

Unspotted from the world. James 1 : 27

"The white flower of a blameless life!" The view of pure and undefiled religion presented in this definition was characteristic of James, surnamed the Just, who was revered even by the Jews for his austere piety, and whose vesture of simple white was emblematic of his stainless character. Whatever may be our views about the doctrines of Christianity, we must see to it that their outcome be in pure and holy living. Orthodoxy of view is utterly worthless unless it be combined with orthodoxy of life. This was the side of truth on which James insisted.

What a beautiful conception is here! The unspotted life! No book is like the Bible in its conception of sin; indeed, we owe to it the thought of sin, and its evil in the sight of God. But there is no book with so lofty an ideal of what life may become when it is yielded to the grace of Christ. A cleansed heart, and an unspotted robe; no sin allowed and permitted in the soul, and no evil habit allowed to dominate and enthrall the life.

But how is it to be ours? (1) Put the grave of Christ between you and your former life, and so reckon that you are dead to all solicitations that would induce you to live according to the lusts and passions that dominate the rest of the Gentiles. (2) Seek by use to exercise your spiritual senses, that you may be quick to discern the first and most distant approach of temptation, that so it may find you hidden in the risen living Saviour. (3) Let the blood of Jesus be instantly applied, so that you may be immediately cleansed from the least spot that may have defiled your dress. (4) Keep away your eyes, and speech, and feet, from all scenes and society that have a defiling influence.

不沾染世俗。 雅一27

「無污點生命的白花！」[註]呈現這節定義裡讓人看見純潔沒有玷污的虔誠，是這位被人尊稱為「公正的」雅各的特徵。他簡樸的白袍，象徵著他無暇的品格，甚至連猶太人都因他刻苦的敬虔而尊敬他。不管我們對基督信仰的教義持怎樣的觀點，我們必須留意這些教義的果效是在純淨聖潔的生活中。觀點的正統若不與生活的正統結合，就毫無價值。雅各所堅持的正是真理的這一方面。

這是何等美的觀念！無瑕疵的生命！沒有一本書像《聖經》那樣論述罪的觀念；其實，我們是靠著聖經才明白罪的思想，以及罪在神眼中的邪惡。然而，也沒有一本書像《聖經》那樣，提到降服於基督恩典之下的生命，可達到這麼高的理想。一顆被潔淨的心，一件無瑕疵的袍子；不容許罪存留於你靈魂中，並且不容任何邪惡習慣主宰又迷惑你的生命。

但我們如何才能有這種品格呢？1)將基督的墳墓放在你與你老舊的生命之間，對於一切引誘你照著主宰世人之邪情私慾而活的邀請，當看自己是死的(羅六11)。2)藉著使用來操練屬靈的感覺，使你在試探剛出現，還遙遠時，就敏銳分辨；這樣，試探就發現你已藏身在復活的救主裡。3)隨時取用耶穌的血，這樣，那些會弄髒你衣服的一丁點污斑，就可以即刻被洗掉。4)使你的眼目、話語和腳步，遠離那些有污染影響力的場合與社交圈。

[註]引自英國詩人阿弗雷得Lord Tennyson Alfred, 1809-1892, 的《王的田園詩》*Idylls of the King*裡Dedication的詩句。後來這詩句被引用作雕像名稱，也被用作 E. Everett-Green 寫肯多馬主教(Bishop Thomas Ken)傳記的書名。聖詩《三一頌》就是肯多馬寫的。他被傳記的作者看作是「無瑕生命的白花」。

Hath not God chosen the poor of this world? James 2: 5

There is nothing that men dread more than poverty; They will break every commandment in the Decalogue rather than be poor. But it is God's chosen lot. He had one opportunity only of living our life, and He chose to be born of parents too poor to present more than two doves at his presentation in the temple. All his life was spent among the poor. His chosen apostles and friends were, with few exceptions, poor. He lived on charity, rode in triumph on a borrowed steed, ate his last meal in a borrowed room, and lay in a borrowed grave. "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world?" Why is poverty so dear to God?

