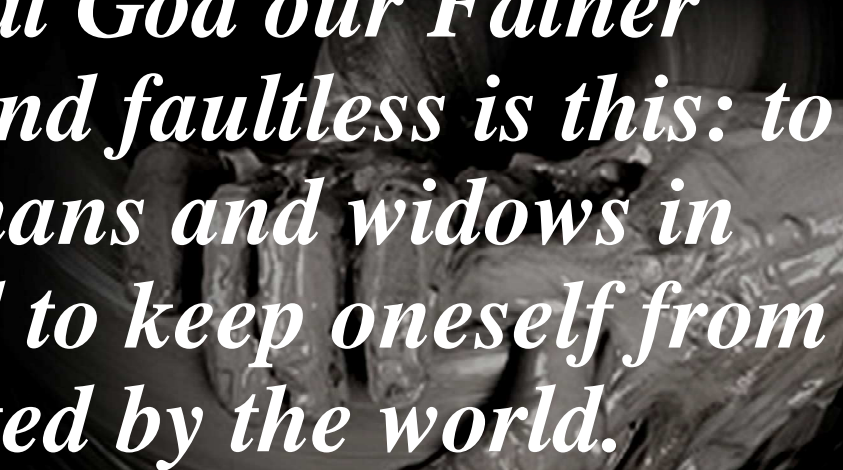


*James 1:26-27 (NIV)*

*<sup>26</sup> If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless.*

*<sup>27</sup> Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.*



# The Compassion Test

- *Am I eager to look after those who, for one reason or another, lack the resources to look after themselves or do I look the other way?*
- *This was a divisive issue!*
  - *Orphans & widows were the poorest of the poor!*
  - *Orphans & widows were often abuse and exploited by others!*
  - *Orphans & widows were treated as outcasts and burdens!*



***The Nature of my Compassion  
Toward Others is One Indicator  
of the Presence or Absence of the  
Transforming Power of the  
Gospel in my Life.***



# The Nature of my Compassion...

- *Compassion for the poor is at the heart of God's character (Isaiah 58.6ff; Deuteronomy 10.18).*
- *Compassion ... is at the heart of Christ's conduct.*
- *Compassion...is to be at the heart of His kids' character and conduct (Matthew 25.31ff).*



***The Nature and Transforming  
Power of the Gospel Must  
Motivate us to Move out of our  
Comfort Zones and Into the Lives  
of Others.***



# The Nature and Transforming Power of the Gospel...

- *Challenges our understanding of God's purpose for our stuff.*
- *Challenges the spiritual integrity of our hearts.*
- *Challenges our vision.*

