



JAMES 1-3 | DEVOTED

BLESSED

James 1.16-27



Talk About

“It is better to give than to receive”. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

Jesus said, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me” (Luke 9.23 NIV11). Practically, what does this mean for you in your day to day life?

How would you answer the question, “For what purpose has God saved us?” (Note: there are many correct answers to this question so think along different tangents)

Complete the following sentence - “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: ...”

 Read James 1.16-27

 Explore

What aspects of God's nature does James draw our attention to in James 1.17-18? What point do you think he is making?

In verses 19-21, James presents a number of very human factors that contrast to God's nature described in the previous verses. What are they?

What is God's answer to our changeable, fickle and sinful nature? Why?

What attitude does James call for? What result does it produce, both in the short term (1.22) as well as ultimately (1.25)? Does this surprise you?

Why is merely listening described as self-deception?

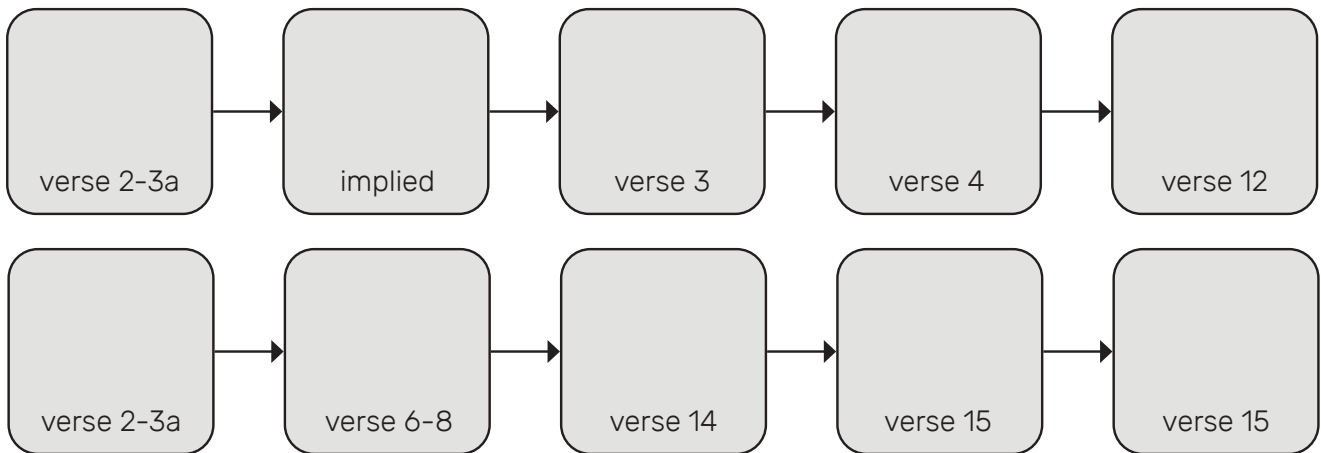
James describes God's word as the "perfect law that gives freedom". Most modern ideas of "law" understands it in terms of restricting freedom. So how does this work? (see esp. Psalm 19)

Would you consider yourself "religious"? Why or why not? What picture does this word paint?

According to James, what elements characterise "pure and faultless" religion?

What point is James making? (see James 2.24)

Last study/sermon we were introduced to two roads, "Wisdom Way" and "Seduction Street", with two very different destinations. Spend a moment to once again map them out.



Can you see these two roads in our passage? What insights does it give us as we think about these two roads and their destinations?

According to our passage, what does the life of one who walks 'Wisdom Way' look like? What about those walking "Seduction Street"?

Jesus in James

Jesus' delight in God's word, his obedience to his father, led him to a life of service and sacrifice for others.

his righteousness is ours

he served us, met our needs perfectly

 **Action**

What makes you angry? Why?

What is your attitude to the Word of God? On Sunday, when we read and preach Scripture? As you read the Bible each day (or not)? What one (or perhaps two) words would best capture your attitude?

Reflect on this quote: “The missing link in evangelical life today is not in the first instance spirituality but rather obedience” (Dallas Willard, the Great Omission). What gets in the way of you obeying God’s word?

Can you think of a recent change in your behaviour that you made as a result of what you read or heard in the Word of God? What changed? What was your motivation for changing?

Is your "religion" practical? Who are the "widows and orphans" in your sphere? Is there "moral filth and ... evil" which you need to get rid of?

What steps might you take to "look intently into the perfect law that gives freedom"?

Often we find practical application difficult, but James tells us it is vital. What steps might help us?