

Title: "OIC Statement of Faith, Part 10: We believe in maintaining purity in doctrine and life."

Key verses:

Jude 3-4 (NASB) – "Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith that was once for all time handed down to the saints. ⁴For certain people have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into indecent behavior and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ."

Jude 21-23 (NASB) – "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life. ²²And have mercy on some, who are doubting; ²³save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh."

Good morning, everyone. It's good to see you all again. Today, I am concluding my sermon series on the Statement of Faith of Osaka International Church – today, I will be covering Paragraph number 10, the final paragraph of the Statement. As I mentioned to you before, I embarked on this series of sermons because I believe it is important that we remind ourselves of the fundamental, essential doctrines on which we stand, on which we live our lives as Christians.

Let's read Paragraph 10 in our Statement of Faith:

We believe in the necessity of maintaining, according to the Word of God, the purity of the visible church in doctrine and life, particularly in regard to all forms of idolatry.
Jude 3-4, Jude 21-23.

Let's look again at these words. "We believe ... in the necessity ... of maintaining..." Necessity: it is crucially important that we seek to maintain the ideals outlined in this paragraph. Not that doing so is a way to earn salvation. No – that's not the way to salvation. The reason it is so important to maintain "the purity of the visible church in doctrine and life" is, firstly, as a witness to the world which is watching us ... and, secondly, because it is dangerous for the church to lose sight of right doctrine and godly lifestyle, because if that were to happen, we are rendered impotent in our witness of the gospel. If our doctrine is watered down, then our message loses power. It loses the power to save souls. There are so many churches that have gotten mixed up in their doctrine. For example, in the medieval era, the institutional church promoted some odd doctrines and some unhelpful religious practices, obscuring the gospel – that is what provoked the Protestant Reformation. Another example, one from the modern era: many churches these days have become liberal in their theology ... so liberal that they deny the fundamental doctrines of the faith: the Triune God, the atoning sacrifice of Christ, the resurrection of Christ. It is sometimes amazing to me as I look at these liberal churches to see people who are denying the fundamental doctrines but who still want to call themselves a Christian church. No. If you want to name the name of Christ, then you must stand on the fundamental doctrines outlined in the Scripture. We need to be sure that we maintain sound doctrine in our church.

Let's return to the medieval church and the Protestant Reformation. The Protestant Reformers sought to bring the church back to principles based on the Bible, the Word of God: they sought to outline correct doctrine and to clarify what is the true way of salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9 – salvation is by God's grace through faith and it is not accomplished by works). Notice that Paragraph 10 of the OIC Statement of Faith specifically points out that what we do must be done "according to the Word of God." It is the Bible that is our supreme and final authority. This is stated in the Protestant principle known as *Sola Scriptura*, "Scripture alone." The Bible alone is our authority, the final and supreme authority for every doctrine and every practice.

Let's look back at Paragraph 10. Note that the Scripture references there are from the Epistle of Jude. Let's read that first reference.

Jude 3-4 (NASB) – “Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith that was once for all time handed down to the saints. ⁴For certain people have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into indecent behavior and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.”

Notice that Jude mentions “our common salvation.” He is writing to a community of Christians who share the same faith as he does that salvation is in Jesus Christ. And then he exhorts these Christians to “contend earnestly for the faith that was once for all time handed down to the saints.” *Contend earnestly*. We sometimes have to defend true doctrine against those people who would distort Christian doctrine – people both outside and inside the church. Notice that verse 4 says that “certain people have crept in” to the church “unnoticed.” Such people appeared to be Christians, but when they started voicing some of their distorted ideas, they showed that they were on the wrong track – some of them are misguided Christians and some of them are completely false disciples (“wolves in sheep’s clothing” as stated in Matthew 7:15). When such a thing occurs, you can’t ignore the situation – the problem is not going to go away by itself. You have to deal with it. Jude tells us to contend earnestly for the true faith. I remember a time about five years ago when our pastor discovered that there was someone attending OIC who was spreading the ideas of what has been called the “prosperity gospel.” That’s a teaching which says that it’s God’s will for every Christian to enjoy full health and financial blessing. This is a false gospel that is damaging to faith. Our pastor had to tell that person not to spread that teaching here. I remember a separate incident about 25 years ago, when a Mormon man was attending OIC and he was trying to recruit people to his church. We had to tell him to stop what he was doing and to not come back. We must contend for the true faith, that which is outlined in the New Testament and which has been passed down to us.