IT IS IN HARMONY WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE GOSPEL. The world-spirit aggrandises itself with the abundance of its possessions. Its children vie with each other in luxury and display. The spirit of Christ, on the other hand, chooses obscurity, lowliness, humility; and with these poverty is close akin.

IT COMPELS TO SIMPLER FAITH IN GOD. The rich man may trust Him; but the poor man must. There is so much temptation to the well-to-do classes to interpose their wealth between themselves and the pressure of daily need; but the poor man has no fortress in which to hide, except the two strong arms of God. He waits on Him for his daily bread, and gathers the manna falling straight from the sky.

IT GIVES MORE OPPORTUNITIES OF SERVICE. The rich are waited on, and pay for servants to wait on those they love. The poor, on the contrary, are called to minister to one another, at every meal, and in all the daily round of life. Herein they become like Him who was, and is, as one that serveth, and who became poor, that through his poverty we might be rich.

神豈不是揀選了世上的貧窮人 ... 麼？ 雅二5

沒有什麼比貧窮更令人害怕了。人寧願違背十誡的每一條誡命，也不願作貧窮人。但貧窮卻是神所揀選的分。祂僅有一次機會來過我們人的一生，但祂卻選擇出生在一個貧苦人家，父母窮到只能用兩隻雛鴿來為祂在聖殿獻祭(路二24, 利十二8)。祂的一生都在窮人中間度過。祂所揀選的使徒和朋友，都是窮人，只有少數例外。祂靠人的施捨過活，在得勝榮耀之時卻騎著借來的小驢駒，在借來的房間裡吃了祂的最後一餐，被安葬在一個借來的墓穴中。「神豈不是揀選了世上的貧窮人麼？」為什麼神如此寶愛貧窮？

貧窮與福音之靈和諧一致。世界的靈靠著豐富的財物提升自己，世人在奢華與炫耀中彼此競爭。反過來，基督的靈卻選擇默默無聞、卑微、謙遜；而貧窮是常與這些情形相近的。

貧窮迫使人更單純信靠神。富人也許信靠祂，但窮人必須信靠祂。處於富裕階層的人，多試圖用財富解決日用所需，使自己不必受到生活的壓力。但窮人除了神大能的雙臂之外，再也沒有可以躲藏的堡壘；他等候神供應他日用的飲食，收取直接從天上降下的嗎哪。

貧窮提供更多服事的機會。富人被人侍候，他們花錢請傭人侍候他們所愛的人。相反，窮人卻是被呼召在每一餐以及所有每天生活例行公事中彼此服事。他們在這種情形變得像祂，就是那位過去、現在，都是服事人的；祂成了貧窮，叫我們因祂的貧窮，可以成為富足(林後八9)。

If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man. James 3: 2

Think of the sins of speech! How innumerable they are! When we see them in the light of this chapter, we can understand the holy Isaiah saying, "Woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King."

THE SINS OF SPEECH ABOUT OURSELVES. The tongue boasteth great things. We are all apt to be vain, boastful, exaggerated. We tell stories that redound to our own credit; contrive to focus attention on our own words and deeds; and even in delivering God's messages manage to let it be seen that we have a clearer insight into truth or a closer familiarity with God than our fellows.

THE SINS OF SPEECH ABOUT OTHERS. "We break the law of courtesy, and become harsh, insolent, and uncivil; or the law of purity, and repeat stories that leave a stain; or the law of truth, and practise insincerity, equivocation, and dissimulation; or the law of kindness, and are harsh and implacable to those who are beneath us in station. Or in our desire to stand well with others we are guilty of flattery, servility, time-serving, and the like."

THE SINS OF SPEECH IN CONNECTION WITH GOD'S WORK. We disparage other workers; compliment them to their faces on addresses they have delivered, and disparage them behind their backs; pass criticisms which take away the effect which their words had otherwise exercised over others; contrive to indicate one defect in which was otherwise a perfect achievement. Alas for us! How greatly we need to offer the prayer of the psalmist: Set a watch, O God, upon our lips!

