

“So whatever you say or whatever you do, remember that you will be judged by the law that sets you free. There will be no mercy for those who have not shown mercy to others. But if you have been merciful, God will be merciful when he judges you.” James 2:12-13 NLT

lectio // James 2:1-13

James, Jesus' brother, is focusing on prejudicial and preferential treatment here. Earlier he wrote about folks with fancy clothes and jewelry and those who have nothing. Sounds just like where I live in Orange County, or it could be Greece, Chile, or Robin even said it was like this in Lebanon! Hmmm, sounds like people dress up and where fancy things everywhere. And right next to them, in everyone of those places there are the poor, homeless and beggars. We have beggars on every corner, from here to our church. We have a whole street (Main) with homeless men and women sleeping in front of businesses everyday. This is the paradox of modernity as well as first century! James is not just looking at behaviors, which is often time the most telling, he's also challenging the reader to look at the heart. What does he mean, “you will be judged by the law that sets you free?” Here he mentions mercy. If you don't have it, don't display it, don't believe in expressing it - YOU WON'T RECEIVE IT. Whoa! Same could be said of love, grace or forgiveness. There seems to be a reciprocal connection between how we treat others and how God will deal with us. You give, God gives. You show mercy, God shows mercy. The sad opposite may be true, if you DO NOT show... you WILL NOT be shown.

oratio

Dad,

Apparently this horizontal relationship between me and others (believer and non believers alike) is very much reflective on my relationship (especially in what I receive) with you. As I learn to grow in those godly characteristics of mercy, love, grace and generosity, I must be continually behaving towards others in those traits (especially to the poor, the widow, the orphan). I believe I will be led today (by your spirit) into opportunities to grow and reflect you to others.

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root