

“Hearing and Doing”

James – Doing Church Right #2

INTRODUCTION

In the second chapter of the book of James, we find ourselves challenged to examine our faith in light of our actions. Here James tells us why it is not enough to say we believe if we do not demonstrate our faith actively. If we are to be the church God wants us to be, we will live in a way that demonstrates His love to others through our actions.

Ice Breaker (Optional):

If you had to choose one, would you rather hear spoken directions, or watch a demonstration when learning a new skill?

Study Questions (45 MIN)

Receive the word

Q1. Read James 1:19-21, James 1:18, 1 Peter 2:1-2

Before he calls us to action, James encourages us to listen. What are we to listen to? (James 1:18 & 21) What are some of the many things we need to rid ourselves of in order to better hear from God? (James 1:21, 1 Peter 2:1) James likens the word of God to pure spiritual milk. Share with your group some of the truths from God’s word that have nourished you personally and helped you to mature. Do you have a “life verse” you could share?

Practice the word

Q2. Read James 1:22-25, Romans 12:2

James refers to God’s word as a mirror into which we should gaze intently in order to be changed. How should the truth be changing us? (James 1:25, Romans 12:2). What are some practical examples of the ways you might be a doer of God’s word in the church?

Share the word

Q3. Read James 1:25-27, Galatians 6:2-3, 2 Peter 1:3-9

Once we have taken time to listen to God’s word, and put it into practice, the natural result will be a love for others expressed in our actions. James contrasts religion that is worthless with that which is acceptable to God. What characterizes worthless religion? How is this

a reflection of our lack of love for others? What are some of the “stains of the world” (James 1:25), perhaps lies you’ve believed, that encourage you to focus more on yourself than on others? It is God’s power that enables us to escape the corruption that is in the world (2 Peter 1:4) What does 2 Peter 1:8 tell us we need in order to be effective and fruitful in our faith?

Q4 Read Isaiah 1:17, Psalm 10:17-18, Exodus 22:22-24

What is one way pure and faultless religion expresses love for others? (v. 27) God conveyed his passion about widows and orphans to Moses in Exodus 22:22-24. What does God’s attitude in that passage reveal to you about God’s heart and His character? Discuss with your group any practical ways you can minister to the needs of widows and orphans at New Life, or in the community.

Wrap-Up

Our faith needs to be more than merely hearing God’s word. We must also be doing the word. But before we can “do” we must take in God’s word deeply enough so that it nourishes and changes us from the inside out. Only then can we put into practice what God is calling and empowering us to do. And the more God changes us, the less we will focus on ourselves. Instead we will seek to bring God’s love to those He loves. We will bear one another’s burdens and share God’s passion for those in need, especially the widows and orphans. In so doing we turn from religion that is worthless and embrace a religion that is both pure and faultless, acceptable in God’s sight.

Memory Verse

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.
- James 1:27 ESV

Prayer (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: _____
Pray for your group members’ needs:

Challenge: Seek out an opportunity to practice your faith by serving either at New Life Church or in the community.

Q1

James 1:19-21 ESV - 19 Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; 20 for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. 21 Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

James 1:18 ESV - 18 Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

1 Peter 2:1-2 ESV - 1 So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. 2 Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation—

Q2

James 1:22-25 ESV - 22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. 24 For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. 25 But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

Romans 12:2 NLT - 2 Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

Luke 11:28 ESV - 28 But he said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

Q3

James 1:26-27 ESV - 26 If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. 27 Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

Galatians 6:2-3 ESV - 2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. 3 For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

Read 2 Peter 1:3-9 in your bible

Q4

Isaiah 1:17 ESV - 17 learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause.

Psalms 10:17-18 ESV - 17 O LORD, you hear the desire of the afflicted; you will strengthen their heart; you will incline your ear 18 to do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, so that man who is of the earth may strike terror no more.

Exodus 22:22-24 ESV - 22 You shall not mistreat any widow or fatherless child. 23 If you do mistreat them, and they cry out to me, I will surely hear their cry, 24 and my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children fatherless.

Prayers Con't: _____

