

CHAPTER IV

OVER-RATED RICHES

James 2:1-13

Introduction

The ability to accumulate riches, in the minds of many people, seems to qualify any man for any position. Even though the acquisition of riches usually goes with oppression of the poor, purchased political power, and arrogant flaunting of both the laws of God and man, it seems that riches enhance a man's prestige and popularity, whether in politics or in the church. This tendency to honor the rich often results in honoring principles that are contrary to the principles of God and completely opposing all Christian warfare. This tendency to give undue honor to a man just because he is rich becomes a temptation to the saint within the church; and if carried far enough, can completely stifle the church's growth and progress.

Although there is clearly nothing wrong with being rich, there may be plenty wrong with the method of becoming rich; and the riches themselves can become the most terrible curse to befall a man. It is against this arrogance that tempts the rich that God speaks. It is against this method of oppression that makes a man rich that God speaks. It is against over-rating riches and thus under-rating all spiritual values that God warns. *It is* the love of money that is the root of all kinds of evil, says the Lord; and this constitutes a form of idolatry as adulterous in God's sight as falling down before the dumb stone idols. Of all this the Christian must be constantly aware, lest his tendency to over-evaluate money and what money can buy completely blind him to the true riches from God. Treasures in heaven do not consist of things that decay, made with hands and purchased with money.

Special honor and over-recognition of the man who gives a fraction of one percent of his income to buy the church a new carpet often results in complete disdain to the man who gives of his life's service to keep that same rug clean, gives fifteen percent of his income to keep the lights burning over that rug on Sunday night, and gives his heart to Jesus Christ and his life in complete

surrender. Over-honoring the man who purchased the rug may result in discouraging the sinful man whose feet should walk over that same rug to surrender his heart to Jesus. That rug may look very beautiful stretched down the expanse of the building's isle, but it may also cover a lot of filth and dirt underneath which should be swept out of the presence of the saints. Over-rating riches and the things that riches can buy is a sin, which is in competition with God Himself.

Outline

Special respect to the rich at the expense of the poor and needy is a temptation within the church; for both the rich and the poor are under the same condemnation for disobedience, and both need salvation by grace from the same Savior.

TEMPTATION IN THE CHURCH 2:1-4.

WHY OVER-RATING RICHES IS A SIN 2:5-9.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES 2:10-13.

TEMPTATION IN THE CHURCH

Text 2:1-4

1. My brethren, hold not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.
2. For if there come into your synagogue a man with a gold ring, in fine clothing, and there come in also a poor man in vile clothing;
3. and ye have regard to him that weareth the fine clothing, and say, Sit thou here in a good place; and ye say to the poor man, Stand thou there, or sit under my footstool;
4. do ye not make distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?

Queries

87. What contrast is implied in the title of Jesus: "Lord of glory?"

88. Is not the greatest of God's creation man himself? Then what is wrong with holding "respect of persons?"
89. There is some dispute as to whether the Greek text intends this first verse to be imperative or interrogative. In our quoted text, it is imperative. How would it be expressed as interrogative?
90. To whom is this specific instruction addressed?
91. What is a "synagogue?" (We might note that the same word can also be translated *assembly* or *meeting*.)
92. "A gold ring and fine clothing" is descriptive of what?
93. What is "vile clothing?"
94. Should we have any regard for the rich man, or should we completely disdain him because of his riches? (Think carefully before you answer.)
95. Just who, in verse 3, is saying "Sit thou here . . ."?
96. Would it be more proper to ask the poor man to sit, and the rich man to stand or sit under a footstool?
97. What would be a proper solution to the problem in verse 3?
98. What is the significance of "sitting under a footstool?"
99. What does the R.V. margin say instead of "do ye not make distinctions?"
100. Is this distinction "between yourselves" a disagreement between people within the church, or a generally divided mind the group as a whole holds?
101. What is evil about these thoughts of distinctions?

