

Is our "Religion" WORTHLESS? ~ James 1:26-27

→ Scripture Reading James 1.21-22, 25-27

INTRODUCTION

→ There are roughly 4,200 RELIGIONS in the world.

The word Religion may be used interchangeably with Faith or Belief System, but Religion DIFFERS from private BELIEF in that it has a PUBLIC aspect.

SUMMARY

James 1:25 (ESV) 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.

CAREFUL SPEECH Come from a Changed HEART ~ James 1:26-27

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

RELIGION has to be more than an External RITUAL or PRACTICE; it must come from an Inner Spiritual REALITY of a CHANGED heart.

IMPLICATIONS

→ **The WAY we TALK and WHAT we talk ABOUT - shows the REALITY of our FAITH**

James 1:26 (NLT) If you claim to be religious but don't CONTROL your TONGUE, you are fooling yourself, and your religion is worthless.

→ **If our WORDS are not CONTROLLED by God - it shows that our HEART is NOT either.** MacArthur

Luke 6:45 (NIV) The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the OVERFLOW of his heart his MOUTH SPEAKS.

COMPASSION and PURITY Come from a Changed HEART ~ James 1:26-27

[26] If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless. [27] Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

It is a **Vital inner Faith** that is seen in everyday life - it is **conduct consistent with faith.** LABC

PURE RELIGION... HNTC

- is to WORSHIP God openly genuinely
- is COMMITTED to Pursuing a closer WALK with God
- shows SELF-CONTROL by Guarding what we SAY
- shows SELF-SACRIFICE by Investing Time and Money to care for others
- shows SELF-DENIAL by Turning AWAY from sin

IMPLICATIONS

→We should **IMPACT** the world - **NOT ADAPT** our Faith and Values so that we **FIT INTO** it

James 1:27 (ESV) ...to keep oneself UNSTAINED from the world.

1 Peter 2:11 (NIV) Dear friends, I urge you, as ALIENS and STRANGERS in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which WAR against your soul.

1 Peter 2:15-16 (HCS) For it is God's WILL that you silence the ignorance of foolish people BY DOING good. As God's slaves, live as free people, but don't use your freedom as a way to conceal evil.

APPLICATION

→They WILL be **DOERS** not just **HEARERS**

Our Relationship with GOD our Religion **Must Impact** our...

- WORDS - What we SAY
- ACTIONS - What we DO
- CHARACTER - Who we ARE

HANDS and HEART

- Compassionate ACTION - without Godly Character
- Godly CHARACTER - without Compassionate Action

→Being a **DOER** of God's **WORD** is about our **HEARTS -and-** our **HANDS**

TAKE AWAY ??

James 1:22 (ESV) But be **DOERS** of the **WORD**, and not hearers only, **DECEIVING** yourselves.

James 1:26 (NLT) If you claim to be **RELIGIOUS** but don't control your tongue, you are **FOOLING** yourself, and your religion is **WORTHLESS**.

Hebrews 4:16 (NIV) Let us then approach the throne of grace with **CONFIDENCE**, so that we may receive **MERCY** and find **GRACE** to help us in our time of need.