

1 **RECEIVING,
PRACTICING,
AND SHARING
THE WORD**

JAMES 1:22-27

2 **How to overcome temptation (review)**

James 1:13-18

1. Remember the Penalty of Sin (Death)
 - Sin is born when lust (a perverted desire) comes together with our will (a decision in our soul)
 - When sin occurs, it results in some type of death: physical, our testimony, our relationships
 - Example of David
2. Remember the Goodness of God – example of David
3. Remember the Divine Nature within you
 - We are born of the Word of Truth and the Spirit of God

3 **INTENTIONALLY rest and grow in the Word of God**

1. Receive the Word
2. Refuse to give in to anger
3. Remove the filth from your life
4. Ruminant (meditate) on God's Word
5. Retake ground you have given to Satan by asking Jesus to restore your SOUL
- 6.
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4 **Steps to retake the ground of your soul**

1. Confess the sin. *Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;* (Hebrews 12:15, KJV 1900)
2. Ask God to regain the surrendered ground (Psalm 23:3) – only He can take back the ground.
3. Tear down strongholds with truth – meditate and ruminant on the Word of God to replace lies with truth.
4. Demonstrate right actions such as forgiving your offender.
- 5.

5 **The big takeaway**

- You must be INTENTIONAL about meditating on God's Word.
- You must be INTENTIONAL to ask God to take back ground that you have surrendered to Satan through bitterness, greed, or immorality.
- You must be INTENTIONAL to fast and meditate periodically – especially for key decisions.
- NONE of these things happens by routine or automatically.

6 **RECEIVE THE WORD!**

7 **JAMES 1:22-27 (LEB)**

But be doers of the message and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves, because if anyone is a hearer of the message and not a doer, this one is like someone staring at his own face in a mirror, for he looks at himself and goes away and immediately forgets what sort of person he was. But the one who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues to do it, not being a forgetful hearer but a doer who acts, this one will be blessed in what he does. If anyone thinks he is religious, although he does not bridle his

tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to look after orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

8 **THREE MIRRORS**

- The mirror of examination – James 1
 - The Word of God reveals our sin to us
- The mirror of restoration – Exodus 30
 - The Word of God enables us to be purified so that we can begin right fellowship with God
- The mirror of transformation – 2 Corinthians 3:18
 - The Word of God transforms us to be more like Christ as we meditate on it and obey it

9 **It is not enough to hear the Word; we must do it.**

- Many people have the mistaken idea that hearing a good sermon or Bible study is what makes them grow and get God's blessing. It is not the hearing but the doing that brings the blessing.
- Too many Christians mark their Bibles, but their Bibles never mark them! If you think you are spiritual because you hear the Word, then you are only kidding yourself.

10 **The mirror of examination (1:23-25)**

- Examination (vv. 23–25).
 - This is the main purpose for owning a mirror, to be able to see yourself and make yourself look as clean and neat as possible.
 - As we look into the mirror of God's Word, we see ourselves as we really are.
 - James mentions several mistakes people make as they look into God's mirror.

11 **Mistake #1 – Merely glancing at ourselves**

- They merely glance at themselves.
 - They do not carefully study themselves as they read the Word.
 - Many sincere believers read a chapter of the Bible each day, but it is only a religious exercise and they fail to profit from it personally.
 - Their conscience would bother them if they did not have their daily reading, when actually their conscience should bother them because they read the Word carelessly.
 - Before your doctor operates, do you want him looking at a candid photo or an X-ray?

12 **Mistake #2 – Forgetting what we see**

- If they were looking deeply enough into their hearts, what they would see would be unforgettable!
- John Wesley wrote about a preaching service: *"one before me dropped as dead, and presently a second, and a third. Five others sunk down in half an hour, most of whom were in violent agonies"* (Wesley's journal for June 22, 1739).
- Before you think these people were nuts, remember how saints in the Bible responded to the true knowledge of their own hearts.
 - Isaiah cried, "Woe is me! For I am undone!" (Isa. 6:5)
 - Peter cried, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" (Luke 5:8)
 - Job was the most righteous man on earth in his day, yet he confessed, *"I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes"* (Job 42:6).