Paraphrases

- A. 2:1 My brothers, do not make a class distinction to the rich in matters pertaining to the faith of Jesus, who Himself should have the first glory of everyone.
2. For if a man, obviously wealthy because of his dress and trappings, should come into your assembly; and another man, obviously poor because of his shabby clothing, should also come;
3. And you show prejudice by saying to the rich man, "Here, sir, take this good seat," and you say to the poor man, "Hey you, stand over there;" or "You can sit on the edge of the platform;"

4. Do you not have a prejudiced judgement that comes from an evil money-desire within yourself?
- B.*2:1 Dear brothers, how can you claim that you belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, if you show favoritism to rich people and look down on poor people?
2. If a man comes into your church dressed in expensive clothes and with valuable gold rings on his fingers, and at the same moment another man comes in who is poor and dressed in threadbare clothes,
 3. And you make a lot of fuss over the rich man and give him the best seat in the house and say to the poor man, "You can stand over there if you like, or else sit on the floor"—well,
 4. This kind of action casts a question mark across your faith—(are you really a Christian at all?)—and shows that you are guided by evil motives.

Summary

Class distinction between the rich and the poor because of the Christian's over-emphasis of the importance of money is caused by evil intentions.

Comment

Because of the particular grammatical construction in the original language, it is impossible to determine whether or not the first sentence is intended to be a question or a command. The context however, gives us more of a clue. The imperative form, "Hold not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons," reads more smoothly with the beginning of the second sentence. . . . "For if there come," etc. It also seems quite evident that James knows of instances where such undue prejudiced views are actually held so that the simple asking of a question does not have the force the explanation which follows, demands.

The "faith of our Lord Jesus Christ" is an expression that here encompasses all Christianity. Hence, "in Christian matters show no favoritism because of wealth." That we should give special honor and glory to an individual because he has been "blessed" with

wealth, is incompatible with all Christian teaching. The special title given to the Christ is an indirect but powerful argument for this very point. Christ is "the Lord of glory," the one in whom all saints should glory. How careful must we be lest we substitute glory in material possessions for His glory, and so by example and honor worship the "golden calf", or at best worship God "through" the "golden calf."

The incompatibility of receiving wealth with special favor in the church with Christianity, is in harmony with many other incompatible circumstances. For instance, one cannot "love God and hate his fellow man," I John 4:20. Likewise, one cannot "lift up the face" of wealth at the same time that we glory in the Lord Jesus. In so doing we should be combining faith in Jesus with the wrong attitude toward the poor. Since poverty is often the means God uses to open a person's eyes to his special need of Jesus, we should be especially careful not to disdain or humiliate a person in poverty-stricken circumstances. The Old Testament admonished, "Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty; but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor." (Lev. 19:15).

Neither must we humiliate the rich by ignoring him, nor humiliate the poor by disdainning him. We can respect God's noblest creation, man, without showing undue regard for something of such minor consequence as money.

The illustration used of the Holy Spirit seems to have included irony for the sake of emphasis. One might even say that the look of admiration and the offering of a particular kind of *seat* in verse 3 is a sarcastic note, so obviously illustrated as to point out the humorous absurdity of the situation. Yet, when we realize the illustration is true to form in many instances, the seriousness of the matter overrides the humor; i.e., "it would be funny if it were not so serious." When we see it in print, it appears absurd. When it happens to us, it is unjust. When we are the authors of the situation, then it seems a real temptation and problem. God sees the matter from all viewpoints.

The person speaking is not identified in v. 3. It could be anyone who is showing special regard to the extent of "snobbery" of the more unfortunate. It could be the usher who is the church-appointed representative to politely greet all visitors with equal and just respect. It could be one of the church officers who by virtue of

his position may represent the attitude of the entire congregation. Thus, the shoe has many sizes and fits many congregations.

