

James 1:22-27
“Are We Real?” Part 2
March 1, 2026

V 18 He “gives birth” to us, by the word of truth.

V 19 Our response to the word of truth must be “...swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath...”

V 21 We are to lay aside the immorality that prevents us from hearing His Word, and receive the Word that was implanted when we were born from above, with the attitude of meekness, because it is able to save our lives.

V 22 We are wrong when we think that simply hearing the Word is enough for spiritual growth and blessing; we must put what we hear into action. To “do” is to “make something happen.” We are to “make something happen” when we hear the word.

V 23 Because, to hear the Word without doing the Word is like looking into a mirror and seeing your hair all messed up, and walking away without doing anything about it. James is saying more, however.

“observing his natural face in a mirror:” “natural” = Gr. *genesis*, “the face of your birth, the *new birth* from v 18. To hear the Word without doing the Word is to “forget what kind of man” you are, which is a new man, born of the will of God.

This means that it is possible for the believer to *live like* he has not been born again; this is the “carnal” Christian; see 1 Corinthians 3:1-3.

V 25 To “look into the perfect law of liberty” is to perceive that you are a new man/new woman, and the Word, when studied and applied, will bring a blessing to you. The “liberty” is the freedom to be who you are in Christ, which is a new creation.

The OT Law: The medieval Jewish philosopher Maimonides broke down the 613 commandments into 248 positive commandments, and 365 negatives (one for each day of the year.)¹

The “law” that we are lawful with respect to is the “law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus,” Romans 8:2.

We do not live under a law, per se, because when we live out our new selves, which is “Christ in us,” (Galatians 2:20), we fulfill the Mosaic

Law, which is to love God first and foremost, and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

Our freedom: No lists, of what to eat/not eat; what to wear/not wear (modesty is a requisite); what days to worship; what feasts to hold every year; bringing our animals’ blood to the altar every time we sin (now, we bring our sin to the blood of Jesus for forgiveness and fellowship).

The “perfect law of liberty” is Christ working out His life through us. That is our new identity. He will never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5).

When we do a good deed, He is there; when we say “No” to our flesh, He is there; when we cry, He is there; when we mourn, He is there; when we tell a dirty joke, He is there; when we think a filthy thought, He is there. *He never leaves us or forsakes us.* That is the internal motivation of the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

“look into” leaning in to take a look; see Luke 24:12

“continues” Gr *parameno*, continue in; compare to *meno*, abide; *hypomeno*, abide under, or endure.

“doer of the work” is literally, “doer of work” (no “the” in Gr.)
The reward of this manner of life is being “blessed.”

V 26 All of our outward demonstrations of worshipping God, be it church attendance, youth group, Sunday school, whatever else, is of no use if we do not have control of our tongues. God desires internal integrity and holiness more so than our external behaviors. We are deceiving our hearts if we think otherwise.

“Tongue control” is directing it to sit quietly when it needs to sit quietly, and to speak when it needs to speak.

V 27 To show kindness to those who need kindness is pure religion; that is the outward sign of our worship that proves that we are doers of God’s Word, and not hearers only. To live life with those priorities is to keep ourselves unspotted from the value systems of the world.

¹ (<https://www.gotquestions.org/613-commandments.html>, accessed 02/21/2026)

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