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PRACTICAL VIRTUES OF CHRISTIAN PERFECTION

WORKS OF MERCY AND LOVE

In order to be saved from judgment without mercy, we need to have the works of mercy and love. These works testify that our faith issues in being saved not only from perdition, but also from judgment without mercy at the judgment seat of Christ. Those who do not have the works of mercy and love will suffer judgment without mercy. This means that they will be disciplined as a result of judgment at the judgment seat of Christ.

Many of the past teachers of the Scriptures have not seen the "lane" in these verses. They saw only certain main streets. By the Lord's mercy and through the help we have received from those who have gone before us, we can see the proper way to divide the Word here. In this chapter we have a certain lane. Because we are able to divide this portion of the Word properly, we can see that salvation here is not salvation from perdition; instead, it is salvation from unmerciful judgment at the judgment seat of Christ.

According to this chapter, to despise a poor brother is to murder him (vv. 2:3, 11). This is to fail to have mercy on the brother. If we do not show mercy to a poor brother, when the Lord comes back He will exercise unmerciful judgment upon us, and we shall suffer as a result. If we would be saved from such unmerciful judgment, we need to have works of mercy and love toward the brothers. These works toward the poor brothers will testify that our faith is living, even issuing in our being saved from unmerciful judgment at the judgment seat of Christ. This is the proper understanding of these verses, the understanding that comes from rightly dividing the Word in a detailed way.

Through the centuries there have been different opinions concerning the Epistle of James. Whereas Luther said that this book is an Epistle of straw, a number of pious and godly people have sided with James. The Brethren, especially Darby, wrote about James from the standpoint of dispensation. Darby pointed out strongly that this Epistle has a Jewish character. However, not even Darby saw the real position and intrinsic contents of this book.

A number of years ago we interpreted the Epistle of James in such a way as to reconcile justification by faith with justification by works. Now we see that, under the light we have today, that interpretation was not accurate. In chapter two James speaks of being saved by works. In the past we interpreted this to mean that justification by faith is something inward and that justification by works is outward. Justification by faith is the seed inwardly, and justification by works is the fruit produced outwardly. This interpretation is rather general, and the application is not accurate. In chapter two of James, to be saved by works is related to the salvation of our soul (1:21). This is not a matter of eternal salvation from perdition; it is a matter of the salvation of our soul from unmerciful judgment at Christ's judgment seat.

In 2:9 and 10 James says, "But if you respect persons, you commit sin, being convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law, yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all." To respect persons is to look down on a poor brother and to uplift a rich brother. According to what James says in 2:11, to look down upon a poor brother is to commit murder.

In verse 12 James goes on to say, "So speak and so do as those who are about to be judged by a law of freedom." This judgment will not be that at the white throne, for the judgment at the white throne will be the judgment of unbelievers. In verse 12 James writes concerning the judgment of believers at the judgment seat of Christ. We need to be clear that this judgment is not for eternal salvation or eternal perdition; on the contrary, this judgment concerns reward or punishment. Furthermore, the judgment at the judgment seat of Christ will not be according to the Mosaic law, but will be according to the law of freedom, that is, according to the New Testament. The Mosaic law will be used for the judgment at the white throne, but the law of freedom will be the basis for the judgment at the judgment seat of Christ.

In verse 13 James says that judgment will be without mercy to him who has shown no mercy, and that mercy triumphs over judgment. If we look down on a poor brother, we do not show mercy toward him. If we do not have mercy on a brother today, when we stand before the judgment seat of Christ, Christ will not have mercy toward us.

In verse 13 James tells us that mercy triumphs over judgment. Mercy is the first step that leads to love. If we do not have mercy, we will not have love. We need to realize that before Christ we are extremely poor. If we have mercy toward the poor ones today, then at the time of the judgment at the judgment seat of Christ, Christ will have mercy on us. This is what it means for mercy to triumph over judgment.

Let us consider verse 14 again: "What is the profit, my brothers, if anyone says he has faith, but does not have works? Can that faith save him?" Now we understand that this verse refers to being saved from unmerciful judgment at the judgment seat of Christ. We may say that we have faith and yet not have mercy upon a poor brother. This means that we claim to have faith and yet do not love this brother. Can this kind of faith save us from the coming judgment at Christ's judgment seat? To be sure, this kind of faith cannot save us from that judgment.

Verses 15 and 16 support this understanding: "If a brother or sister is without clothing and lacks daily food, and anyone of you says to them, Go in peace, be warmed and filled, yet you do not give them the necessities of the body, what is the profit?" These verses are a further indication that the judgment in verse 13 is related to how we treat the brothers. This is a strong proof that the judgment here is not

a matter of eternal salvation or eternal perdition. Verses 15 and 16 speak of our attitude toward the brothers and the way we treat them. Our attitude toward the saints will be a deciding factor regarding whether or not we are rewarded at the judgment seat of Christ.

In verses 17 and 18 James continues, "Even so faith, if it does not have works, is dead in itself. But someone will say, You have faith, and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works." The works here are works of mercy and love toward the brothers. Once again, in these verses faith and works are not a matter of eternal salvation, but are related to being saved from judgment at Christ's judgment seat.

(Excerpts from Life Study of James Message Seven
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Burdens for Church Prayer

- 2026 Targets, # of baptized:22; # of prayer meeting attendance:35; average Lord's Day and small group attendance:10% increase
- Spread the kingdom of God by preaching the gospel on the WVC campus and by Bible distribution in the community.
- Multiply the number of small groups for the increase and building up of the Body of Christ
- Perfect young working saints with shepherding families as containers for the next generation.
- Practice PSRP, BNPB, and vital small groups.
- Blending in the Body, by participating in conferences and trainings
- Establish and strengthen the church services, including children, YP, ushering, etc.
- Establish a prayer life individually and corporately
- Pursuing the truth and growth in life to live in the reality of the kingdom.

Announcements

- Life-study of James messages 7，8
- HWMR 2026 Summer Training Week 4
- 11/24 (Tue) 7:45pm, Saints home.
- 12/12 (Sat.) 10-12pm, South Bay Chinese Speaking saints corporate pursuit - Pillars in God's Building), $50/person (lunch included), Mountain View
- 11/25 (Wed) Campbell Thanksgiving Love Feast and Gospel
- 11/26-29 International Thanksgiving Conference at Denver CO
- **2026 NorCal Thanksgiving Conference Schedule**

	10:00AM	7:30PM
11/27(Fri)	Message 1	Message 2
11/28(Sat)	Message 3	Message 4
11/29(LD)	Message 5	Message 6

https://www.norcalchurches.org/2026-thanksgiving-conference/

- 2/20-21/2027 ICSC. Taipei. Registration deadline 12/31/2026
- 12/21-26 Semiannual Training, register by 11/1
- Financial Giving:
  PayPal/Zelle: churchincampbell@gmail.com
  Venmo @Churchin-Campbell
- Church in Campbell bookroom account (PayPal/Zelle)
  churchincampbellbooks@gmail.com