Let me read some more verses for you related to what Jude has told us about contending for the true faith. The Apostle Paul wrote to his co-worker Timothy the following instructions in 1st Timothy 1:3-4 (NASB) – “As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, ⁴nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith.”

In a similar way, the Apostle Paul gives instructions to another one of his co-workers, to Titus. Let's read Titus 1:5 (NASB) – “For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you.”

In verses 6, 7, and 8, Paul gives a list of character qualities that an elder should possess. Then in verse 9 Paul tells Titus one of the things elders should be doing – “holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.”

To exhort in sound doctrine ... and to refute those who contradict.

The elders are to exhort (to teach) the congregation what is sound doctrine ... and also to refute anyone who would bring false doctrine into the church.

This is what Paragraph 10 of our Statement of Faith instructs us: to maintain purity of doctrine, and purity of life. What is the pure doctrine that we must maintain? I notice that among Bible-believing Christians, there are differing opinions on a variety of doctrines. I have often contemplated this question: What are the absolutely essential doctrines that we Christians must be united on, the essential doctrines we must be clear about and we must do our utmost to maintain?

Well, in answer to such questions, I would say: first of all, we must make sure we have the way of salvation correctly understood and lived out. If we don't have the way of salvation correct, then everything else we do is of no use. And a second doctrine is also crucial – perhaps I should have mentioned this one first: we must have a right understanding of who God is and who Jesus Christ is. If you are not following the right God, then you can hardly find the right way to relate to your creator.

I have already mentioned several times the Protestant emphasis that salvation is by God's grace alone through faith in Christ and is not obtained by any kind of meritorious works that we do. This is taught in Ephesians 2:8-9 and other places. It was the rediscovery of this principle in the sixteenth century that sparked the Protestant Reformation.

[*Unspoken in the sermon*: Eph. 2:8-9 (NASB) – “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; ⁹not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.”]

But let me tell you the story of another controversy over the proper understanding of the way of salvation, a controversy that occurred in the first century and is described in the book of Acts. Here we will see how Paul and Barnabas had to “contend earnestly for the faith” as Jude has exhorted us to do. And we will see how the church leaders came together to resolve this controversy. The background to the story is this: the church in Antioch had had much success in reaching the Gentiles with the gospel of Christ, both in the city of Antioch and later through the missionary efforts of Paul and Barnabas in places like Cyprus and Galatia. But controversy arose when certain Jewish Christians from Judea came to Antioch.

Acts 15:1-2 (NASB) – “Some men came down from Judea [to Antioch] and began teaching the brothers, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.”

²And after Paul and Barnabas had a heated argument and debate with them, the brothers determined that Paul and Barnabas and some others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders concerning this issue.”

There were Jewish Christians who believed that Old Testament directives must be followed by all Christians, including this crucial mark of the covenant: circumcision. In effect what they were saying was that a person had to become a Jew first in order to become a Christian. Paul and Barnabas strenuously disagreed with that viewpoint. It was decided that the way to resolve this dispute was to meet with the church leaders in Jerusalem.

Acts 15:3-11 (NASB) – “Therefore, after being sent on their way by the church [in Antioch], they were passing through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and they were bringing great joy to all the brothers and sisters. ⁴When they arrived in Jerusalem, they were received by the church, the apostles, and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them. ⁵But some of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed [in Christ] stood up, saying, “It is necessary to circumcise them and to direct them to keep the Law of Moses.” ⁶The apostles and the elders came together to look into this matter. ⁷After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, “Brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles would hear the word of the gospel and believe. ⁸And God, who knows the heart, testified to them giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us; ⁹and He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith. ¹⁰Since this is the case, why are you putting God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our forefathers nor we have been able to bear? ¹¹But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are.”

Peter tells them in verse 10 that following the provisions of the Old Testament Law was tough for their Jewish ancestors to do and it is also tough for the current generation to do, so Christians today should not be requiring Gentile converts to follow the Old Testament Law. Peter says in the rest of his message that God has blessed the Gentile converts with the gift of the Holy Spirit just as He did with the Jewish Christians – God has made no distinction between the two groups. Verse 11 – all of us are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus. That is the way of salvation.

