

8. **Unconditional Love for Mankind:** There are two words for love in the New Testament, the verbs: (1) ἀγαπάω (*agapáō*) and (2) φιλέω (*phíleō*). *Agapáō* is the word used in the mandate to love everyone and is therefore unconditional, but does not become habitually operational until the believer advances to the sophisticated spiritual life and has facilitated personal love for God. *Phíleō* is used for a believer's soul rapport which is developed over time. This area of love requires personal virtue.

Personal love is directed toward God. There is a personal love that is restricted to a very small number of people: parents, siblings, spouse, children, grandchildren, extended relatives, and exceptionally close friends, but this is better classified as familial love.

Agapáō is the functional love of the Christian that when developed enables him to accept all people as they are. It is actually Christian professionalism that is maintained by the filling of the Holy Spirit.

The relaxed mental attitude of the believer toward his human characteristics is necessary for him to deal with those same characteristics of others. Race seems to be a big thing today and is the source of a great deal of animosity in our society.

On a human level, we had no say—so in what we are physically. We are who we are by virtue of genetics. The physical you is virtually unchangeable unless you start to dicker with it.

Some are of a certain race and sometimes that is indicated by skin color. Some have blond, brown, black, or red hair; blue, brown, green, or hazel eyes. Some people are tall some short. Some weigh in at 300-pounds some at 100 even. The makeup and characteristics of the human body are never an issue with regard to one's relationship with other people.

What is an issue is how they think. And how they think is completely based on how they have chosen to use their volition. Some are bad and some are good; some are kind and some are inconsiderate; some are heathen and some are saved. Some have a Progressive inventory of ideas. Some have establishment viewpoint. Some believers are advanced spiritually while others are not.



It is the problem-solving device of unconditional love toward all mankind that enables every believer to associate with anyone with a relaxed mental attitude. It emphasizes the virtue of the subject rather than the attraction of the object.

Unconditional love is directed toward all mankind and is the ultimate expression of humility and objectivity.

Unconditional love as a problem-solving device is commanded in all dispensations under one phrase, “Love those in your periphery as yourself.” We have spent a goodly amount of time amplifying this commandment with this expanded translation:

James 2:8 If [**protasis of a 1st-class condition**] you apply the Royal Law according to the Scripture, “You shall unconditionally love from personal integrity those you encounter,” [**apodosis**] honorably, you must keep on doing this. (EXT)

We have established the principle that the Royal Law cannot be consistently executed until the believer advances to the level of personal love for God after which he develops the spiritual inventory to manage others with virtue, honor, and especially, personal integrity.

It is the acquisition of standards from the righteousness of God that provides the inventory from which one applies the biblical standards required to execute the Royal Law.

In the growth process, personal volition must take guidance from the justice of God in one’s relationship with others. Righteousness demands righteous application. Justice demands that righteous standards be always applied in one’s relationship with others.

When there is an advanced inventory of ideas in the soul, the believer is enabled to have a relationship with other believers without being judgmental, critical, scolding, argumentative, or disapproving of them.

Principle: If you are not responsible for the behavior of the people you encounter, then you do not have divine authorization to intrude with verbal or physical admonishments.

Instead, you are commanded to, “love from personal integrity those you encounter.”



9. Sharing the Happiness of God.

There are several words in both the Hebrew and Greek texts of the Bible that may be translated “happiness.” We commonly use these words to define emotions, excitement, or anticipation.

Accompanying this perception is the idea that a set of circumstances, things, people, or events can produce happiness. However, true happiness is based on an inventory of ideas that becomes a part of the believer’s character.

The world’s idea of happiness is based on events that interest, encourage, or motivate. This human happiness is what some unbelievers and believers may share. Here are examples from the 1970s song, “Happiness Is,” sung and made popular by the Ray Conniff Singers:

**Happiness is different things to different people:
That’s what happiness is.**

**On the desert
It’s a drink, drink, drink
To a show girl
It’s a mink, mink, mink
To the banker
Lots and lots of dough
To a racer
It’s a GTO.**

**To a sailor
It’s the sea, sea, sea
To my mother
Why, it’s me, me, me
To the birdies
It’s the sky above
But, to my mind
It’s the one I love.**

Things, places, and people, and everything external are required to elicit happiness and it varies with the individual. True happiness is a mind-set. The happiness of the mature believer is internal and does not depend on externals.

