

Joyful Life Bible Studies

JAMES 1:22-27

Lesson 7

FIRST DAY: Review and Overview

1. Review James 1:16-21. In what way has James 1:17,18 enriched your knowledge of Who God is and what He's done for us?
 - a. Relate how James 1:19-21 should influence our behavior.
2. Mark the paragraph divisions in James 1:22-27 as follows and list the subjects dealt with in each paragraph:
 - a. James 1:22-25
 - b. James 1:26,27
3. We cannot emphasize strongly enough the need for every believer to *apply* God's Word to his or her life. *Doing* the study each week is not enough. We must live what we are learning. Begin your homework with a prayer asking the Lord to give you a fresh revelation of what James 1:22-27 is saying to *you* and express your desire to put into practice whatever the Word tells you to do.

*... a good understanding
have all they that do His commandments ...*
-Psalm 111:10b

SECOND DAY: Read James 1:22

1. James 1:22 has been called *the heart of James* or *the key to James*. Write this verse phrase by phrase. Memorize it.
 - a. Write this verse again in your own words personalizing it.
 - b. What is this verse saying to you?

Optional: Test yourself on your *doing the Word* by reviewing James 1:1-21 observing any areas that we are to put into practice. How are you *doing*?

2. Think seriously for a moment about the consequence of *hearing the Word* but *not doing it*. Record it from James 1:22c.
 - a. To endure the tests and trials James 1 alludes to, we must be putting the Word into process by being *doers*. Use James 1:2-4 as a practical example of this.
 - b. *Deceiving* means to reckon falsely; miscalculate, delude. Cite a current example of one who could be doing this and not be aware of it.
3. The word *hearers* here does not refer to merely a casual peruser of the Word but one who gives attention to it, he *receives* it (James 1:21). One can even love being a student of the Word but if there is no *doing of the Word*, he/she is *deceived*. Describe the *hearers* only from the following verses:
 - a. Matthew 7:26(27)
 - b. Ezekiel 33:30c-32. Use NIV if desired.

(1.) What do you think goes on in the gap between the *hearing* and the *doing*?

Challenge: View the disobedience of those to whom Ezekiel was speaking from Ezekiel 33:(23)24-26.

Advanced Students: Research and briefly state the consequences of their disobedience to the Word of the Lord.

4. Can you imagine *hearing* Jesus speaking directly to you as those on the Mount of Beatitudes did? Choose a few (all if you have time) of His instructions from the following verses and ponder them in relationship to your being a *doer* of the Word as you write them here:
 - a. Matthew 5:16
 - b. Matthew 5:44
 - c. Matthew 6:19,20(21)

- d. Matthew 6:31(32)33
 - e. Matthew 7:7(8)
 - f. Matthew 7:12
 - g. Mark 11:25
5. Observe closely the word *be* in James 1:22. It literally means *become*. It signifies a change in behavior and a continued perseverance in that change. What does *be* say to you today in light of *become*?

*The Greek word translated hearers was used to designate
those who were consistent in listening to lectures
but who never became genuine disciples.*
-selected

THIRD DAY: Read James 1:23-25

1. Compare the following TLB version of James 1:(22)23,24 with the KJV. Write above the underlined words the KJV words.

(And remember, it is a message to obey, not just to listen to. So don't fool yourselves.) For if a person just listens and doesn't obey, he is like a man looking at his face in a mirror; as soon as he walks away, he can't see himself anymore or remember what he looks like.

- a. Focus on the words *beholding* and *beholdeth*. This indicates more than a quick glance. It signifies *gazing intently*. With this in mind describe in your own words what the man of James 1:23,24 is like.

(1.) What is the point of this illustration?

- b. Think for a moment about why you look in a mirror. Write a few of the reasons you do this.

(1.) What comparisons do you find in this for your *hearing* of God's Word (whether by reading or listening)?

(2.) Do you *behold* (see) yourself when you hear or read the Word? Why or why not?

Optional: Exodus 38:8 reveals that the women of Moses' time donated their *lookingglasses* (mirrors - NIV - of solid bronze) for the casting of the *laver* in the courtyard of the tabernacle. What was the purpose of the *laver*?

(a.) Link the *lookingglasses* and the *laver* with the *mirror of the Word* and the cleansing of the Word (John 15:3). Share any thoughts on this.

2. Write James 1:25 phrase by phrase.

a. How is the Word of God described in James 1:25a?

(1.) Look at the *perfect law of the Lord* as the *perfect law of liberty* through Psalm 19:7-11. What do you see?

Challenge: *Law of liberty* at first glance sounds like an oxymoron (a combination of contradictory words). How is God's Word the *law of liberty*? (You might want to think of the Children of Israel brought out of the bondage in Egypt, experiencing freedom. The law was given to safeguard their freedom, not restrict it.)