If you read the rest of the chapter, you will find that the apostles write a letter to the churches in Antioch and the surrounding region, a letter which states that those people from Jerusalem who had caused controversy had been stating their own opinion and not the official position of the church. I like this story because it shows how the church dealt with a matter of controversy. The leaders of the church came together to discuss the matter, listening to both sides of the controversy and then coming to a conclusion. Through such discussions, the essential doctrine can be clarified.

Actually, this model has been repeated numerous times in church history. When there is a matter of particular concern, a council of church leaders has been convened to discuss the matter and come to a resolution. One of the most famous of these church councils was the one convened in the city of Nicaea in the year A.D. 325. This is known as the First Ecumenical Council – the word “ecumenical” means “universal” and it refers to the fact that this was the first time that the bishops from throughout the whole Roman Empire were invited to a church council. They had a number of serious matters to discuss, the most important among them was the controversy caused by a Christian priest named Arius. This man had been spreading his viewpoint that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is not eternal like God the Father is.

Arius had several Bible verses to back up his viewpoint, and his views were gaining popularity. He caused much disturbance among the churches and finally the ecumenical council of Nicaea was called to discuss this matter. On the one side was Arius, with his viewpoint. On the opposite side was Athanasius, a famous theologian who later became bishop of Alexandria – he advocated the viewpoint that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, must be co-equal and co-eternal with God the Father. At the council, initially both of these viewpoints were minority viewpoints – most of the bishops present seemed to take a middle ground position. But eventually, after much intense discussion like we read about in Acts 15, the bishops finally agreed that Christ must be co-eternal with the Father and, crucially, that He is of the same substance as the Father. The same substance. The Greek term for this is *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος) or *homoousion* (ὁμοούσιον), which in English is often translated as “consubstantial.” God the Father and God the Son have the same substance. Thus, the full divinity of Christ was affirmed at this council. The Nicene Creed was drawn up at the council to outline the basic tenets of the Christian faith and the relationship of the Father and the Son. At the end of the creed, there was originally a brief mention of the Holy Spirit. At the Second Ecumenical Council in A.D. 381, held at Constantinople, the section on the Holy Spirit was expanded to make clear that the Holy Spirit is divine and is a Person distinct from the Father and the Son. Thus, we have a definitive statement on the Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

I tell you this story for two reasons. One is that I wanted to share with you an illustration of how the early church had to “contend earnestly for the faith” and to clarify its doctrine through discussion among church leaders, and then they stated their conclusion in a nice, succinct theological formulation: the Nicene Creed. The second reason for telling you this story is that this is the introduction to a personal testimony that I want to share with you.

I have told you before about the excellent foundation I received in a Lutheran Sunday school during my youth. Then, during my college years, I was introduced to John MacArthur’s church, and I was really impressed with his thorough, verse-by-verse expositional preaching through the

Bible. He really dug thoroughly into the Greek structure of the verses and the cultural background to the passage of scripture that he was preaching on – he really illuminated for us the meaning of each passage he covered. I learned a great deal from him and am really grateful. I was young and enthusiastic and idealistic in those days. I was so eager to be thoroughly Biblical in every way and to stick to the Bible only and to get rid of any preconceived notions that denominational background or church tradition might give me.

And then halfway through my college years, during the summer vacation when I was back home in San Diego, two evangelists came knocking on my door and desiring to share some scripture passages with me. I didn't know what point they wanted to make, but when they gave me a couple of books to read, I recognized those books as ones published by the Watchtower Society – that's the Jehovah's Witnesses. This is a group that denies the Trinity. They have some of the same viewpoints as Arius had, who I mentioned a few minutes ago. They reject the divinity of Christ. Well, when you think about it, these people do make at least one accurate point: the word "Trinity" does not appear in the Bible ... the word *homoousios* does not appear in the Bible. If these are not biblical terms, then maybe the theological conceptions behind them are not correct. Well, I took the two books that the Jehovah's Witnesses gave me and I read them. This was perhaps a dangerous moment in my life. My mindset at this time was very much to be strictly biblical and to shun any old traditions or inaccurate theological conceptions. I was very eager to throw off anything that is "just tradition." Maybe the Trinity is "just tradition" and is something that ought to be discarded.