The discourteous attitude of ignoring the poor man, or asking him to stand while offering a fine seat to the wealthy, or asking him to "sit under my footstool" is especially humiliating since the man cannot help the circumstances that apparently cause the discourtesy. To make a man suffer humiliation because of circumstances beyond his control is so completely unjust that the Christian, of all people, should recognize the inconsistency with Christianity. We might add that the illustration encompasses enough to cover many other current situations. In one particular congregation, the minister was putting on a special money-raising drive. He had prepared a large blackboard that covered a huge section of the front of the auditorium. At the top of the board in large letters was printed: \$1,000.00 *or over*. Beneath this in slightly smaller letters with more space were the words: \$500.00 TO \$1,000.00. Then beneath this, with at least a dozen spaces, were the letters: \$100.00 to \$500.00. Finally, at the very bottom, in very small letters, were the words: \$10 and under. Under this space was room for at least a hundred names in very small print. One young man was so impressed with the campaign that thirty-five years later he still remembered how the one millionaire's name was printed at the top of the board in large, black, bold letters. The name of the young man's father, together with a hundred others, was printed in small letters at the bottom of the board. The young man's father was a poor carpenter, and his \$10 gift was a real sacrifice!

The "do ye not make distinctions" of v. 4 might also be translated: "Are ye not divided in your own mind." (A.S.V. margin). Some might argue that the church was divided in this practice, some wanting to honor the rich and others seeing the impropriety of it. They might say, such a practice would divide the church, causing contention. More likely, the division-thought is within the mind of the "church" as a whole. i.e., there is a sharp distinction between that which the Christians think and profess at one time and what they practice at another time. Thus, the division is the inconsistency between what the Christian *knows* to be right and what he *does* when the rich and poor are present. It is a form of wavering like the waves of the sea, or doubting with a lack of faith, or hesitating between two desires.

The Saints who so conduct themselves are said to be "judges

with evil thoughts." The evil thought is descriptive of the judge, hence they are "evil-thinking judges." Jesus said, "For out of the heart come forth evil thoughts." Matt. 15:19. "Wherein," you may ask, "is the evil?" For one thing, God is the judge and He judges according to the inner man and the heart. Man cannot know the heart; and even in the case of inappropriate action, man can only determine the heart by the action. God *knows* the heart. Second, the basis of judgment is completely unjust, that on the basis of possessions and dress and wealth we should show partiality. Third, it may be that the motives of this judgment are completely evil. Money-worship, adoration of things that perish, and subtle planning to obtain gifts and favors for honor bestowed would be particularly obnoxious to God.

WHY OVER-RATING RICHES IS SIN

Text 2:5-9

- 2:5 Hearken, my beloved brethren; did not God choose them that are poor as to the world to be rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he promised to them that love him?
6. But ye have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you, and themselves drag you before the judgment seats?
 7. Do not they blaspheme the honorable name by which ye are called?
 8. Howbeit if ye fulfil the royal law, according to the scripture, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well:
 9. But if ye have respect of persons, ye commit sin, being convicted by the law as transgressors.

Queries

102. Note the four words with which James opens the reasoning here. What is different about this and the manner of opening chapter 2?
103. Did God choose the poor who did not choose God? *What* poor are here chosen?
104. If God chooses those who are being saved, how can we encourage everyone to choose God?

105. What kind of poverty do these poor have? Of spirituality? Of spiritual blessing? Of material possessions?
106. God chose them to be "rich in the faith." Does this mean that though they were poor before they became Christians, that now God will give them material riches since they are in the faith? If not, what does it mean?
107. If the kingdom of God is the church on earth (Mark 1:15; 4:11; Luke 8:10; Mark 9:1; 14:25; 9:27; 17:21, etc.), then how does it appear the saints are still "heirs of the kingdom?"
108. Although v. 5 expressly states that these saints are "chosen," what *within this verse* definitely proves that these chosen ones do the choosing themselves?
109. In v. 6 the text says "dishonored." What word is here used in the A.V.?
110. How do we know these rich people were not Christians?
111. What kind of oppression or persecution of v. 6 is most likely? Persecution of people because they are Christians? What other reasons are possible?
112. What are "judgment seats?"
113. What is the difference between "blaspheme" and "revile?"
114. What is the honorable name of v. 7?
115. State the "royal law."
116. Why does James refer to the royal law?
117. Since the royal law is contained in the O. T. (Lev. 19:18), why does James infer that the saints do well to keep it now?
118. Explain how "respect of persons" violates the royal law.
119. Relate 1:13 and 1:26 with verses 8 & 9.

