

“Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.”



An Uncomfortable Reality

1. Live in a Very Broken World

- Persecution of Christian Brothers & Sisters**

- Huge Social Issues are Reality**

- Poverty**

- Sickness**

- Wickedness**

An Uncomfortable Reality

2. Biblical Truth

a) clear that there will be issues

- Deut 15:11 *“For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, ‘You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.’*

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- 2 Cor. 1:3-5 "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, ⁴ who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. ⁵ For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too."

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b) Our Response Matters to God

- Psalm 41:1 *“Blessed is the one who considers the poor! In the day of trouble the LORD delivers him;² the LORD protects him and keeps him alive; he is called blessed in the land;*

- Proverbs 14:31 *“Whoever oppresses a poor man insults his Maker, but he who is generous to the needy honors him.”*

An aerial photograph of a densely packed informal settlement, likely a favela. The buildings are constructed from brick and corrugated metal, with many having makeshift roofs. A dirt path winds through the center of the settlement, and there are various structures and debris scattered throughout. The overall scene depicts a crowded and impoverished living environment.

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- Proverbs 21:13 *“Whoever closes his ear to the cry of the poor will himself call out and not be answered.”*

- Proverbs 28:27 *“Whoever gives to the poor will not want, but he who hides his eyes will get many a curse”*

An aerial photograph of a densely packed informal settlement, likely a favela. The buildings are multi-story and constructed from brick and corrugated metal, with many makeshift additions. A dirt path winds through the center of the settlement, flanked by utility poles and wires. The overall scene depicts a crowded and resource-poor environment.

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- Isaiah 58:7 “Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?”

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- Isaiah 58:10-11 *“if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday. And the LORD will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.”*

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- James 2:14-17 “What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? ¹⁷ So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.”

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c) Widows and Orphans identified

- James 1:26-27 *“If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. ²⁷ Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.”*

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3. Our Response

- Matt. 25:35-40 *“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink?*

An aerial view of a densely packed, informal settlement, likely a favela. The buildings are constructed from brick and corrugated metal, with many having multiple stories. The structures are built on a hillside, with narrow, unpaved paths and a complex network of utility lines. The overall scene depicts a crowded and somewhat precarious living environment.

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38 And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? 39 And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' 40 And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'

An Uncomfortable Reality

a) See the Need

- allow God to show you
- allow God to affect you

b) Respond as Enabled

- open hands to God
- pray, give, go

c) Know the privilege

- not from guilt or obligation
- allowed to participate with God



An Uncomfortable Reality – So What?

1. Be Real

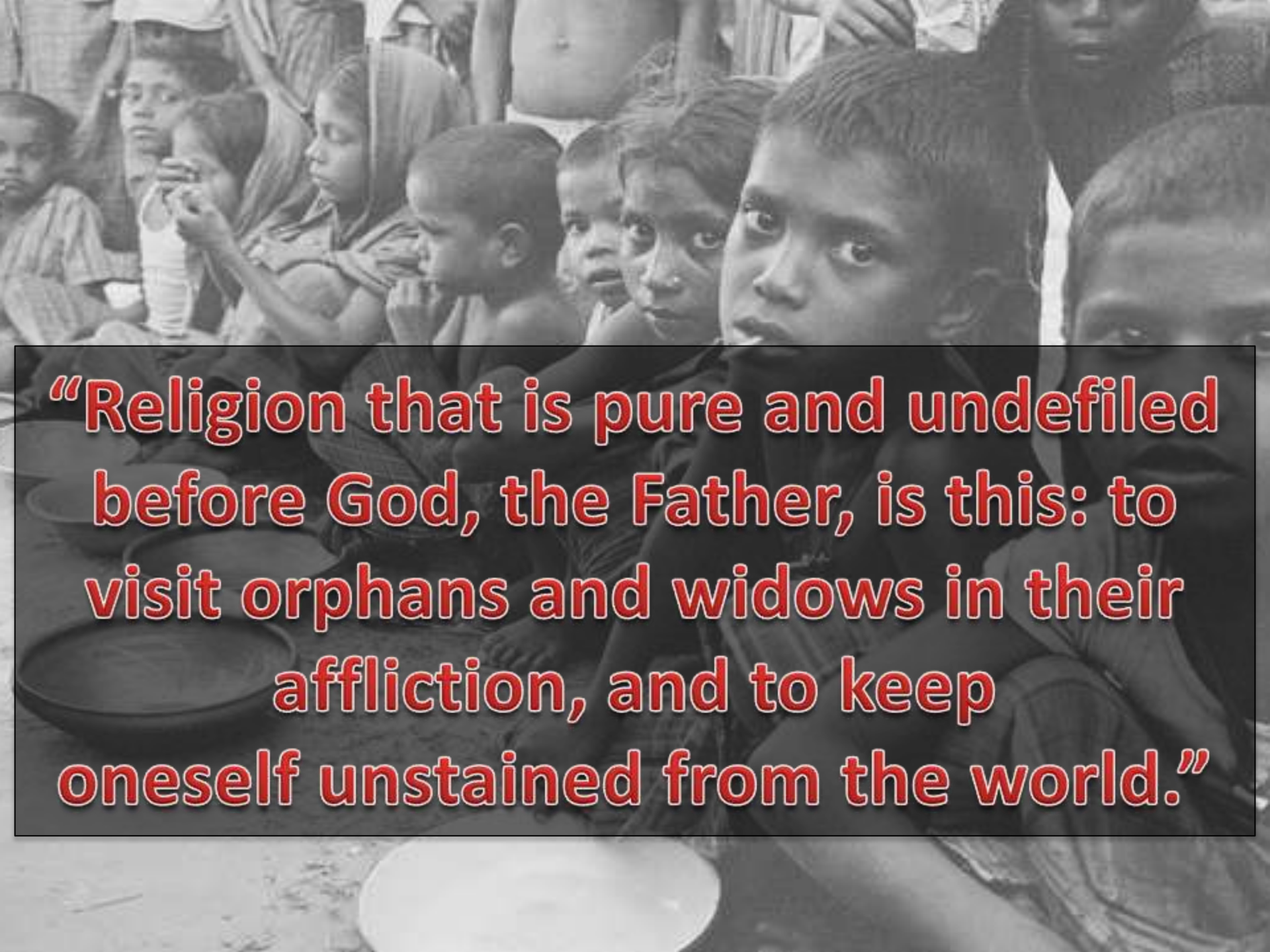
- we are incredibly privileged
- open eyes and hearts here and beyond

2. Be Involved

- discover, demonstrate, duplicate
- Investigate what God desires

3. Be Blessed

- know the privilege of participation
- pray, give, go



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