Well, in the next couple of weeks, I did quite a lot of investigation into the background to the Trinity and I weighed the evidence both for and against that theological viewpoint. I soon realized that some of the ways the Jehovah's Witnesses were interpreting certain Bible verses was not accurate. But the thing that impressed me the most was when I looked at the Greek translation of the Old Testament known as the Septuagint. This translation was made in the second and third centuries B.C. When the translators came to the word "Yahweh," the name of God, they translated it with the Greek word "Kurios," meaning "Lord." When the New Testament writers quote the Old Testament, they generally quote from the Septuagint (the Greek Old Testament) ... and I was amazed to find out that many times when the New Testament writers quote a Septuagint verse containing the word "Kurios" and apply that verse to Jesus, they are, in fact, equating Jesus with Yahweh, because the original Hebrew word in those verses is Yahweh. When I came to realize that, this brought an end to my contemplation that maybe the Trinity is unbiblical. The Jehovah's Witnesses' analysis is flawed. Actually, if you take the whole of the biblical material when it discusses God the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, then the Trinity becomes the best way to describe these three persons: each of them equally God and each of them being a distinct Person.

Perhaps I have spent too much time telling you this story, but I wanted to share with you this important lesson that I learned. I learned to appreciate the work of previous generations of theologians who struggled with theological issues and clarified essential doctrines. Sometimes the theological words that we use (such as "Trinity" and "*homoousios*") are not explicitly used in the Bible, but they nevertheless express doctrinal truths that can be supported by the scripture. We Protestants say that we believe in the principle of "Sola Scriptura," that the Bible alone is our final authority on all matters of doctrine and practice. This is right: the Bible is our final authority on doctrinal issues. But "Sola Scriptura" should not be taken as "SOLO Scriptura" – the Bible only (only!) and thus ignore or reject any statements not explicitly found in Scripture. The Bible is our supreme authority, but the work of our forebears in the faith should not be overlooked or discarded. When the Protestant Reformers made their critique of the doctrines and practices of the Roman church, they often did appeal to the writings of various church fathers such as Saint Augustine and Saint John Chrysostom to support their viewpoints. And the Reformers affirmed the

theological formulations of the Nicene Creed, as well as the declaration from the Council of Chalcedon (in A.D. 451) on the two natures of Christ. These important statements have stood the test of time and have had wide acceptance throughout the Christian community, both inside and outside the boundaries of the old Roman Empire. These are useful and beneficial summaries of biblical truth. They are not on the same level as sacred scripture, but it is widely held that these statements are in line with what the Bible says.

Well, Paragraph 10 of the OIC Statement of Faith says that we believe it to be necessary to maintain “the purity of the visible church in doctrine and life.” And I have spent quite some time discussing doctrine, correct doctrine. Within the Christian community of our day, we find that there are numerous disagreements about what the correct doctrines are. Even among Bible-believing Christians, there are differing viewpoints on baptism, on spiritual gifts, on the exact manner of the future return of Jesus Christ, and on many other topics. What are the absolute essential doctrines that we must adhere to and defend? What are some less crucial doctrines that we might disagree on while still maintaining fellowship and recognizing each other as genuine Christians? Surely, part of the answer to the first question is something I already mentioned earlier. It is essential that we have the doctrine of salvation correct. And it is essential to have the doctrine of God correct: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – three Persons who are each God, sharing the same substance. But on some other doctrines like the ones I mentioned a moment ago, there are disagreements among honest, Bible-believing Christians. And I was amazed during my 20s to discover that God was using and blessing evangelical Christians who come from differing denominational outlooks. I have my viewpoints on certain theological issues, but I recognize that I have brothers and sisters who have differing viewpoints. As long as they stand on the truly essential doctrines, I accept these brothers and sisters.

The first sermon I gave at OIC was in 2017 and it was on the topic of the Five Principles of the Protestant Reformation. In fact, I repeated that sermon for you last year. In 2018, I delivered my second and third sermons at OIC – my second sermon was on the Apostles’ Creed and my third one was on the Nicene Creed. I think that these two theological formulations represent some of the most essential doctrines that we must adhere to as Christians. I am quite fond of these two creeds and so I would like to recite them for you today.