Paraphrases

- A. 5. Listen, my beloved brothers, did not God choose the poor who love him to have spiritual riches through faith and to be the ones who shall receive the kingdom that was promised?
6. But in honoring the rich you have humiliated the poor man. Do not these same exceedingly rich people humiliate you by bringing suits against you before the courts?
7. Do they not also make fun of the very name Christian which you wear?
8. When you say, "But we honor them because we love them,"

you do well to love them even as the Old Testament law states, *but*

9. if in honoring them, you dishonor the poor you show respect because of riches, and by not loving the poor you violate the same law you claim to keep!
- B.*5. Listen to me, dear brothers: God has chosen poor people to be rich in faith, and the kingdom of heaven is theirs, for that is the gift God has promised to those who love Him.
6. And yet, of the two strangers, you have despised the poor man. Don't you realize that it is usually the rich men who pick on you and drag you into court?
 7. And all too often they are the ones who laugh at Jesus Christ, whose noble name you bear.
 8. Yes indeed, it is good when you truly obey our Lord's command, "You must love and help your neighbors just as much as you love and take care of yourself."
 9. But you are breaking this law of our Lord's when you favor the rich and fawn over them; it is sin.

Summary

This class distinction causes you to unjustly honor those who persecute the poor Christians and to neglect those who are poor. This is a plain sin, for God says, Love your neighbor as yourself.

Comments

Although James again uses his characteristic address *my beloved brethren*, he here adds *hearken*. If there is any possibility they did not get the point, he wants them to pay particular attention to the reasons. Undue concern over material things spoiled many Christians then, even as many thousands today lose their first love (Christ) because they love too much the things of this world. But the point goes beyond this. It is inconsistent with brotherly love, lacking in just judgment, and is open disobedience to God.

Their choosing to pamper the rich is in direct opposition to the nature of God's choice, who chose "the poor as to the world." Christ did not die for the worthy man, but for the unworthy. All men are unworthy (Rom. 1 & 2). But not all men know it. The poor of

this world have a great physical need. Physical needs we feel, spiritual needs we do not feel. The soul does not have a stomach to growl for food in hunger nor muscles to grow restless for lack of exercise, thus many men are dying of spiritual hunger and their souls are wasting away from lack of use; and they know it not. But a man with a serious physical need. . . ah, that is different! In desperation he turns to God in prayer for food, or for healing, or for rest or whatever his physical need may be. Having broken down the "normal" resistance man has to submitting himself in request, he is now more willing to search his heart and seek spiritual blessing from God as well. Yes, the sick, the lame, and the blind physically are more able to see their need for spiritual healing and have their spiritual eyes opened that they might see Jesus and find salvation. Brother, the greatest blessing you have may be the fact that you have very little of this world's goods. If God sees fit to keep you in poverty, then He knows best. "Thank God for poverty!"

The riches in faith do not refer to material riches that are temporary and of no permanent value. These are the riches laid up in heaven, the riches of character and Christ-likeness, the fruits of the spirit, the samples of heaven we have on this earth. These are the riches that put a song on the lips of the poor, and an expression of rejoicing in the heart of the saint being persecuted. These are the treasures that "neither moth nor rust doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steel." (Matt. 6:20).

