

## Wednesday Night Fellowship Discussion Guide

James 1:26-27

8/11/21

James 1:26–27

<sup>26</sup> If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. <sup>27</sup> 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.

### **Passage Summary**

In these verses James provides a summary of his teaching throughout the first chapter by providing three practical tests of true religion. While these three identifying marks of true religion are most certainly not ALL that makes up authentic faith James makes it clear that if someone does possess authentic faith then these actions will truly be present in their life. He points out that authentic faith produces a person who controls his/her tongue, cares for the helpless, and continually consecrates him or herself to God.

### **Discussion Questions**

*(These questions are intended to generate discussion and promote application. Don't feel pressured to make it through all of them. The questions are made for the discussion leader, not the discussion leader for the questions.)*

#### Control of our tongue

James 1:26

If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless.

- Is James calling for believers to always remain silent?
- What are some examples of times when a believer should control their tongue by NOT speaking? Any Scripture passages show this by example or statement?
- What are some examples of times when a believer should control their tongue by CHOOSING to speak? Any Scripture passages show this by example or statement?
- Does God need to control His tongue? If so, how does He determine when it is time to speak or time to remain silent?
- According to this verse, how should a religion be measured as to whether it has worth or not?
- If you struggle with controlling your tongue, what can you do to follow more closely to your Father in this area?

## Care for the helpless

James 1:27

<sup>27</sup> 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.

- Why did James choose to use widows and orphans to illustrate this identifying mark of authentic Christianity?
- What are some ways that God Himself acts to provide care for the helpless?
- Does the notion of helping widows and orphans belong only in the 1<sup>st</sup> century or does ministry to such segments of society still demonstrate pure and undefiled religion?
- What are some other general examples of caring for the helpless in our society?
- What are some specific examples of caring the helpless in your day-to-day life?
- What are some reasons that we make the choice to ignore or refuse to act with care toward the helpless?

## Consecrate ourselves to God

James 1:27

<sup>27</sup> 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.

- What are some ways that believers become stained by the world?
- HOW does someone keep him or herself unstained from the world?
- How did Jesus keep Himself unstained in the world? Scripture?
- What about the world is particularly tempting to you?
- What actions can you as a family or an individual take to keep yourself unstained?
- What actions can we as a church take to keep ourselves unstained by the world?