Human happiness is objective whereas spiritual happiness is subjective. It is an internal possession of the believer’s soul.

This form of happiness is not an emotion but a status quo mentality that underwrites, supports, and maintains the copacetic spiritual life.



Regardless of circumstances, whether external or internal, true happiness enables the believer to endure the worst of times with a soul enriched with unalloyed happiness.

The subject at the 2011 Shreveport Bible Conference was *The Copacetic Christian* and part of that study was the exegesis of 1 Peter 1:7–8. Here is the expanded translation of those verses:

1 Peter 1:7 that the genuineness of your doctrinal inventory, being much more precious than gold, which is perishable, even though tested by fire for the purpose of approval, may be discovered to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

v. 8 and though you have never seen Him, you continue loving Him, with reference to Whom at the present time you continue not seeing Him, yet you keep on believing with sublime unalloyed happiness that is inexpressible and full of resplendent glory.† (EXT)

- 10. Occupation with Christ:** Occupation with Christ is the result of the copacetic spiritual life just noted above in 1 Peter 1:8. The ability to love someone who is invisible demands a very high inventory of ideas.

The only way to develop this level of love is by consistent inculcation of biblical doctrines into the soul. Everything in Scripture has its genesis in Jesus Christ. Everything in the Bible is geared toward a better understanding of who and what He is.

Over the course of history, numerous individuals have been admired for their honor, virtue, integrity, rectitude, and probity. Each one had a sin nature, misbehaved at some point, made a poor choice, violated some law, took a stand for a wrong thing.

Nevertheless, the totality of their lives reflected a consistency of good decision-making, service to his fellow man, and a lifestyle that brought him the accolades, appreciation, and esteem from those who knew him.

† For the exegesis of this passage see: Joe Griffin, 2011 Shreveport Bible Conference: *The Copacetic Christian: How to Be Happy in the Devil's World* (St. Charles, Mo.: Joe Griffin Media Ministries, 2011), 16–30.
<http://www.joegriffin.org/Pages/ClassArchive.aspx?SeriesID=SBC11&ArchiveTitle=Shreveport+Bible+Conference+2011+-+The+Copacetic+Christian+>



Jesus Christ, perfect from the day He was born until He was seated at the right hand of the throne of God where He presently remains, is the only impeccable member to grace the human race.

He is the one to be revered, yet presently He is, yet again, the target of ridicule by those in our client nation who because of the blindness of their souls do not know Who He is.

The Bible contains several imperative moods that relate to the problem-solving device of occupation with Christ.

Hebrews 12:2 Be concentrating on Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our doctrine, Who, because of the exhibited happiness, He endured the cross and disregarded the shame, and He sat down at the right hand of God. (EXT)

1 Peter 3:15 Set apart as top priority the Lord Christ in your streams of consciousness. (EXT)

Philippians 2:1 Therefore, if there is any encouragement in Christ, and there is, if there is any comfort from love, and there is, if there is any fellowship with the Holy Spirit, and there is, if there are any affections and mercies, and there are; be filled with my happiness that you might be thinking the same things, i.e., divine viewpoint, having the same virtue, united in soul, intent on one objective.

v. 5 Have this thinking in you which was also in Christ Jesus.

From these examples we conclude that occupation with Christ results in God emphasis taking precedence over people emphasis.

Nevertheless, attainment of occupation with Christ takes time. Over time, Jesus becomes your role model:

Ephesians 3:19 Come to know the love of Christ, which goes beyond knowledge [γνῶσις (*gnōsis*)] that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.



Occupation with Christ eliminates human viewpoint which results in strife, arguments, insults, and conflict. These functions describe the environment currently tearing at the foundations of what was once a civilized society.

Human viewpoint has replaced establishment viewpoint. The level of discourse has sunk to such a level that doggerel verse on posters are now a prelude to street brawls.

The general absence of these ten biblical problem-solving devices is a dead giveaway that our client nation is in decline.

