

## Deep Practice Discipleship Guide

**James 1:22 — “Be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves.”**

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### 1. Opening Reflection: Last Week’s Deep Practice

Begin by inviting the group to reflect on their commitment from last week.

#### Prompt Questions:

- What did you commit to practice this past week?
- Where did you follow through? Where was it difficult?
- What did you notice about your heart, habits, or awareness?
- Did anything surprise you as you tried to live it out?

Encourage honesty. The goal is not perfection, but awareness and growth.

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### 2. Sermon Overview (For Group Reflection)

#### Hook:

There are some things in life you simply cannot fake.

Like trying to preach without a shirt or a sermon—you can’t just “wing it.”

You can’t fake being prepared... and you can’t fake being covered.

And James presses this truth further: you can’t fake discipleship.

#### Head: Understanding the Text

- **“Be doers”**  
Truth is meant to be acted upon, not just understood.
- **“Of the word” (Logos)**  
God’s revealed authority—ultimately fulfilled in Jesus.
- **“Hearers” vs. “Hearers only”**  
Hearing = receiving and understanding  
Hearing only = exposure without transformation
- **“Deceiving yourselves”**  
Self-deception happens in the gap between hearing and doing.

### **How Self-Deception Develops:**

1. Hear the word clearly
2. Feel recognition or conviction
3. Walk away without responding
4. The moment fades

### **Why It's Dangerous:**

- It *feels* like faithfulness
- It can include:
  - Church attendance
  - Bible engagement
  - Emotional response
- But underneath:
  - No surrendered will
  - No heart change
  - No reordered life
  - No behavioral transformation

### **Common Forms of Spiritual Self-Deception:**

- **Information-based:** “I know a lot, so I must be growing.”
- **Intention-based:** “I plan to obey, so that counts.”
- **Emotion-based:** “I felt something, so I’ve changed.”
- **Comparison-based:** “I’m doing better than others.”

### **Key Insight:**

The danger is not rejecting the Word—it is receiving it in a way that requires nothing.

### **What Is a Doer?**

A doer translates what God has said into a lived response:

- Not identical for everyone
- Not at the same pace

- But always moving toward obedience

**James 1:25:**

- Looks intently
  - Continues in it
  - Acts on it
  - Experiences blessing
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**3. Group Discussion (Bloom's Taxonomy)**

**Remembering / Understanding**

- What does James say is the difference between a hearer and a doer?
- Where does self-deception begin according to this passage?

**Applying**

- Which form of self-deception do you find most tempting (information, intention, emotion, comparison)?
- Where do you see a gap between what you know and what you do?

**Analyzing**

- Why do you think hearing the Word can feel like obedience, even when it isn't?
- What makes "hearing only" so spiritually dangerous?

**Evaluating**

- How would you assess your current discipleship—more hearing or doing?
- What indicators would show real transformation in your life?

**Creating**

- What would it look like for you to become a "doer" in one specific area right now?
  - How can you build a rhythm that moves you from hearing to doing consistently?
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**4. Storying Exercise**

**Text:** *Matthew 7:24–27 — The Wise and Foolish Builders*

**Step 1: Read the Story Aloud (twice if possible)**

**Step 2: Retell the Story Together (from memory)**

Encourage the group to reconstruct the story without looking.

**Step 3: Explore the Story**

**Discussion Questions:**

- What is the difference between the two builders?
- What do both builders have in common?
- What ultimately reveals the difference between them?
- How does this story connect with James 1:22?
- Where do you see yourself in this story right now?

**Key Connection:**

Both *hear* the words.

Only one *acts*.

The difference is revealed over time.

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**5. Deep Practice Commitment (This Week)**

Take a few quiet moments for reflection.

**Write this down:**

- What has God shown me in His Word that I need to obey?
- Where is there a gap between what I know and what I do?

**Now choose ONE concrete step of obedience for this week:**

Make it:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Realistic
- Immediate

Examples:

- Initiate a difficult but necessary conversation
- Set aside daily time in Scripture with a specific action step
- Forgive or reconcile with someone
- Change a specific habit or pattern

Encourage participants:

You can continue working on a previous practice, or begin a new one based on what God is showing you now.

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## **6. Closing Prayer**

Invite the group to pray together.