

2:1 My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality.

2:2 For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes,

2:3 and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, "You sit here in a good place," and say to the poor man, "You stand there," or, "Sit here at my footstool,"

2:4 have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?

2:5 Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?

2:6 But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts?

2:7 Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called?

2:8 If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well;

2:9 but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.

2:10 For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.

2:11 For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.

2:12 So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty.

2:13 For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

Good morning everyone.

It is time for the last worship service of September. There are only three months left in this year. Along with the equinoxes, the autumn winds have begun to blow. The mornings and evenings have become chilly, but until the cold winter comes, I would like to enjoy the blue sky and the coming fall colors of the leaves.

Today we are entering the second chapter of the book of James, and in chapter 1 we read, "When you are going through trials of various kinds, consider them as a great joy. For as you know, perseverance is produced by the testing of faith.

He also said, "Put away all filthiness and gross wickedness, and accept with meekness the Word that is implanted in your hearts. For in the Word is the power to save your souls. And be a doer of the Word.

He also said, "He who earnestly and tirelessly observes the law of perfect freedom is not one who hears it and forgets it, but one who actually does it. Such a person is blessed by his deeds."

This was the case.

Remembering the love of God who gave us Jesus to redeem us, and having received forgiveness, salvation, freedom and love through the Holy Spirit, "Pure and undefiled piety before God the Father means nothing more than to visit orphans and widows in need and to keep oneself clean and untainted by the world. In chapter 2, he taught us to advance to a more specific "piety.

In chapter 2, he talks more specifically about what he means by "pure and undefiled piety before God the Father.

1 My brethren! Let us not be divided in defending our faith in Jesus Christ, the Lord of our glory.

In today's passage, God is explicitly speaking clearly about what He wants and what He does not want.

Here, the Lord clearly and unequivocally rejects the idea of "dividing" people. He says that it is totally unbalanced in the defense of "faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ.

To divide means to discriminate against people based on one's likes and dislikes, and to selfishly treat one person as better than another.

From this we learn that God values "fairness," as it is "faith in Jesus Christ, the Lord of our glory," and as God's unwavering belief.

2 For example, suppose a man comes into your synagogue wearing a gold ring and a fine kimono, and at the same time a poor man comes in wearing a shabby kimono.

3 To the man in fine clothes he would say graciously, "Please take a good seat here," and to the poor man he would say, "You stand there, or sit at my feet. 4 And if you say to the poor, "Stand there, or sit at my feet,

4 Have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges of men with evil thoughts?

It may be a rich person who gives a large donation to the synagogue. Those who are rich may be socially influential people. But that does not mean, as we see here, that one person may say to another, "Please take a good seat here," and another may say, "Stand there, or sit at my feet. Or sit at my feet." This is a "division," and is clearly unworthy of "defending faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ.

To judge people with such eyes. In other words, judging people based on whether they are useful to us or not, and deciding who is better or worse. This is not appropriate for "keeping faith with Jesus Christ, the Lord of our glory.

The Lord Jesus Christ said, "Have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges of men according to ungodly thoughts?"

Ungodly thoughts mean evil, wicked, unjust, bad, and sinful thoughts. The Bible clearly tells us that it is evil, wicked, and sinful to put people down a notch or a level, to divide and discriminate in such a way.

We often think that we want to connect with influential people or seek influential supporters. The presidential election will soon be held in the U.S., and in the fierce race to win or lose, each camp will do whatever it takes to outmaneuver the other. In such a situation, it will be most important to join hands with the influential people.

5 Beloved brothers and sisters, listen carefully. Listen carefully. God has chosen the poor of the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the Kingdom promised to those who love Him.

6 But ye have wronged the poor. Is it not the rich who torment you and drag you into the courts?

7 Is it not indeed they that dishonor the precious name that is spoken against you?

The Bible also speaks of faith here.

God "chose the poor of the world and made them rich in faith, heirs of the kingdom promised to those who love God.

The Bible digs deep into our hearts and tells us how we have tried to do everything without trusting and relying on God, how we have been misguided, selfish, and poor, trying to go on without God. Nothing is impossible with God. The source of redemption and life, God created everything we see by the Word of His invisible mouth.

One should rely on this Creator before trying to rely on those around him. We must know that it is only through the mercy of the Lord and through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, that we, the poor who are dead in trespasses and sins apart from God, are now rich and have forgiveness and life.

6 But you have wronged the poor. Is it not the rich who have wronged you and dragged you into the courts?

7 Is it not indeed they who dishonor the precious name that is spoken against you?

Is it not the rich who are intoxicated with their wealth, and who, under the pretense of power, obliterate all their political opponents and graze on their rights? Are not those who are rich the ones who rely on their power, who give up on us when we are no longer of use to them, and who, if we are their enemies, will use all their financial resources to bring us to trial and eliminate us? This is what the Bible is telling us, whether we value those who put God first in the depths of their souls, or whether we live with those who put money and power first.

