself outwardly. There will be a new motivating power within, and that new desire is an evidence that you are a child of God. The manifestation of Christ's life through an individual is proof that that person is rightly related to Jesus Christ by faith. In other words, faith in Christ will result in love for others, and this is what James referred to as "pure religion."

The Lord Jesus Christ showered His love on those who could not help themselves and who could not, or would not, return His love at that time. When we know Him as personal Saviour, we will have this same kind of love. We will love those who are helpless and unable to return our expressions of love. It is relatively easy to be friends with those who are friends in return or to give to those who give in return. However, our Christianity is woefully deficient if we give in order to receive or if we give and expect an even larger gift in return. This is not pure religion. So when a person is rightly related to Jesus Christ--when he has pure and undefiled religion--he will express the love of Christ to those who are in dire

circumstances and unable to return similar expressions of love.

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:18).

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