13 **Mistake #3 – Failing to obey the Word**

- Hearing is not the same as doing.
 - We enjoy substituting reading for doing, talking for doing, or hearing for doing.

- We love conferences and webinars and meetings about spiritual subjects.
- While there is certainly nothing wrong with conferences and committee meetings, they are sinful if they are a substitute for service.

14 **No quick glances!**

- If we are to use God's mirror profitably, then we must gaze into it carefully and with serious intent (James 1:25).
- No quick glances will do. We must examine our own hearts and lives in the light of God's Word. This requires time, attention, and sincere devotion.
- Five minutes with God each day will never accomplish a deep spiritual examination.

15 **Finding a good doctor**

- It took me a long time to find a good doctor.
 - A good doctor takes time with you and is not in a hurry.
 - A good doctor tells you the truth.
 - A good doctor encourages you to change the behaviors that contribute to your illness rather than just giving you a pill to cover up the symptoms.
- If the doctor takes time for you, should you not take time to listen to the doctor? And maybe you should take notes!

16 **Jesus is the Great Physician**

- When Jesus, the Great Physician (Matthew 9:12), examines us, he uses his Word; and he wants us to give him sufficient time to do the job well.
 - Perhaps one reason we glance into the Word instead of gaze into the Word is that we are afraid of what we might see.
- After seeing ourselves, we must remember what we are and what God says, and we must do the Word. Take notes!

17 **PRACTICE THE WORD (JAMES 1:23-25)**

18 **The blessing is in the doing!**

- The blessing comes in the doing, not in the reading of the Word. *"This man shall be blessed in his doing"* (James 1:25, literal translation). The emphasis in James is on the practice of the Word. We are to continue after reading the Word (James 1:25; see Acts 1:14; 2:42, 46; 13:43; 14:22; 26:22 for examples of this in the early church).
- *But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.* (James 1:25, KJV 1900)

19 **Why does James call the Word of God "the perfect law of liberty"?**

- James 1:25 -- When we obey it, God sets us free.
 - "And I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy precepts" (Psalm 119:45).
 - "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin" (John 8:34).
 - "If ye continue in my Word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32).
- But examination is but the first ministry of the mirror of the Word. There is a second ministry.

20 **The mirror of restoration (Exodus 38:8).**

- When he built the tabernacle, Moses took the metal looking glasses of the women and from them made the laver.
 - The laver was a huge basin that stood between the brazen altar of sacrifice and the holy place.

(Read Exodus 30:17–21 for details.)

- The basin was filled with water, and the priests washed their hands and feet at the laver before they entered the holy place to minister.
- No dimensions given for laver in the Tabernacle because the opportunity for relational forgiveness is unlimited.

21 **The tabernacle**

22 **The laver**

23 **The laver's relationship to the brazen altar**

1 The Brazen Altar

- 2 • Made of wood and brass
 - Square in shape
 - Specific dimensions given
 - Rings and staves used for carrying it
 - Covered when carried
 - For fire
 - Received sacrifices for all

3 The Laver

- 4 • Made only of brass
 - Probably round
 - No measurements given
 - No mention of rings and staves
 - No mention of being covered
 - For water
 - Reserved for the priests alone

24 **The laver's primary function: washing**

- Priests bathed their entire body when they were ordained. (Exodus 29:4)
- Following ordination, the priests had to wash their hands and feet every time they entered the Tabernacle or approached the bronze altar to minister, or they would die. (Exodus 30:19-21)

25 **Why it is important to understand the laver**

- There is a significance difference in Scripture between being cleansed by the blood and being washed by water.
- However, many sermons and gospel songs confuse these two things.
- This confusion has brought about many things in the lives of Christians that are dishonoring to the Lord.

26 **Priestly and practical purification**

- The primary purpose was priestly purification as Aaron and his sons were to wash their hands and feet before they entered the Tabernacle.
 - At the brazen altar, sins were put away.
 - At the Golden altar, worship was presented to God.
 - In between, the priest were required to wash showing us the communion with God not only requires acceptance by Him, but also requires practical purification.