It is true that the church is the kingdom of God on earth, but the kingdom of God is more than the church. The redeemed church is still the tempted church. The born again still live in the flesh, looking forward to being clothed again with a new body. The promise of salvation we now have—but there is more to come! There is a sum total of blessings that shall only be ours when we are with Jesus in eternity. This is a fulness of the kingdom such as this earth does not now know. We become heirs of the kingdom when we are washed in the blood of Christ, and we remain heirs until we shall be with Him in heaven. (Matt. 19:28ff; 25:34; Mark 10:17; Luke 10:25; 18:18; I Cor. 6:9,10; 15:50; Gal. 5:21).

In verse 6 we note the rich often oppress the poor. The verb (oppress) means to dominate or exercise power over in a bad sense. The idea is to exploit people, such as to not pay the wages earned, or take to property and possessions from the helpless

through use of the courts and of the power that wealth gives. (See Micah 2:2; Amos 8:4; Zech. 7:10; and Jer. 7:6). Because of the use of "themselves", we gather that these very people to whom the churches were giving honor were the ones dragging the saints into court. (i.e., the rich Saducees of Acts 4:1; 13:50).

As if the treatment of the saints at the hands of these rich were not enough to show the inconsistencies of giving undue honor to them, James points out that the honorable name by which they were called, i.e. Christian (Acts 11:26; Acts 26:28; I Pet. 4:16), was blasphemed (reviled) by them. These rich would speak evil of the name Christian, or of the name of Christ which the saints used in the name *Christian*. There is a slight difference in the use of the word *blaspheme* and *revile*. If their insult were directed toward God, or toward that which was holy and sacred it would be translated *blaspheme* (cf. Acts 18:37; Rom. 2:24). If the insult were against man it would be *revile*. (cf. Titus 3:2; Rom. 3:8).

Verse 8 seems to be answering an anticipated argument, perhaps like this: "You say we are honoring the rich. We admit it. Are not these people as real as the poor people? When God commands us to love our neighbor as ourselves, did he not include the rich? Are not these our neighbors too? Certainly, some of them are unjust and take the poor to court. Certainly, some of them blaspheme the name of Christ, and these things we neither like nor approve. But we do love these as men, our neighbors, so what is wrong in giving them honor out of love?"

James answers that if in doing so it is truly to fulfill the royal law, they do well. The royal law is summed up as loving one's neighbor, and is fully stated in Lev. 19:18. This is, probably, called the royal law because of the particular emphasis put upon it by Jesus (Matt. 22:39; 19:19, etc.). Thus, to be polite to the rich, and to give them normal courtesy and treat them like gentlemen, is evidently not considered to be in error, but rather an application of the royal law. Yet, their treatment went far beyond the normal courtesy given any stranger. It was a difference clearly measured by the amount of their wealth. It was such honor as to show distinct preference even to the point of insulting the poor. James points out inconsistencies of their (unstated) claim to be fulfilling the royal law.

If ye have respect of persons, ye commit sin. This is an obvious transgression. If they are obeying the royal law in their respect

for the rich, why then do they not obey the royal law in respect for the poor? The same context with the royal law says, "Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty." (see also Deut. 1:17; 16:19). The same law behind which they may hide concerning their treatment of the rich exposes their sin concerning their treatment of the poor. Next, James defines the principle transgressed in their actions.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Text 2:10-13

- 2:10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is become guilty of all.
11. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou dost not commit adultery, but killest, thou art become a transgressor of the law.
12. So speak ye, and so do, as men that are to be judged by a law of liberty.
13. For judgment is without mercy to him that hath showed no mercy: mercy glorieth against judgment.

Queries

120. By what logic can we reason that to break one part of any law is to break it all?
121. How much is included by the expression "whole law?"
122. Who is the "he" that said "Do not commit adultery?" (v. 11).
123. The two main themes of the epistle so far, speech and conduct, are both covered in one place in this segment of Scripture . . . by what six words?
124. How can mercy glory against judgment?
125. What is the law of liberty of v. 12?
126. What in the model prayer given by Jesus is the same as 13a?
127. What can v. 13 have to do with the over-rating of riches about which James has been talking?
128. There are two great principles, one covering the Old Testament, and one covering the New Testament. Can you find them in this segment of Scripture and put them in your own words?