若有人在話語上沒有過失，他就是完全人。 雅三2

請想想話語上的罪吧！真是多得不計其數！當我們從這一章的觀點看言語上的過失，我們就能夠明白那位聖潔的先知以賽亞所說，「禍哉！我滅亡了！因為我是嘴唇不潔的人，又住在嘴唇不潔的民中；又因我眼見大君王萬軍之耶和華。(賽六5)」

「論及自己」之話語的罪。舌頭說誇大的事。我們都傾向虛榮、炫耀、誇張。我們講述故事使我們得稱許；設法集中注意力到我們自己的話語和行為上；甚至在傳講神信息的時候，企圖顯示自己比同儕在真理上有更清楚的見解，或是比他們更親近神。

「論及他人」之話語的罪。「我們觸犯了禮貌的規範，變得刻薄、蠻橫、粗野；或是觸犯純潔的規範，重複談論那些會留下污點的事；或是觸犯真誠的規範，虛假、言語模稜兩可、掩飾；或是觸犯恩慈的規範，苛刻、冷酷無情地對待地位低於我們的人。或為了要討好他人而阿諛諂媚、卑躬屈膝、隨波逐流，諸如此類令自己愧疚的事。」

「與神事工有關」之話語的罪。我們貶損其他工人；當著他們的面讚揚他們發表的言論，背地裡卻貶損他們；傳播對他們言論的批判，抵消了他們言語原本能夠對其他人產生的影響；想方設法在別人完美的成就中指出一點缺陷。可悲的我們！我們是多麼需要獻上詩人的禱告：「耶和華啊！求你看守我的口，把守我的嘴。(詩一四一3新譯本)」

The Spirit . . . yearneth for us even unto jealous envy. James 4:5 (R.V., marg.)

A very deep and remarkable verse! The apostle is contending against the worldliness which was so rife among the believers he was addressing. They were set on pleasure; they sought the friendship of the world, and became unfaithful to their divine Lover; they were proud and high-minded. He went so far as to speak of them as adulterers and adulteresses; and then adopting a gentler, pleading tone, he says, "You are grieving the gentle Holy Spirit who has come to dwell within you, who yearns with a jealous envy to possess your entire nature for Himself."

The Spirit of God dwells within thee, O believer in Jesus Christ. If a man have not the Spirit of God, he is none of his; and since thou art undoubtedly one of us, thou hast most certainly the Holy Spirit. But the mistake of thy life consists in this, that He hath not thee. Some part of thy heart is given, but not all; and this causes Him the most intense pain, resembling that which we suffer from jealousy.

No keener pain is possible to the heart of man than to have good reason for the belief that a loved one is not wholly true; that there has been an alienation of affection which was once whole and entire; that another is receiving a part at least of the heart's devotion. The fire and screw are light in comparison with our anguish then; but, this is what the Spirit of God suffers when we share between Him and the world that love which should be all his own. "I, the Lord thy God am a jealous God," is as true as when first spoken from Sinai. The person of Jesus Christ must be the Sun of our system, though that system may include many planets beside.

神 ... 的靈，是戀愛至於嫉妒。 雅四5

這節經文極其深刻且引人注意！使徒對於受信的信徒中間盛行的世俗，提出抗爭。他們的心專注於享樂；他們尋求屬世的友情，對愛他們的神不忠貞；他們高傲。使徒用極重的話，說他們是姦夫淫婦；接著，他又以一種較溫柔懇求的口吻說：「你們正在讓那位住在你們裡面溫柔的聖靈憂傷；祂帶著嫉妒的戀慕，渴望擁有你們的全人。」

耶穌基督的信徒啊，神的靈住在你裡面。人如果沒有神的靈，就不是屬祂的(羅八9)；既然你確實是我們中間的一員，你必定有聖靈。但是你生命的錯誤在於 — 祂沒有得著你。你獻上了你心的一部分，而不是全部；這給祂造成了莫大的痛苦，這種痛就像我們在嫉妒時所受的痛苦。

