

The Father of Lights

El padre de las luces

How should we respond to the Father of Lights?
¿Cómo debemos responder al Padre de las Luces?

1. Let's pursue a _____ life.

Sigamos una vida _____.

James 1:19-21 (Santiago 1:19-21)

Matthew 6:33 (Mateo 6:33)

2. Let's put God's word into _____.

Pongamos la palabra de Dios en _____.

James 1:22-25 (Santiago 1:22-25)

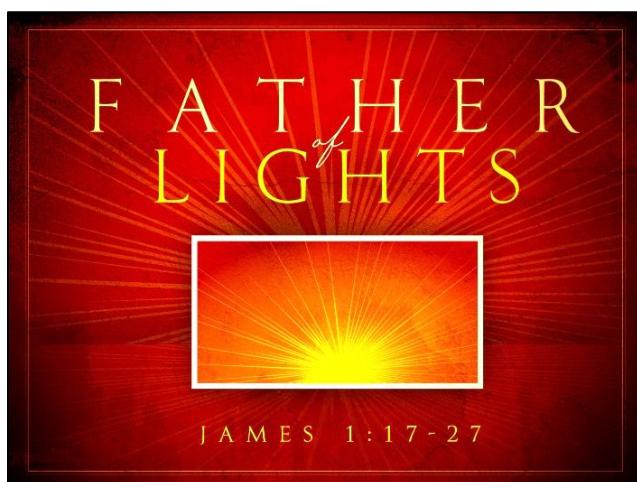
1 John 3:17-18 (1 Juan 3:17-18)

3. Let's practice _____ religion.

Practiquemos la religión _____.

James 1:26-27 (Santiago 1:26-27)

Romans 12:2 (Romanos 12:2)



Life Group Discussion Questions

Week 2: May 18-25

James 1:1-16

There are many human relationships we are familiar with that the Bible uses to teach us about our relationship with God. One of the most important ones is that of a father and his children. However, because human beings are imperfect, weak, and sinful, there are no perfect human fathers. Even the best fathers sin and fall short of God's glory. The good news is that our heavenly Father is always perfect in every way. In James 1:17-27, God is described as the "Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows." In this passage we see several good gifts that God gives to His children. We also see how we as God's children should respond to His good and perfect gifts.

Read James 1:17-27

1. How did James describe God in this passage? (1:17-18)

Charles Swindoll notes:

James says that we have been brought forth "by the word of the truth" (Jas. 1:18). That same motherly word that gave birth to us will also nurture and protect us, giving us all we need to grow. And when those inevitable and appealing temptations come, God's Word can literally deliver us from evil. The psalmist said, "Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You" (Ps. 119:11). (Swindoll, 35)

2. What instructions did James give us in verse 19?
3. What is the relationship between anger and righteous living? (1:20)

Swindoll observes:

When the Word hits close to home, a sinner most naturally responds with defensiveness, indignation—even anger. We don't want our crookedness to be held up to a perfect standard, but that's just what happens when we let God's Word expose our innermost thoughts and actions. Instead of allowing the typical response of anger, James calls us to respond in peace, "for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God" (Jas. 1:20). Anger rejects rebuke; peace accepts it. Anger dismisses correction; peace embraces it. (Swindoll, 38-39)

4. What should a Christian clean out of his or her life? (1:21)

Gary Holloway writes:

“Get rid” is actually a metaphor of taking off one set of clothes and putting on another. Thus, Christians are to put off the filthy clothes of hasty speech, anger, and all kinds of evil and to put on Christ. This metaphor of “take off” and “put on” occurs in many places in the New Testament and may refer to the change of life that takes place in baptism (Romans 13:12; Ephesians 4:22-25; Colossians 3:8; Hebrews 12:1; 1 Peter 2:1). It is another way of speaking of that new birth and creation that God gives (see v. 18). (Holloway, 46)

5. What is the relationship between listening to God’s Word and doing it? (1:22)

6. What analogy did James use to describe a person who does not do what the Bible says? (1:23-24)

Kent Hughes comments:

Admittedly, looking in the mirror at oneself is not always a pleasant experience. As someone once said to me, “Whenever I forget what I look like, I count it a blessing!” But spiritually it is catastrophic whenever we stop looking. The man here sees his reflection in the mirror, contemplates his appearance, and goes on his way. There is no real effect on his life. He has failed to respond to God’s Word. He has gotten no more lasting benefit from God’s Word than a passing look. The solemn truth is, unless the Word has made a change in our lives, it has not really entered our lives. God’s Word becomes a millstone if we do not make it a milestone. (Hughes, 66)

7. What promise did James give to the person who studies God’s Word and practices it? (1:25)

8. What does the Bible give to people? (1:25)

9. How is a person’s speech related to the credibility of his or her faith? (1:26)

10. How does pure religion respond to those in need? (1:27)

11. How does pure religion respond to the sinful temptations of the world? (1:27)

Holloway notes:

This discussion of hearing and doing serves as a corrective to the cheap grace practiced by many in the church today. Salvation by grace does not mean that moral standards are lower for Christians. Indeed, it is Jesus who calls his disciples to a higher righteousness (Matthew 5:20). In James's day, as well as ours, there were those who deceived themselves into thinking they were saved because they had heard the gracious words of salvation. James reminds them that grace requires an active response. Such a response includes control of our speech, care for those in need, and rejection of the standards of the world. (Holloway, 51)

12. What makes it hard for us to be good listeners?

13. How do displays of anger and temper affect the witness of a Christian?

14. What attitudes and habits can inhibit our growth as disciples of Christ?

15. What makes it hard for us to practice what we know to be good?

16. How does our speech reflect our relationship with God?

17. How have you experienced freedom by doing the Word of God?

18. What can we do to help widows and orphans?

19. How will you keep yourself from being polluted by the world?

20. In what situations do you need to curb your anger? How can you?

Sources cited:

Holloway, Gary. *James & Jude*. College Press, 1996.

Hughes, R. Kent. *James: Faith that Works*. Crossway, 2015.

Swindoll, Charles. *Insights on James, 1 & 2 Peter*. Tyndale, 2014.