27 **Two kinds of forgiveness in view**

- 1 Judicial forgiveness – the Brazen Altar
- 2 • The first prerequisite to entering the Tabernacle
 - Depicts the cleansing from the guilt of sin
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- Required the blood of the sacrifice

- 3 Relational forgiveness – the Laver
- 4 • The second prerequisite to entering the Tabernacle
 - Depicts the need to be cleansed from the defilement of the world for someone who is already cleansed from sin.
 - Requires water

28 Why did the priests need to be washed?

- After killing a sacrifice on the North side of the altar, the priest's hands would be smeared with blood.
 - In our everyday lives, we have dealings with those who are dead and their trespasses and sins – and their influence can defile us.
- Because the priests wore no shoes, the dust of the desert would soil their feet.
 - Our walk through the world with all of its temptations and misplaced values likewise defiles us.

29 Why only the priests?

- Only Aaron and his sons were required to have this washing.
 - Had they failed to do this, they would have still belonged to the nation of Israel. But they would not have been able to serve God in the Tabernacle.
 - Our being in the world and in contact with sinners in no way jeopardizes the fact that we are children of God if we have received Christ as Savior (Hebrews 10:14).
 - "For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."

30 From Exodus

- *Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and his foot also of brass, to wash withal: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein.* (Exodus 30:18, KJV 1900)
- *And he made the laver of brass, and the foot of it of brass, of the looking-glasses of the women assembling, which assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.* (Exodus 38:8, KJV 1900)

31 Water is a picture of the Word's cleansing power

- *Now ye are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you* (John 15:3).
- The church is sanctified and cleansed "*with the washing of water by the Word*" (Ephesians 5:26).
- When the sinner trusts Christ, he is once and for all washed clean (1 Corinthians 6:9–11; Titus 3:4–6).
- But as the believer walks in this world, his hands and feet are defiled, and he needs cleansing (John 13:1–11).

32 How the word cleanses us from sin

- It gives us the promise of cleansing (1 John 1:9) -- *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, so that he will forgive us our sins and will cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* (1 John 1:9, LEB)
- As we meditate on it, it cleanses the heart and the mind from spiritual defilement.

- It is the blood of Christ that cleanses the guilt, but the water of the Word helps to wash away the defilement.

33 Remember Nathan

- Nathan's experience with David in 2 Samuel 12 helps to illustrate this truth.
- Nathan told David the story about the stolen ewe lamb, and David became angry at the sin described. "*Thou art the man,*" said the prophet, and he held up the mirror of the Word for David to see himself. The result was confession and repentance: "I have sinned against the Lord!" The mirror of the Word did its work of examination.

34 Nathan did not stop there

- He also used the Word for restoration. "*The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die*" (2 Samuel 12:13).
- Here was the assurance of forgiveness and cleansing, and it came from the Word. David visited the laver and washed his hands and feet.
- If we stop with examination and restoration, we will miss the full benefit of the mirror ministry of the Word. There is a third ministry.

35 Mirror of transformation (2 Corinthians 3:18).

- After the Lord restores us, he wants to change us so that we will grow in grace and not commit that sin again. Too many Christians confess their sins, and claim forgiveness, but never grow spiritually to conquer self and sin.
- 2 Corinthians 3 is a discussion of the contrasts between the old covenant ministry of law and the new covenant ministry of grace.
 - The law is external, written on tables of stone; but salvation means that God's Word is written on the heart.
 - The old covenant ministry condemned and killed; but the new covenant ministry brings forgiveness and life. T
 - the glory of the law gradually disappeared, but the glory of God's grace becomes brighter and brighter.
 - The law was temporary, but the new covenant of grace is eternal.

36 Paul and the veil of Moses

- When Moses came down from the mount, where he met God, his face was shining (Exodus 34:29–35).
 - He did not want the Jews to see this glory fading away, so he put on a veil to hide it.
 - When he returned to the mount, he took off the veil.
- When Jesus died, he rent the veil in the temple and removed the veil between men and God.
 - The Old Testament prophet wore a veil to hide the fading of the glory.
 - The New Testament believer has an unveiled face, and the glory gets greater and greater!

