

Sunday, October 4, 2020

Text: James 1:26-27

Title: Pure Religion

*Proposition:* In James 1:26-27, James gives three tests of pure and undefiled religion so that we can examine whether our religion is real or worthless.

- The Necessity of Test Taking (vv.26-27)
- The Speech Test (v.26) (Proverbs 10:19; 29:20; Luke 6:45; Matthew 12:34-37;
- The Compassion Test (v.27) (Psalm 68:5; Deuteronomy 10:18-19; Matthew 25:36; Luke 1:68-69; Matthew 5:43-48; Isaiah 1:11-17)
- The Worldliness Test (v.27) (1 John 2:16; Romans 12:2; Matthew 20:28; John 4:34; John 13:34)

Study Guide Questions:

- What connections are there between James 1:26-27 and the previous passage (1:22-25)? What insight do we gain about the “perfect law, the law of liberty” (v.25) from Verses 26-27?
- In James’s thinking, is being religious good or bad? What words does James use to describe religion?
- How would God evaluate your religion? With that question, what are the criteria you immediately think of? Do they match up with this passage or not?
- What are three tests of true religion from 1:26-27?
- What does it mean to bridle your tongue? As you think about the kinds of sinful speech you are most likely to participate in, what does that kind of sinful speech reveal about the way you view God, yourself, or others?
- In what way, do you most need to bridle your tongue? Is there someone in your life who could help you see other areas?
- What does it mean to visit orphans and widows? How are you currently showing compassion to the hurting and/or helpless?
- If you have grown distant or isolated from the needy and suffering, what are some ways you could engage them again and cultivate a soft heart?

- What correlation may there be between a failure to show compassion to the needy and your understanding of the Gospel?
- What does it mean to be unstained from the world? What is the world system? How have you recently seen your thoughts or desires been affected by the world's system?
- What should you do with tests you find yourself failing?
- Which of the three tests leaves you most encouraged? Which leaves you most concerned?
- How does Christ comfort those who find themselves lacking? How does Christ empower change in those who find themselves lacking?
- What are some other tests that Scripture gives of pure religion?