



DISCUSSION GUIDE

Week Two
James 1:19-27

MAIN POINT

God's people not only hear God's Word but must also obey God's Word.

PRAY

Take time **before** your discussion to pray with and for one another. Be sure to write down the things you'll be praying for so you can continue to pray for your group throughout the week.

INTRODUCTION

Use this section to get the group warmed up a bit. You can use one of these questions, or you could write your own based on this week's text.

What reveals more about a person: actions or words? Why do you say so?

When have you seen someone's actions match up with their words, even when doing so was difficult?

A primary emphasis in the book of James is the daily expression of one's faith in action. Evidently, James was dealing with some who tried to separate being a Christian from demonstrating one's faith in everyday life. In James 1:19-27, James stressed the vital connection between hearing the Word of God and living it.

READ JAMES 1:19-21

How are James's three commands in verse 19 related to one another? What is the root issue James warned his readers against with these commands?

READ JAMES 1:22-25

Why do we often "hear" and not "do" when it comes to Scripture? What does this say about our faith?

In what area of your life could you do a better job applying God's Word rather than just listening to it?

James was concerned that believers persevere in living out God's Word. James maintained that just listening to God's Word was insufficient. When one hears the Word and does not act on the admonitions contained in it, that person really is engaging in self-deception. Simply listening to the message is not enough. For James, genuine religion and daily life could not be separated. He had little patience with those who claimed to be pious or religious but gave no evidence of inward change by their daily conduct.

What do we risk happening when we are hearers only?

READ JAMES 1:26-27

What is genuine religion? How can believers develop a genuine faith that positively affects people around them?

Why do you think James singled out caring for orphans and widows as an example of faith in action?



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True religion expresses itself in loving service and in holy living. Put another way, true religion includes both social ethics and personal ethics.

What truths of Scripture are we putting into action when we meet the needs of others? Read Matthew 25:35-40 for Jesus' teaching on this matter.

Why is meeting the physical needs of the hurting and helpless so important for the Christ follower?

How is it that by serving people, we love them and show them Jesus?

James reminded us how God's righteousness is formed in us so that God's love reaches through us to others. God's shaping tool is His Word. Reading it and studying it are not enough. We must obey it through the power He supplies. Then God's righteousness begins to be evident.

PUT YOUR FAITH TO WORK

In what area of your life could you do a better job at applying God's Word rather than merely listening to it? What help do you need from God in this area?

What do you spend more time on—your spiritual growth or active ministry? What needs to change for you to have more balance between the two?

What impact do personal disciplines such as Bible study, prayer in the Spirit, and remaining obedient have on how you treat others?

Why is it such a struggle for us to look beyond ourselves to the hurting and helpless, such as the widows and orphans James mentioned? How can we help hurting people see Jesus in their everyday lives?

PRAY

Spend time praying together, seeking the Lord's help to become people committed to living in obedient response to God's Word.