



STUDY TOOLS

Sunday, June 1, 2025

Teaching Title: The Antidote: The Cure for Today's Christianity

Key Scripture: James 1:19–27

CEDAR VALLEY

5-DAY READING PLAN WITH QUESTIONS:

Monday: Jeremiah 7:1–29

Tuesday: Deuteronomy 28:1–14

Wednesday: Joshua 1:1–9

Thursday: Psalm 112

Friday: John 14:15–31; Matthew 7:24–29

1. What does this passage tell you about God?
2. What does this passage tell you about people?
3. If this is God's word, what do I need to do?
4. What's your takeaway?
5. Who would you tell?

MEMORY TOPIC:

Do what God's Word says

MEMORY VERSE:

James 1:22 NLT

But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves.

LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION:

Introduction:

We are in Week 3 of our teaching series, *James: Faith that Works*. In his letter, James challenges his readers with a truth that still resonates today: it's not enough to simply say you're a Christian—you must live like one! For James, faith is only genuine when it's lived out. When we apply God's word to our lives, rather than just hearing it, that's when true transformation happens. Christians are called to be doers of God's Word, not just hearers: by controlling our speech, rejecting sin, caring for the vulnerable, and refusing to be corrupted by the world. It's time for today's Church to stop posing and start practicing, because the world needs authentic Christ-followers. Information doesn't lead to transformation until there's application.

Questions:

Icebreaker: What is one piece of advice or instruction you've heard many times but still struggle to apply? (e.g., flossing daily, not speeding)

1. Read James 1:19–27 as a group. What makes it difficult for us to be good listeners?
2. How might following the three steps James outlines in 1:19 help us in our relationships with God and others? How are these steps connected? (See Notes)
3. According to 1:19–21, how can anger hinder our spiritual growth?
4. What patterns in your life do we need to turn from in order to humbly receive the Word of God? (1:21—See Digging Deeper)
5. Some say James 1:22 captures the main point of his letter. What are some ways we can allow God's Word to take root in our lives and transform us?
6. How does James' illustration emphasize the importance of both hearing and doing? Why is it essential to apply God's Word rather than just read it?

7. In your own words, how would you describe true religion versus false religion? (James 1:26–27)
8. Who are the vulnerable people in your life—the widow and orphan? What are some specific acts of compassion God may be calling you to show them?

Notes

James begins verse 19 with “quick to listen,” but it’s important to remember the context. James 1:18 says, “He chose to give birth to us by giving us his true word. And we, out of all creation, became his prized possession.”

First, it says that He gave us “birth.” This refers to the new birth that only God can give, the birth that leads to eternal life. James isn’t talking about physical birth, because anyone reading or hearing this has already been born physically. He’s specifically addressing Christians. James is writing to believers, those who have experienced this second, spiritual birth.

So how did this new/second birth come about? It came through His “true word.” In the context of this chapter, that “true word” refers to the truth of the Gospel, the message about Jesus Christ through which believers receive spiritual life. His life, His death and burial, and His resurrection from the dead. This is the message or the “true word” by which we are given new birth!

Digging Deeper

In James 1:19–27, James builds on the teaching of Jesus found in Matthew 7:24–27 (as well as the Parable of the Sower in Matthew 13:1–23).

“Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won’t collapse because it is built on bedrock. But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn’t obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash.”

Question 4—

“In further preparation for the reception of the Word, one must “get rid of all moral filth.” The Greek word translated “get rid of” (*apothemenoi*) was primarily used of taking off garments. Hebrews 12:1 speaks of throwing off any excessive weight, such as unnecessary clothing, to make ready for the race of faith. The “moral filth” and the evil that is so abundant are to be stripped off like dirty clothes in preparation for “accept[ing] the word.” The reception of truth must be marked by humility or meekness (Gr., *prayeti*). This is not to be construed as spineless or weakness. Instead, it is the quality of a strong [person] that makes [themselves] docile and submissive rather than haughty and rebellious. Only in such a spirit can one fully receive God’s truth. That the Word is described as “planted in you” suggests the readers were believers who already possessed the truth. The phrase “which can save you” simply describes the truth as saving truth. James is not calling for initial acceptance of that message, but for a full and intelligent appropriation of the truth as the Christian grows in spiritual understanding.”

—Donald Burdick. *James. The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*. Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 1981.