

RELIGION THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

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INTRODUCTION

- A. TEXT: (James 1:16-27).
1. "Be not deceived my beloved brethren"
 2. "Pure Religion and undefiled before our God and Father is..."
- B. SETTING:
1. James is writing to the church about a generation after its beginning.
 2. He writes concerning the life that Christians should live.
 3. A very practical book on Christian living.
- C. WARNS AGAINST HYPOCRISY.
1. Nothing is more repulsive to sensitive souls than hypocrisy.
 - a. "Hypokrisis" - playing a part on the stage.
 - b. Defined as 'a feigning to be what one is not.'
 2. One of the places hypocrisy is most frequently found is in religion.
 3. In Luke 6:46, Jesus asked; "*Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*"
- D. The Book of James makes it unmistakable clear that TRUE RELIGION does make a difference in one's Thinking, disposition, language, habits, choice of friends, etc.
1. It is the total control of an individual by the Will of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 2. In James 1:16-27, the Holy Spirit specifies Five Areas in which TRUE RELIGION makes a difference in one's life.
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ONE'S VIEW OF GOD

- A. GOD IS UNCHANGING:
1. "*Be not deceived, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning.*" v.16,17.
 2. James had earlier warned against a false view that would make God the source of our temptations to evil. (James 1:13ff).
 3. If Satan can get us to forget our blessings and brood over our hardships, he may be able to create discontent and frustration and lead many into sin
- B. SATAN TRIES TO GET US TO "QUESTION" GOD IN MANY WAYS.
1. "Why did God take him from us?"

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2. "Why did God do this to me?"
 3. "If there is a God of Love in Heaven....why, why, etc.
 - C. James Declares Our View Of God is the source of Life's Good Things.
 1. He does not "set us up" by blessing one day and taking away the next.
 2. He sends only Good Things and sends them constantly.
 3. Illustrated by "Father of lights"... constant and stead with His blessings (cf I John 1:5).
 4. Greatest gift....**SALVATION!**
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SELF CONTROL

- A. DIFFERENCE IN ONE'S ABILITY TO CONTROL HIS TEMPER AND TONGUE.
 1. *"Ye know this, my beloved brethren, But let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:"* v. 19.
 2. Can you control your temper?
 3. Do you say the right things, at the right time.
 - B. Whether in conversation or criticism.
 1. Whether it has to do with religion or weather, be slow about losing your temper and unleashing your tongue!
 2. Even if you win an argument, you may lose a friend or even a soul.
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IN ONE'S HEART

- A. *"Wherefore putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness, receive with meekness the implanted word which is able to save your souls."* (v. 21).
 1. When the Gospel is Preached it brings varied response.
 - a. "Some mocked" (Acts 17:32).
 - b. The difference is not in the gospel (Acts 10:35), but in the heart of the hearer.
 2. Parable of the soils (sower). Luke 8:4-15.
 - B. The Gospel will not have its full effect in producing Christian Character and dedication in a person **until** he discards all the sinful remains of his old life!
 1. Gal. 4:16 *"So then am I become your enemy, by telling you the truth?"*
 2. The elements of a good and fruitful heart is PURITY.
 3. The Heart is changed, Rom. 2:29; "circumcision is that of the heart"
 4. **TRUE RELIGION CHANGES US FROM THE INSIDE - OUT!**
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WILLINGNESS TO OBEY

A. *“BUT BE YE DOERS OF THE WORD, AND NOT HEARERS ONLY, DELUDING YOUR OWN SELVES. For if any one is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a mirror: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth away, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But he that looketh into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and so continueth, being not a hearer that forgetteth but a doer that worketh, this man shall be blessed in his doing.”* (James 1:22=25).

1. Truths of the Gospel must be translated into actions!
2. “That sermon really hit me”... **stepped on my toes**...etc. (If it stepped on our toes, it does us no good, unless we are willing to move our feet!)
3. Listening to the painful Truth is not a whipping that squares your account with God; it is a form of prodding to get you to do something once you leave the building.

B. *“LOOKING INTO THE PERFECT LAW...”*

1. The hypocrite listens, nods approvingly...etc. then behaves precisely as he pleases.
 2. The “wise” and “foolish” builders in Matthew 7:24-27.
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CONCERN FOR THE NEEDY

A. *“If any man thinketh himself to be religious, while he bridled not his tongue but deceiveth his heart, this man’s religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.”* (

1. What does “visit” mean? (James 1:26-27)
2. For a child of God to shut his heart to the plight of poor people around him would make his religion vain. It would make him a hypocrite.

B. *“Put on therefore, as God’s elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving each other...”* (Col. 3:12ff).

1. Gal. 6:10; “Do good unto all men...”
 2. *“But whoso hath the world’s good, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither with the Tongue; but in deed and truth”* (I John 3:17) (See Micah 6:6-8) Read
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