37 2 Corinthians 3:18 explained

- "When the child of God looks into the Word of God [the glass, the mirror], he sees the son of God, and he is transformed by the Spirit of God to share in the glory of God!"
- The word *changed* in the Greek gives us our English word "metamorphosis"—a change on the outside that comes from the inside.
 - When an ugly worm turns into a beautiful butterfly, this is metamorphosis.
 - When a believer spends time looking into the Word and seeing Christ, he is transformed: the glory on the inside is revealed on the outside.

38 **Changed = Metamorphosis = Transfigured**

- It is this word that is translated “transfigured” in Matthew 17:2.
- The glory of Christ on the mount was not reflected; it was radiated from within.
- The same word is in Romans 12:2, “*Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.*”
- As we meditate on the Word, the Spirit renews the mind and reveals the glory of God. We do not become spiritual Christians overnight. It is a process, the work of the Spirit of God through the mirror of the Word of God.

39 **Take off the veil**

- The important thing is that we hide nothing. Take off the veil!
- “*Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting*” (Psalm 139:23–24).
- “*If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*” (1 John 1:8).
- Our first responsibility is to receive the Word. Then, we must practice the Word; otherwise we are deceiving ourselves. This leads to a third responsibility.

40 **Share the Word (James 1:26–27)**41 **Religion is almost always a bad thing**

- The word translated “religion” means “the outward practice, the service of a god.”
 - Used 27 times in the Bible – 26 times it is condemned
 - Used only five times in the entire New Testament (James 1:26–27; Acts 26:5; and Colossians 2:18, where it is translated “worshiping”).

42 **Pure religion**

- Pure religion has nothing to do with ceremonies, temples, or special days.
- Pure religion means practicing God’s Word and sharing it with others, through speech, service, and separation from the world.

43 **Speech (v. 26)**

- There are many references to speech in this letter, giving the impression that the tongue was a serious problem in the assembly (see James 1:19; 2:12; 3:1–3, 14–18; 4:11–12).
- It is the tongue that reveals the heart (Matthew 12:34–35); if the heart is right, the speech will be right.
- A controlled tongue means a controlled body (James 3:1ff).

44 **Service (v. 27a)**

- After we have seen ourselves and Christ in the mirror of the Word, we must see others and their needs.
 - Isaiah first saw the Lord, then himself, and then the people to whom he would minister (Isaiah 6:1–8).
 - Words are no substitute for deeds of love (James 2:14–18; 1 John 3:11–18). God does not want us to pay for others to minister as a substitute for our own personal service!

45 **Separation from the world (v. 27b)**

- By “the world” James means “society without God.” Satan is the prince of this world (John 14:30), and the lost are the children of this world (Luke 16:8).
- As the children of God, we are in the world physically but not of the world spiritually (John 17:11–16).

- We are sent into the world to win others to Christ (John 17:18). It is only as we maintain our separation from the world that we can serve others.

46 **A spiritual warfare**

- The world wants to “spot” the Christian and start to defile him.
 1. First, there is “friendship of the world” (James 4:4),
 2. This leads to a love for the world (1 John 2:15–17).
 3. If we are not careful, we will become conformed to this world (Romans 12:1–2),
 4. The result is being condemned with the world (1 Corinthians 11:32). This does not suggest that we lose our salvation, but that we lose all we have lived for.

47 **Lot is an illustration of this principle**

1. First he pitched his tent toward Sodom, and then moved into Sodom.
2. Before long, Sodom moved into him and he lost his testimony even with his own family.
3. When judgment fell on Sodom, Lot lost everything.

48 **Abraham**

- It was Abraham, the separated believer, the friend of God, who had a greater ministry to the people than did Lot, the friend of the world.
- It is not necessary for the Christian to get involved with the world to have a ministry to the world.
- Jesus was “unspotted” (1 Peter 1:19), and yet he was the friend of publicans and sinners. The best way to minister to the needs of the world is to be pure from the defilement of the world.

49 **Wrapping it up**

- How is your relationship to the Word (examination, restoration, transformation)?
- Are you moving toward Sodom or letting it move into you?
- Are you marked by pure religion?
 - Not sacraments and rituals
 - But speech, service, and separation that radiates the presence of Christ within your life