3. Think of the words *looketh* and *continueth* (James 1:25) in the light of this paraphrase: *But if anyone keeps looking steadily into God's law for free men, he will not only remember it but he will do what it says, and God will greatly bless him in what he does.* TLB rev. What will be the result of his looking into, continuing in, and doing God's Word? Selah

a. The Bible is called the *perfect law for free men*. If obeyed it will keep us from those things that will bring us into bondage unto our self and sin. How have you experienced the *blessedness* of obedience promised to those who are *doers of the work* in James 1:25?

4. What do you discover about the transforming power of God's Word in the following translation of II Corinthians 3:18 that encourages you?

*But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror
the glory of the Lord, are being transformed
into the same image from glory to glory,
just as from the Lord, the Spirit.*

II Corinthians 3:18 NAS

FOURTH DAY: Read James 1:26,27

1. Observe the continuity of thought from James 1:18-25 in relationship to James 1:26,27: the new birth (18,19a) leads to the new growth (19b-25) produced by *hearing* and *doing* the Word. This leads to a new lifestyle which James characterizes by three specific areas of Christian living. James uses these verses as an overview of topics he will deal with more thoroughly later in his letter. List these three areas from James 1:26,27.
2. Write James 1:26 phrase by phrase in the following left-hand column. Write each phrase in your own words in the right-hand column. Use the following NIV to help you with this if you desire:

James 1:26 KJV	James 1:26 - own words
a. If	
b. and	
c. but	
d. this	

*If anyone considers himself religious and
yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue,
he deceives himself and his religion is worthless.*

3. In James 1:26,27 we encounter *vain religion* contrasted with *pure religion*. The Greek word *threkos* defined in James 1:26 as *religious* refers to outward or ceremonious acts of religion. The phrase *seem to be* means *in his own estimation*. This man thinks because he is outwardly scrupulous in ceremony and worship he is a pious, wonderful Christian. From the preceding explanation define *religion* in your own words.
 - a. Where is *this man* deceived and what evidence declares him deceived ?
 - b. What picture comes to mind when you read the words *bridleth not*?
 - c. Why does not bridling his tongue prove his outwardly religious acts to be *vain, worthless* or *meaningless*?

d. How might a *deceived heart* be exposed by an *unbridled tongue*? Luke 6:45

4. How does James 1:26 speak to you?

a. What do you do when you feel the bridle slipping?

b. Share a verse from the Bible that helps you bridle your tongue.

c. Meditate on Proverbs 31:26. What *law* controls her tongue? Selah

(1.) Put this into practice today (James 1:22) and report on the results.

FIFTH DAY: Read James 1:27

1. What two examples of *pure religion and undefiled before God our Father*, does James use here? Use other versions for your answer if you desire.

a. James is not giving a complete definition of *religion* in James 1:27. What do you think is his intention in this verse? See James 2:17.

2. James stresses *personal service* and *personal purity as religion* (outward marks of the inward life) which is acceptable unto God. Why do you think ministering to *orphans* and *widows* (representative of the two most needy classes in the early church) was especially a high priority for James? See Matthew 25:36,37; Psalm 68:5.

a. How is this exemplified by the early church? Acts 4:32,34a

(1.) Caring for the needy should always be a concern and a commitment of the believer. Consider and record the promises given to those who serve the Lord by serving those who are in need:

(a.) Psalm 41:1-3

(b.) Isaiah 58:7,8

b. Share any opportunity that is available to you to be a *doer* of the Word in this area of service.

3. What does keeping oneself *unspotted* (unstained, polluted, defiled) *from the world* mean to you in personal experience?
 - a. Define the *world* as James refers to it here from I John 2:16.
 - b. *Unspotted* defines a condition of personal purity that remains untainted and unpolluted by contact with the world's contaminating influences. What things contribute to keeping oneself *unspotted from the world*?
 - (1.) Share one practical way you can avoid the polluting influences.
 - (2.) How much do you think T.V. contributes to personal pollution (being spotted by the world)?
4. God sets us apart for Himself and preserves and keeps us holy. See this from I Thessalonians 5:23,24; Jude 24(25). It is our part to cooperate with God in His work in us. Someone has written *Constant vigilance is required by the believer to remain unspotted from the world*. How does James 1:27 alert and prompt you to personal purity?

SIXTH DAY: Review James 1:22-27

1. In what area of James 1:22-27 have you been most strengthened?
2. Share a particular insight from the lesson that enriched, encouraged, or pressed you to a deeper commitment.
3. In response to James 1:22-25, what are you going to *do* about what you *hear* from the Word?
 - a. Use your mirror as a daily reminder of this. Share a creative way you might do this.
4. Where do you find yourself being most deficient in James 1:26,27? Share, if not too personal.
 - a. What change would you like to experience?
 - b. What steps will you take to implement this?
5. What are you most thankful for in this lesson?

