

James 2:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

Analysis

If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, James illustrates with a brother or sister lacking clothing (gymnoi, γυμνοί) and daily food (leipomenoi trophēs, λειπόμενοι τροφῆς). Faith encounters tangible needs, not theoretical scenarios. The familial terms emphasize church responsibility toward one another.

The scenario exposes hypocrisy: ignoring fellow believers' needs reveals faithlessness. Reformed ecclesiology highlights covenant community; neglecting family obligations contradicts gospel love.

Historical Context

Persecution and famine created many destitute saints (Acts 11). James oversaw relief distributions and knew of believers lacking basics. His illustration wasn't hypothetical. Paul's collection for Jerusalem mirrors this priority.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. Who in your church family currently struggles with basic needs?
2. How can you restructure budget or time to meet tangible needs?
3. What systems can your church implement for swift benevolence?

Interlinear Text

Ἐὰν δὲ ἀδελφὸς ἢ ἀδελφὴ γυμνοὶ ὑπάρχωσιν καὶ
If G1161 a brother or G2228 sister naked G1131 be G5225 and G2532
G1437 G80 G79 G6131 G5225 G2532

λειπόμενοι ὥσιν τῆς ἐφημέρου τροφῆς
destitute G5600 G3588 of daily food G2184 G5160
G3007 G2184 G5160

Additional Cross-References

Luke 3:11 (Parallel theme): He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

Isaiah 58:7 (Parallel theme): Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

Isaiah 58:10 (Parallel theme): And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday:

James 2:5 (Parallel theme): Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?