Paraphrases

- A. 2:10. All the parts of the law form one whole law, and a man cannot break any part without breaking the whole law.
11. For one God gave the whole thing and if you break any one commandment, you have disobeyed the same God who gave the other parts.
 12. So you would be better off to speak and act as men who are under the New Testament law of grace rather than under the Old Testament law of the covenant.
 13. For if you insist on sticking to the letter of the law, you shall be judged by the letter of the law. The free gift of grace gives you much more than you have earned under the law of justice.
- B.*2:10. And the person who keeps every law of God, but makes one little slip, is just as guilty as the person who has broken every law there is.
11. For the God Who said you must not marry a woman who already has a husband, also said you must not murder, so even though you have not broken the marriage laws by committing adultery, but have murdered someone, you have entirely broken God's laws and stand utterly guilty before Him.
 12. You will be judged on whether or not you are doing what Christ wants you to, so watch what you do and what you think;
 13. For there will be no mercy to those who have shown no mercy. But if you have been merciful, then God's mercy towards you will win out over His judgment against you.

Summary

If you are hiding behind the law of loving your neighbor in your treatment of the rich, and you do not love the poor the same way, then you have broken a part of the law; therefore you are a law-breaker and will be judged as such. You had better stay under the grace of Christ in your speech and deeds, for as a lawbreaker you need His grace!

Comment

An oft repeated teaching of both the Old and the New Testament is the fact that a sinner is not fit to stand in the presence of God. *Any* transgression makes a man a sinner. Men like to measure their righteousness percentage-wise. We act as if we would like to be able to say "I am only 22.9% a sinner, and 77.1% righteous." God says, however, that if we are .1% a sinner, we are a transgressor of the law and not fit for heaven. One jot, one tittle of transgression, is enough to completely condemn us, and we are no more qualified to stand in the presence of God than the 100% sinner. When I measure my own meritorious works, my righteousness is as filthy rags; for one filthy thread contaminates the entire suit. (And who, save God, could possibly count my filthy threads?) If we could only understand the principle and stop using our bird-brain logic to rationalize our position before God, then in our ignorance plead for God to "please be just with me and give me what I really deserve." What folly for us to appeal to the justice of God when we have earned nothing but death! By what self-deception do we try to hide behind the very law that condemns us? What brazen blindness must overcome us before we would dare to demand that God give to us what is our just due. This is a principle that *every Christian* must understand before he can begin to appreciate what Jesus has done for us. It is a general principle of the law of God that God will tolerate *no transgression*, and that *no transgressor* shall stand in his presence. Any one sin whatsoever makes man a transgressor against God, completely incapable of earning heaven, with absolutely no right to demand anything of God. Having told one lie I stand as guilty as the murderer, or the thief, or the drunkard, or the adulterer, or the man who has done all of these. This is the law-principle. The principle condemns me whether I take the law from the Old Testament or from the New Testament. This law-principle is the main lesson of the Old Testament and thus made the O. T. a "tutor" to lead the human race to Christ. By this principle, I know I stand condemned and in desperate need of a Savior.

The subject of guilt under the law in v. 10 comes about by the possible appeal the Christian is making for his treatment of the rich. "The law says love your neighbor, and this rich man is my neighbor. . . . I am merrily keeping the law!" Then if so, I am

merrily being condemned by that same law when I fail to treat my poor neighbor the same way! Although the principle is spelled out carefully many places in both covenants, James here repeats it with clarity . . . it is that important!