對於一個人的心，不可能還有更尖銳的痛苦，因他十足確信：他所愛的人不是全然真心；曾經一度是完整的愛情已出現疏遠；另有別人至少得到部分的愛情。火燒和刀絞與這劇痛相比都是輕微的；但當我們將原本應當完全屬於神的愛，叫神與世界共同分享時，神的靈所受的正是這種劇痛。「我耶和華你們的神是嫉妒的神。(出廿5直譯)」這話在現今仍然真實，如同當初在西乃山上第一次說出時那樣。耶穌基督自己必須是我們繞行的中心 — 太陽，縱然這系統可以包括許多的行星在旁邊。

The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. James 5: 16

IT might be rendered literally: "Very strong is the supplication of a righteous man, energizing." When a man is right with God, not regarding iniquity in his heart, nor seeking aught for his own pleasure, the energy of the divine Spirit moves mightily within him, and his prayers become very strong. They recall the Master's, with their strong cryings and tears.

THE RIGHTEOUS MAN FINDS RELIEF FOR SUFFERING IN PRAYER. "Is any among you suffering? let him pray." There are sorrows we cannot tell to our dearest. Surges of grief sweep over us for which we have no words. Life is a stern fight for us all; and each heart knows its own bitterness. But there is always one resort: we can pour out our sorrows into the ear of our compassionate and merciful High Priest.

THE RIGHTEOUS MAN PRAYS THE PRAYER OF FAITH. The prayer of faith is that which is so sure of the divine answer that it knows that it has received it, though there is no appearance of its having been granted to the sense. We can only pray that prayer when we have asked what is in God's will to bestow. But righteous men cannot always pray thus, because they do not know the Lord's will on matters not recorded in this book. There are some sicknesses which are unto death, and we cannot pray the prayer of faith for these. If you cannot pray the prayer of faith, take medicine, and use the best means in your reach.

THE RIGHTEOUS MAN CAN AFFECT THE WHOLE HISTORY OF HIS FATHERLAND BY HIS PRAYERS. It was so with Elijah, as we learn here. It was so with John Knox, whose prayers were more dreaded by Mary of Scots than the armies of Philip.

義人祈禱所發的力量是大有功效的。 雅五16

這話按字面可作：「義人的代求是強而有力的。」當一個人與神的關係正常，心裡不注重罪孽(詩六十六18)，不求自己喜悅時，聖靈的能力在他裡面大大運行，他的禱告就變得強而有力。這些強烈的呼求與淚水，叫人想起主的禱告。

義人在禱告中得到痛苦的緩解。「你們中間有人受苦嗎？他就應該禱告。(13節, 新譯本)」有許多悲傷是我們不能向至親的人述說的。悲痛的浪濤席捲而來，是我們無法用言語表達的。人生對我們所有的人，都是一場嚴酷的戰鬥；每個人心中都有自己的苦楚。但總有一條出路：我們可以將我們的悲傷，向我們這位滿有憐憫和仁慈的大祭司耳中傾訴。

義人發出信心的禱告。信心的禱告對神的回應十分確定，儘管在感覺上沒有任何蒙應允的跡象，心裡卻知道禱告已得到垂聽。只有當我們求在神的旨意中要賜予的事時，我們才能作那種禱告。但義人並不是經常能夠這樣禱告，因為對於那些聖經沒有記載的事，他們不知道神的旨意。有一些疾病會招致死亡，我們無法為這些疾病發出信心的禱告。如果你無法發出信心的禱告，那就應該吃藥，用你能找到的最好方法來治療。

義人能藉著他的禱告影響他祖國的整個歷史。以利亞曾是這樣，就如我們在這裡所學到的(17-18節)。約翰·諾克斯[註]也是這樣；他的禱告要比菲力的軍隊更讓蘇格蘭女王瑪麗懼怕。

[註] 約翰·諾克斯, 1514-1572, 蘇格蘭宗教改革時期重要的神學家。瑪麗, 1542-1587, 蘇格蘭女王。菲力二世, 1527-1598, 擁有無敵艦隊的西班牙全盛時期的國王。