

review it *(Revisit the weekly rituals and follow-up on the last gathering)*

- Look over the last session’s Action Step Journal and ask how it went. Share as honestly as you can. It’s not meant to cause shame or guilt, rather, a community of care.
- Try to recite last week’s memory verse.
- Try to recite the series memory verse, James 1:22.

hear it *(Slow down and hear the Word)*

Read James 1:26-27 aloud (twice if possible, using two different translations).

- ASK: What word, phrase, or image stands out to you and why?
- ASK: What does this passage teach about God?
- ASK: What does this passage teach about humanity?

check the mirror *(Help the group examine themselves honestly by asking questions)*

- **tongue check | words reveal the heart**
 - Where did your words (in person... or online) this week show what’s really going on inside you?
 - What tends to “trigger” sharp or cutting speech for you?
 - Look at *Ephesians 4:29*. How would *doing* this reshape one recent conversation or post?
 - What’s one boundary you could set to “rein the tongue” before it runs?
- **majoring on minors | angry bickering**
 - Where have you been more eager to win an argument than to love a person?
 - What belongs in your “closed hand” of clear beliefs vs. your “open hand” of secondary views? (*cf. Romans 14:1–4*)
 - What does love require of you when a debate starts to heat up?
 - How could you exit an unhelpful thread without shaming anyone?

- **rules vs. obedience | legalism and ritual**
 - Are there “extra rules” or empty, churchy habits you lean on while ignoring a clear step of obedience God’s actually asked of you?
 - Is there a tradition or preference which has quietly become a “test of spirituality” for you?
 - Where is God inviting simple, humble obedience instead?
 - What would repentance look like this week?

put it to work *(Move from talk to action)*

This week’s practice: **look after someone vulnerable.**

Choose one person or family (ideas: a widow/solo parent, a family fostering, a neighbor in need, someone financially/relationally at risk) and do one concrete act of care: a meal, a gas card or pay a bill, childcare, yard work, a ride to an appointment, a kind word of encouragement, or a generous gift.

Why would practicing this matter? James says “pure and undefiled” religion shows up as compassion and holiness. Serving the vulnerable forms our hearts like Jesus and keeps us from a performative religion.

- Do you think this will be easy or difficult?
- What could pollute or derail this and how can you guard your heart while you serve?

wisdom in action *(Apply wisdom principles to life situations.)*

Consider how a guarded tongue (restraint) and generous care (action) make Jesus visible in ordinary life.

- How do “words + works” together display the good kind of religion?

One step into a *real relationship* will often teach more than ten debates.

- Where is God inviting you to move toward people with courage and holiness instead of figuratively circling the wagons?

weekly rituals

(Do these in whatever order—be sure to move through them)

- Weekly Memory Verse:
"But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves." James 1:22
- Action Step Journal:

- Series memory verse:
"But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves." James 1:22