Matthew 5:3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

5:4 Blessed are the sorrowful, for they shall be comforted.

We may be the ones who are far outnumbered in this bleak world by those who look only to their own immediate preaching and seek to push others aside to set up their own kingdoms. We may be in the position of being the poor, the needy, and the grieving. We may be the ones who are accused of being eccentric, isolated from the world, independent, and dependent only on the invisible God. But that is okay. That is where our power lies. And it is our strength.

2:8 But if thou be not a man, thou shalt not be a stranger.

2:8 But if you keep this very precious law according to the words of the Scriptures, "Love your neighbor as yourself," it is good.

9 But if you divide, you sin, and are condemned by the law as transgressors.

10 For even if you have kept the whole law, if you are at fault in even one point of it, you have transgressed the whole.

11 For example, He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder. Therefore, even if you do not commit adultery, if you kill, you have transgressed the law.

12 Therefore speak and do as one who ought to be judged by the law of liberty.

God's people have struggled painstakingly against keeping the law. It has been the lifeline and way of life for those who believe in God. But at the same time, ironically, the law has become a weakness that humans are somehow incapable of keeping.

There was no one who kept the whole law.

Romans 3:10 says, "There is none righteous, no, not one.

3:11 There is none that is enlightened, no, not one that seeks after God.

3:12 All have gone astray, and all have become vain. There is none that doeth good, not one.

3:13 Their throats are open tombs; they deceive with their tongues, and the poison of the louse is in their lips,

3:14 Their mouth is full of cursing and bitter words.

3:15 Their feet are swift to shed blood,

3:16 In their way is destruction and misery.

3:17 And they know not the way of peace.

3:18 There is no fear of God before their eyes."

12 Therefore speak and do as one who is to be judged by the law of liberty.

The law of liberty. It is God's renewal of the idea that we are righteous and free if we do the law.

We are weak and poor, sad and worthless, but the Lord in His mercy and unconditionally through His atonement has given salvation and life to those who believe in the gift of God through the atonement of Christ, making them righteous, giving them life, salvation, and freedom. And we can believe that God will bear fruit abundantly in us who continue to be forgiven through His redeeming blood, a life of fruitfulness that responds to His love and grace, a life that responds to God's love and enables us to walk in the footsteps of Jesus.

John 15:12 My commandment is this. 15:13 For as I have loved you, so love one another.

15:13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

15:14 If you do what I command you, you are my friends; and if you do what I command you, you are my friends.

15:15 I will no longer call you servants, for I do not know what my master does. 15:15 I will no longer call you servants, for I know not what my master does. I have called you friends, because you do not know what your masters do. 15:15 For I have made known to you all that I have heard from my Father.

15:16 Ye have not chosen me: I have chosen you. 15:16 You did not choose me, but I chose you. And I have set you up. 15:17 And I have chosen you, that ye may go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit may remain for ever; and that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

15:17 I command you these things that you may love one another.

2:13 For whosoever shall not have mercy, unto him shall judgment come, without parable; and whosoever shall not have mercy, unto him shall judgment come. Mercy triumphs over

judgment.

Romans 8:32 He that spared not even his own Son, but delivered him up to death for us all, how shall he not also the Son, and all things?

8:33 Who shall reproach the elect of God? For God has made them righteous.

8:34 Who condemneth us? For Christ Jesus died, and rose again, and is seated at the right hand of God, and intercedes for us.

8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Whether tribulation, or affliction, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

8:36 For it is written, "We are appointed unto thee all day long unto death, and to be looked upon as sheep that are slaughtered.

8:37 But in all these things we have more than enough, through Him who loved us.

8:38 I am convinced, because he has loved us, that in all these things we have more than enough to win. 8:38 For I am persuaded, that in all things there is neither death nor life, neither angels nor rulers, neither things present nor things to come, neither things mighty, nor things small, nor things great,

8:39 Neither high things nor deep things, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

So, again, the more we think about God, the more we realize that we are weak and needy, and that we are now only in God's mercy. Neither death nor judgment can separate us from God's love. When we receive this kind of love, it is clear how we should treat others. We should take joy in meeting those who have been abandoned by the world and have nothing to give back to us as people who are precious to us, and realize that the way of life is not to flatter those who are powerful.

Compassion overcomes judgment. We have received the Lord's deep mercy that surpasses judgment, and as one who has been forgiven, I hope to be one who boldly points to God's deep mercy and speaks of Akashi City.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you for today's worship. We thank you for the belief of the Creator of this world, the Lord and King of all the world, the One who makes the poor rich in faith and heirs of the Kingdom of God, the One who gives forgiveness, freedom, and mercy that precedes judgment. Please always remember that mercy and compassion of yours and protect us this week so that we will not seek to deceive. Bless our families and the people in our community. We pray in the name of the Lord Jesus. Amen.