Therefore, we find these comments from Scripture, written three-thousand and 2,800 years ago respectively, but yet a testimony to our current Zeitgeist:

Psalm 2:1 Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? (KJV)

Hosea 8:7a They have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind. (KJV)

Here are the expanded translations of:

James 2:12 In light of these things, keep on speaking or communicating and keep on applying just as those who are about to receive evaluation by the law of freedom.

v. 13 Evaluation will be without mercy for the one not having shown mercy; grace in action exults over the Evaluation Tribunal. (EXT)

Application of the Royal Law: James 2:14–26

James 2:14 What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him? (NASB)

1. This is the most controversial paragraph in the Epistle of James and one of the most controversial in the New Testament. This controversy is almost totally caused by how it is translated in English Bibles.
2. The genesis of this paragraph goes back to verse 8 which is the first verse of the preceding paragraph. In verse 8, James's refers to the Lord's commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," as the Royal Law. Here's the expanded translation of that verse:



James 2:8 If [**protasis of a 1st-class condition**] you apply the Royal Law according to the Scripture, “You shall unconditionally love from personal integrity those you encounter,” [**apodosis**] honorably, you must keep on doing this. (EXT)

3. James then gives several illustrations of how the Royal Law is not applied. In verses 9–11, he references the partiality that the Chazzan showed Mr. Golden Fingers in verses 1 through 7 while showing disdain for the Poor Man.
4. James puts these Messianic Jews back in the context of the Mosaic Law reminding them of when they thought salvation could not be acquired unless they kept the whole law.
5. He reminded us of the Lord’s conversation with the Rich Young Ruler which is recorded in Matthew 19:16–22; Mark 10:17–22, and Luke 18:18–27. This man was confident he did not commit a number of overt sins the Lord mentioned, but he had committed mental-attitude sins in these areas.
6. It is implicated by the Lord in Mark 7:9–13, that the young ruler had contributed all his wealth to the temple under the pledge of Corban thus violating the Fifth Commandment.
7. With these things in mind, the Jews of James’s congregation were to orient to grace by remembering that although they no longer functioned under the Mosaic Law they now functioned under the principle of free will.
8. The function of one’s volition in the Church Age is approached differently than previously in the dispensation of Israel. In the Old Testament, many Jews were guided by the mandates of the Mosaic Law, many erroneously assuming that keeping the Law resulted in salvation.
9. In the Church Age, believers function under the principle of grace which includes the principle of the Law of Freedom. Saved by grace, the believer is to grow in grace so he can apply doctrines of that dispensation.
10. Verses 12 and 13 draw an obvious conclusion from verses 8–11. Believers in the Church Age are commanded to grow in grace so they may, “prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers” (James 1:22).
11. Therefore, the believer is to move forward as a good soldier for Christ by growing in grace. Failing to do this results in being a hearer of the word and not a doer.
12. This principle is forcefully stated in James 1:25 where the term Law of Freedom is first used:



James 1:25 But the one who looks with an earnest desire to absorb in detail the perfect Law of Freedom, and continues to live in close proximity to it, not having become a forgetful hearer, but a doer, this man shall acquire unalloyed happiness by the production of divine good. (EXT)

13. The Law of Freedom makes reference to the principle: “In human history, the sovereignty of God and the free will of man coexist by divine decree.”
14. Therefore, believers may opt for intensified study of the Word of God which results in “not becoming a forgetful hearer, but a doer,” or on the other hand, they may be a “hearer, but not a doer.”
15. The subject that James now addresses is how to tell the difference between a doer of the word and a hearer only. James 2:14 looks at the situation from the standpoint of the unbeliever.
16. Verse 14 begins with an interrogative pronoun **τίς (tís)**: “What.” It introduces a principle that will stress the importance of the Word of God over works since no divine good can be produced unless it is based on divine guidance from Scripture and under the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.
17. The problem that results among unbelievers is their inability to recognize the difference between themselves and professing Christians. The reason is that all too often the believer is a hearer, but not a doer.
18. All the unbeliever can do is observe the lifestyle, behavior patterns, and character traits of others. All they are able to perceive is the production or lack of it of the believer.
19. When mainline Christianity stresses “good works,” but without teaching the doctrines that support them, a form of subtle legalism emerges. The biblical sequence is for the pastor to teach the doctrine which challenges members to first hear and then apply.
20. The end result among congregants is that some hear the Word and then apply while others are hearers only. It is this latter group that James is challenging in verse 14 because being a hearer only does not enable the unbeliever to distinguish that person from other unbelievers.
21. The next word in the text is the subject, the noun **ὄφελος (óphelos)**: “advantage, benefit, or profit.” This may be translated, “To what advantage.”
22. We know that unbelievers have no access to divine thought which is foolishness to them:



1 Corinthians 2:14 But a natural man [**unbeliever**] does not accept the things of the Holy Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. (NASB)

23. Believers must be constantly reminded of the status they once occupied. Like the person in this verse, he could not understand what believers were talking about when they discussed biblical principles.
24. He could clearly understand negative commandments, the “thou shalt nots,” but things unseen were a mystery to him. He could observe a believer not doing the “thou shalt nots,” but in an establishment oriented culture, even unbelievers obey many of those.
25. What unbelievers cannot see is the person’s faith: faith alone for salvation and faith alone for spiritual growth. If they cannot “see” these things because believers in their periphery were not using, “faith in the Word for application to life and circumstances,” then James asks, “What advantage is it?”
26. The unbeliever has no human spirit and cannot discern the difference between himself and other people except by observation through the eye and ear gates. What they see or hear, or in this context, what they do not see or hear, is how they determine the difference between themselves and members of the Royal Family of God.
27. The personality of the believer is reflected by his demeanor, mental attitude, and communication. His demeanor is not threatening, but confident. His mental attitude is positive, not negative. His communication is not judgmental, but flexible.
28. One does not need to quote chapters and verses to an unbeliever for he cannot understand biblical truth anyhow. However, principles of doctrinal truth have the power to confront human viewpoint without citing the Source.
29. Of course, this does not include personal evangelism which does require references to passages that distinguish Jesus Christ as the means by which one may choose to submit to acquire eternal life.
30. In this context, it is the application of doctrine to life and circumstances that enables the unbeliever to distinguish something different about Christians as compared to others he encounters.
31. Visible production from the source of inner faith will impress the unbeliever. He cannot see the inner source of faith, but he can see the application of it.



32. He cannot see the *kardía* and its stream of consciousness, he cannot see the doctrine stored therein, he cannot see the Holy Spirit's indwelling ministry, and from that resource he cannot see God's grace and His power.
33. Nevertheless, these attributes are most assuredly real and active in the soul of the Spirit-filled believer. Without application of these attributes, the unbeliever cannot distinguish a believer from an unbeliever.
34. So James poses the question, "What advantage is it, my fellow believers, if anyone "says": the present active subjunctive of λέγω (*légō*). The present tense indicates the universality of this statement during the course of the Church Age.
35. This is not in quotes, but the phrase "anyone says," indicates this is the attitude of the unbeliever. The active voice means the unbeliever thinks this while the subjunctive mood introduces a third class condition, maybe true, maybe not.
36. This is preceded by the particle ἐάν (*eán*): "if," plus the subjunctive of *légō* implying a third class condition. As far as the unbeliever is concerned, this is the way he sees life.
37. To try and restrict yourselves from association with unbelievers is unrealistic. There are numerous situations where it is actually impossible to avoid them such as a classroom, workplace, organization, recreation, and of course, family.
38. These gatherings are places for the believer to apply doctrine without necessarily quoting Scripture. These are environments for the application of the Christian way of life.
39. The verse reads so far, "What advantage is it, my fellow members of the royal family, if anyone says" This is followed by the present active infinitive of ἔχω (*échō*): "to have" or "to have and hold, to possess."
40. The unbeliever either thinks or comments, "He says he has faith." The word "faith" is πίστις (*pístis*) and is the direct object of the verb *échō*, "to have."
41. The noun *pístis* is intransitive and therefore must have an object. It is the object that indicates in what the individual places his faith. In our context, it is obvious that the unbeliever is accusing a believer of having faith in something.
42. That "something" cannot be the gospel of salvation since the person has already been identified as a believer. So then what is the object? The unbeliever does not actually know, but what he does observe is that the person does not produce works.

(End JAS2-24. See JAS2-25 for continuation of study at p. 241.)