The Apostles’ Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

(Book of Common Prayer, 1979)

The Nicene Creed (or Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed)

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at

the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father [and the Son]. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

(Book of Common Prayer, 1979)

Also, let me repeat for you the Five Principles of the Protestant Reformation:

Sola scriptura ("by Scripture alone") – the Bible is our supreme and final authority on all matters of faith and practice.

Sola fide ("by faith alone") – we are justified by faith alone rather than on the basis of good works.

Sola gratia ("by grace alone") – salvation is based only on the grace of God and not on human merit.

Solus Christus ("through Christ alone") – Christ is the only mediator between God and man, and there is salvation through no one else.

Soli Deo gloria ("glory to God alone") – all glory is reserved for God alone and should not be given to any other person or being.

Our church's constitution identifies us a Protestant church. Our church's Statement of Faith is a typical Evangelical statement of faith. This is why you have heard me say that OIC is a church that stands in the Protestant and Evangelical tradition. We are also an Interdenominational church. We were founded as the first English-speaking church in Osaka – at that time, there were Baptists, Presbyterians, Charismatics and other evangelical Christians involved in our founding, so we have had an interdenominational and international flavor throughout our history.

Well, I have said a great deal about doctrine in today's sermon. Let's look again at Paragraph 10 of our Statement of Faith:

We believe in the necessity of maintaining, according to the Word of God, the purity of the visible church in doctrine and life, particularly in regard to all forms of idolatry.

"The purity of the visible church in doctrine and life." Let me spend a few minutes talking about purity of life – the Christian lifestyle. And about idolatry – this paragraph makes a specific mention of idolatry. That makes me think of the Epistle of 1st John. The very last thing John says in his fine epistle is this (1 John 5:21): "Little children, guard yourselves from idols." We must keep ourselves from worshiping anything other than God Himself and His Son Jesus Christ. There are many good reasons for this – for one thing, Psalm 115:8 tells us that when you worship something that is not God, you will come to resemble those lifeless idols you serve. And that leads us away from the true life that God gives us.

Purity of life. Let me share a few verses with you before I close today's message.

Ephesians 4:1-2 (NASB) – "Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, ² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love."

Our way of life should be "worthy" of our calling as disciples of Christ. Our lives should reflect the character of Christ. The people around us are watching us. Do we reflect Christ's character of love and holiness? Or are we sometimes grumbling and complaining, lying or stealing? It is my daily prayer that I live a God-honoring life that displays a positive witness consistent with my claim to be a follower of Christ.

Colossians 1:10 (NASB) – “So that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.”
Again: walk in a manner worthy of Christ. Desire to please Him. Bear fruit. Increase in the knowledge of God.

Philippians 1:27a (NASB) – “Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ ...”

1st Thessalonians 2:11-12 (NASB) – “Just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children, ¹² so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.”

Over and over again, the Apostle Paul implores the Christians in the various churches he has ministered in that they live lives that give honor to the God who has called them to be His disciples in His Kingdom.

Let me change my focus a bit. Let’s look at 1st Thessalonians 4:3-5 (NASB) – “For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; ⁴ that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, ⁵ not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God.”

God’s will ... is that we be sanctified, that we be living God-honoring lives. And chief among the things that we should be careful about is how we use our body. In verse 4, the word “vessel” probably refers to one’s own body. In the New International Version (NIV), verse 4 reads this way: “that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable.”

1st Corinthians 6:18-20 (NASB) – “Flee sexual immorality. Every other sin that a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. ¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? ²⁰ For you have been bought for a price: therefore glorify God in your body.” Our body is a “temple of the Holy Spirit.” This is where the Holy Spirit dwells. Also – verses 19 and 20 – this body doesn’t belong to us, it belongs to God, because He purchased it when Christ died on the cross to save us.

These verses that I’m sharing with you helped me in my younger days to be strict with myself and live according to Christian morality. This body doesn’t belong to me – it belongs to God. This body is where the Holy Spirit dwells, I must not defile it.

Let us be sure to live holy, God-honoring lives. Forsaking all manner of sins – immorality, lying, theft, greed, murder, anger, and many other sins. The world is watching us. Our lives should reflect Jesus.

I am going to close today’s message with one of my favorite verses from my favorite New Testament book. James 1:27 (NASB) – “This is pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.”

This is pure and undefiled religion:
To care for the most vulnerable members of society.
And to live a clean life.
To care for the most vulnerable members of society.
And to live a clean life.