A second principle is introduced in verses 12 and 13. This is the principle of grace and mercy under Christ. Under this principle I wear a robe of righteousness that is not my own. Because I put my faith in Jesus so completely that I put myself in subjection under Him, God counts this faith as if I were righteous, for He counts Christ's absolute righteousness as if it were my own. This is all possible because of Jesus' death on the cross, although all the ramifications of it I do not understand. God said that it was so, and even though I do not understand it all, I put my complete confidence in His Word. This is the principle of grace, wherein I am given that which I have not earned: forgiveness and Christ's righteousness. Thus my appeal is not to the law of God, but rather to the grace of Christ. Herein I have liberty to serve Jesus and to walk and talk with God, for my sins have been taken away by grace. For this reason I prefer to be under this "law of liberty" rather than the law of justice. If justice prevails in my life, I die. By God's grace, Christ fulfilled the law of justice and I now live by the law of liberty.

Verse 13 states that "judgment is without mercy to him that showed no mercy." Jesus put it a different way, but said the same thing in the model prayer: "forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors." (Matt. 6:12). I am not protected by the law of liberty unless I live under the law of liberty. For Christ to forgive me I must live the forgiving life, for this is the only way I can live in Christ. Rather than trying to justify the action of favoritism to the rich by appeal to the law, I should rather observe the Spirit of Christ and view *all* men, both the rich and the poor, through the eyes of compassion and love and liberty. This would govern both the way I talk and the way I live.

Verse 12 seems to summarize all that has gone before. Almost all to this point could be classified as instruction concerning speech and deeds of the Christian. "So speak ye, and so do" by this second principle . . . the law of liberty. Herein is the mercy of John 3:16; but I am only covered in this mercy when I choose to do (i.e., live) this mercy. The relationship of these deeds to the faith that saves involves the rest of chapter 2.

*TWELVE SERMON TITLES WITH THREE-POINT OUTLINES***TEMPTATION IN THE CHURCH 2:1-4**

- A. Respect of Persons—General teachings against prejudices.
- B. Causes of false respect—riches, society, politics, skin color, race, physical beauty, etc.
- C. Judges with evil thoughts—placing physical values above spiritual worth.

IN WHOM WE GLORY 2:1

- A. Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory.
- B. The sin of putting our glory elsewhere.
- C. Fading vs. never-fading glory.

PREJUDICE 2:2-4

- A. Come from improper regards.
- B. Manifestations of prejudice.
- C. Overcoming prejudices.

EVIL-THINKING JUDGES 2:4

- A. The sin of arrogance in judging.
- B. Sinful motives in judging.
- C. Christ, the judge of us all.

THE CHOICE OF GOD 2:5

- A. God chooses all, including the poor, the sinner, etc.
- B. God chooses those who love Him.
- C. We choose to be chosen of God.

HEIRS! 2:5

- A. Heirs by promise.
- B. Heirs of the Kingdom.
- C. Heirs by choice (God's choice and our choice).

THE SIN OF OVER-RATING RICHES 2:5-9

- A. God chooses those who love Him. (Riches are not involved).
- B. Men misuse riches. (Oppress the poor, dishonor Christ).
- C. The Royal Law demands that we love all alike.

DANGER OF RICHES 2:6-7

- A. Oppression of the poor.
- B. Using influence of money for unjust purposes.
- C. Blaspheming the name of Christ.

SINNERS 2:10-11

- A. What is sin. (The Law).
- B. Transgressing the whole law. (The Transgression).
- C. Guilty! (The Sentence).

FULFILLING THE ROYAL LAW 2:8-9

- A. What it demands in relationship to our fellow man.
- B. The manner in which the royal law is broken.
- C. The real fulfillment in Christ Jesus.

THE TWO PRINCIPLES THAT RELATE US TO GOD 2:10-13

- A. Justice.
- B. Mercy.
- C. The superiority of mercy over justice.

A LAW OF LIBERTY 2:13

- A. Freedom from the law, is not absolute freedom.
- B. Free to love and be loved is not absolute freedom.
- C. Christ doth set us free.