

Greater Pleasant Branch Baptist Church

Connect Learn Grow

Wednesday Bible Study-Theme: Pathways to Spirituality

Review of the Book of James

Lesson # 10- March 31, 2021-Prepared by: Pastor Artee Williams

I. Subject: True Faith in Action- James 1: 26-27

II. Introduction

In this section of James chapter 1, James seeks to avoid a misunderstanding of the phrase: “doer of the word.” James gave three examples of practicing the word to include the believers speech, service and separation from the world. James maintains that when a believer receives the word and acts on it in faith , it will result in an absence of vain religion and hypocrisy.

III. Big Idea

Committed believers demonstrate their obedience with deeds of compassion and inner purity.

IV. Key definitions, commands, spiritual principles and spiritual disciplines

1. Religion- means an outward practice. In some New Testament Scriptures it refers to worship. Pure religion means practicing God’s word and sharing it with others. So then is it possible (Pastor Williams question) that Religion could be defined as an act of worship in which believers demonstrate obedience to God’s word through deeds of compassion ,while remaining separated from the world ?
2. In verse 26 , James describes a believer who considered himself to be religious but did not listen well to God’s word.
3. James is addressing believers who focus on the externals of religious action such as public prayer, giving, worship, and church attendance. James did not say those externals were unnecessary or unimportant but that inner control of the tongue must accompany outward performance.
4. James compares the tongue to an unmanageable horse which needed a bit and bridle to control it. The word “bridleth” means to restrain, govern, or control. James is teaching the importance of governing what proceeds from our mouth, uncontrolled speech is a sign that the word of God has not been fully implanted into the heart.
5. Warren Wiersbe states the following regarding the tongue: “ It is the tongue that reveals the heart(Matthew 12: 34-35). If the heart is right, the speech will be right.”
6. In verse 26, James warned believers regarding the practice of outward religion without inner control. First, those believers deceive themselves, which means a state of continual self-deception. In addition it means to lead astray or divert. As long as a believer is in a state of self-deception, that state will never produce a change of conduct. Second, their religion is vain or worthless, it produces nothing of spiritual value. Such

a believer is not being led to demonstrate true religion but is drawn further away from that standard.

7. In verse 27, James states that pure religion is demonstrated by deeds of compassion and inner purity. James maintained that for God to accept our worship it must be accompanied by loving ministry and a holy life.

8. Words are no substitute for deeds of love(I John 3: 11-18).

9. The word “visit” means to take care of, or look after. The word is stated in the present tense and calls for a way of life, not an occasional action.

10. Good deeds must accompany a godly life.

11. The believer who is a doer of the word will also keep himself unspoiled from the world.

12. The word “world” used by James means : society without God. Believers live in a world or society that does not know or obey God.

13. As believers we are in the world physically but not of the world spiritually (John 17: 11-16).

14. Believers cannot become friends with the world(James 4:4),love the world (I John 2: 15-17),or be conformed to the world(Romans 12:1-2).

15. The best way to minister to the needs of the world is to be separated and pure from the defilement of the world.

16. In conclusion, James is teaching that believers will only accomplish the goals he stated as they receive the word of God into the heart and live it in life.

V. Application

1. Identify and describe spiritual principles and spiritual disciplines in James 1: 26-27.
2. What is the difference between pure religion and vain religion?
3. How can a believer remain separated from the world?
4. How will you apply this lesson to your heart and life ?