



James

Living Right in a Wrong World!

Living Right in our Actions!

James 1:21-27

Message #5 of 15 – S966

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Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

Living Right in our Actions!

James 1:21-27

Opening Comments

- Turn to **James 1**
- Today, we continue the series: **James - Living Right in a Wrong World!**
- Today, we will get to the key verse of the book of James
- **James 1:22**
- What we do in this life matters to God
- As we live in this wrong way world God wants us to do the right things
- In this text we will see that you can do the right thing in the wrong way – God calls that useless
- I don't know about you but I don't want to live a useless life – right?
- Let's pray and ask the Holy Spirit to teach us how to live useful lives
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **Living Right in our Actions!**
- So far in James we have heard messages about trials, doubt, temptations, and anger
- James draws a conclusion
- **James 1:21**
- 'Therefore' – what is it there for? Trials and temptations are hard!
- God is using them to perfect and complete us – to make us more like Jesus.
- God does all the hard parts, but we are called to do something.
- 'lay aside' speaks of a conscious choice.
- It should be our goal to eliminate every wicked thing from our lives.
- 'filthiness' and 'wickedness' clog our spiritual ears to the Word of God.
- 'implanted word' – the Word of God is not naturally occurring in the human heart.

- It must be implanted there by God.
- I am sure some of you have had to deal with a bathroom sink or shower drain that is not draining properly.
- Over time, a nasty gunk collects and begins restricting the flow of the drain.
- The more restricted it is, the faster gunk builds up, until it stops flowing completely.
- Your life is like that drain. God pours out His grace into our lives.
- His grace never stops flowing.
- There is always more than enough for us to experience the abundant life He created us to live.
- Sin is the gunk that builds up in our lives and hinders the flow of God's grace in and through our lives.
- James gives us a three-step process to experience the fullness of God's grace in our lives.
- The first step is to 'lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness.'
- To experience the fullness of God's grace we must turn away from all sin.
- That is not a comfortable thing to do.
- It is nasty and disgusting to open up the shower drain and pull that gunk out.
- It must be done, or else nothing changes.
- Dealing with the sin in our lives is not fun or comfortable, but if you don't, it will not get better on its own and will probably get worse.
- Second step: 'receive with meekness the implanted word'.
- Regular reading, study, and sitting under a spiritual teacher will help keep you away from the gunk of sin, the 'filthiness and wickedness' that so easily tempts us in this wrong way world.
- It has been said, 'This book will keep you from sin and sin will keep you from this book.'
- 'with meekness' – Pride is one of the sins that will prevent the Word of God from being implanted into a human heart.
- Humility is a key to hiding God's Word in your heart **Psalm 119:11**
Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.

- When approach this book, whether in reading, Bible Study, or sermons, we must do so with meekness and humility.
 - That means we come expecting God to speak to us what He wants us to hear.
 - We don't presume to tell God what we need or want to hear.
 - God knows better than you do what you need to hear.
 - God will speak to us if we are open to hearing His voice meekly and humbly.
 - The third step is in the next verse
 - **James 1:22**
 - James has talked to us about trials, doubt, temptations, and anger
 - It is possible to live right in a wrong way world
 - Just listening to these messages will not make you a better Christian and will not cause you to experience the fullness of God's grace.
 - Just sitting and hearing, or listening at home, or in your car, will not help you to live right in this wrong world.
 - To benefit from your Bible reading, or study, or listening to sermons, you must apply what you hear.
 - We must learn to listen for God's voice. And when we hear it, we need to respond by doing what He says.
 - This is not a complicated process.
 - First, examine your life for things you know God disapproves of.
 - Repent of those things and replace them with right attitudes and behaviors.
 - Second, seek God through His Word and His servant-teachers.
 - Third, at every opportunity ask God a simple question, 'What would you have me to do now, Lord?'
 - At first it might not be that easy to discern the Lord's voice from your own heart or from the noise of our culture in your mind.
 - That's where faith comes in.
- Faith doesn't need facts before it acts!**
- I don't need to **know** I heard God's voice before I do something, I just have to believe I heard God's voice.
 - I don't even have to be convinced it is God's voice – it might be God saying it, but I might be wrong.

