

FAITH + WORKS

JAMES 1:19-27



OPENING

- Read the entire first chapter of James. Ask the group members how they've been challenged by and responsive to the three sermons that covered this passage.

SERMON REVIEW

- Have you ever listened, but failed to do what was said? It's not enough just to hear. Jesus said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word and obey it." (Luke 11:28)
- Be quick to listen, but slow to speak and slow to become angry. We love to hear our own voice and give our opinions, but there's wisdom in attentiveness and restraint.
- Listen to the voice of the Lord, and align yourself with Him. Then you'll be angered by sin and injustice, rather than things that simply don't matter.
- Don't just listen to the word; do what it says. The person that listens without doing is as crazy as one who looks into a mirror and then forgets their own appearance afterward.
- James is warning us: if you don't live this out, you're a fake, and you're deceiving yourself! If you don't do what the word says, you haven't fully submitted your life to Jesus.
- There's a difference between being impacted by the word of God and being changed by it. Do you hear a sermon and think, "That was good!" Or do you put it into practice?

DISCUSSION

- How can you be quick to listen and slow to speak, both to others and to God?
- What does it mean to "humbly accept the word planted in you"? Read the words of Jesus in Matthew 13:1-23.
- Were you surprised by James' assertion that, if you aren't living out the word, you're deceiving yourself into thinking you are a follower of Jesus? Why or why not?
- How does the mirror symbolize Scripture? What does the word of God show us as we "look intently" into it?
- Read v. 25 again. Now read John 8:31-32. What are these words of James and of Jesus revealing to us? And what exactly is James promising at the end of v. 25?
- James mentions self-deception again in v. 26, making the point that a person's religion is worthless when their speech is unrestrained. Why does he state that? See what Jesus says about it in Matthew 12:33-34.
- How is v. 27 related to the rest of this passage? Remember that the immediate literary context is of properly hearing and responding to the word of God.

CHALLENGE

- Put the word of God into practice. Take action in response to your private practice of prayer and devotion, small group discussions, and the sermons that you hear.
- Continue reading, writing, and memorizing the book of James.

PLAN AHEAD

- Brandi will be teaching from James 2:1-13. Read it for yourself to be prepared!