- **Testing for God's voice:**

- **First - Does it lead you or someone else toward sin?**

- If it will, stop, that is not God's voice **James 1:13**

Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.

- If it won't lead to sin, go on to test 2.

- Example: should I call in sick because I don't feel like going to work today? That is lying and stealing! It is not God's voice!

- **Second - Does it agree with God's Word?**

- If it doesn't stop! God will never lead you that contradicts His Word.

- Example: Should I divorce my wife? **Mark 10:7-9**

'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, 8 and the two shall become one flesh'; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh. 9 Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.'

- **Third - Can God be glorified through your doing it?**

- Everything that exists does so for God's glory (1 Cor. 6:19-20).

- If God can't be glorified, then God didn't tell you to do it.

- Example: if I thought God told me to do a Tik Tok showing off my best dance moves. Definitely not God's voice.

- 'Be doers of the word' – do what God tells you to do – through His written Word – through His faithful preachers and teachers – through the small still voice of the Holy Spirit.

- Faith doesn't need to be convinced before doing what God says, it only needs to believe God said to do it

- James says if you are not doing what God's Word says, you are deceiving yourself.

- **James 1:23-24**

- If I read in God's Word or hear in a sermon that anger is sinful – I have heard the Word of truth.

- If then I look into my own heart and see anger I am faced with a choice.

- If I say, 'Oh well, that's just how I am!' then I am a hearer of the word and not a doer.

- And I will not experience the fullness of God's grace or the blessing

- Old law = condemnation for doing wrong. 'perfect law of liberty' = freedom to do what is right!

- **James 1:26**
- One of the tests of authentic Christianity is control over the tongue – controlling what we say.
- We can use the same test we applied in knowing God’s voice to knowing what to say.
- The tongue reveals what is in the heart.
- If anger, fear, resentment, or bitterness is expressed in your words it is because those things are in your heart.
- Religion is the outward expression of worship.
- It is possible to act religious but be lying to your own heart and practicing a useless religion.
- Some people act like religion is a bad thing.
- Well, it is when you do it according to man’s ideas and to appease yourself or the world around you.
- It is not when your objective is glorifying God, blessing others, and growing in faith – all in accordance with God’s Word.

- **James 1:27**

- Pure and undefiled religion has two components.
- First, **Personal Ministry**, ‘to visit orphans and widows in their trouble’.
- Orphans and widows were the most vulnerable people in the community.
- One of the foundational principles of Christianity is the concept of selflessness – putting others interests and needs before our own **John**

15:13

Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.

- When God made us, it wasn’t just to love Him and be loved by Him –

He gave us a purpose **Ephesians 2:10**

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

- Everyone is called to walk with God in a personal ministry.
- Ministry: responding to the leading of the Holy Spirit to the authentic needs of others with the resources God has provided you as an expression of the love of Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.**

- One of the great adventures of the Christian faith is the journey to discover the personal ministry that God created you for.

- And the greatest blessings you will ever experience in this life is when you are doing it.
- Second component of pure and undefiled religion – **Personal Purity**
- To be ‘unspotted’ means that there are no visible imperfections.
- For a Christian that means that nothing of the world’s wrong ways is visible in us.
- For example, many Christians are getting involved in the social justice movements that are so popular right now.
- All of those movements have a wrong view of what justice is and so their movement is not based on truth, even when their cause may be based on at least a measure of truth.
- This is important because personal purity will impact your personal ministry and determine the degree to which you experience the grace of God in your life which will influence how much of the grace of God others will experience through your life.
- Your life matters to God – All lives matter to God
- He didn’t create you just so that you could live
- He created you on purpose and with a personal ministry to do
- Living right in a wrong world is not about what you don’t do, it is about what you do as an expression of your faith
- God’s grace is flowing all around us
- To experience more of God’s grace – deal with any sin you know about in your life – do what God says – find your personal ministry and do it while pursuing personal purity
- And you will know the blessings of the fulness of God’s grace in your life – God will be glorified, others will be blessed, and faith will grow all around you
- **Pray - Communion**