

# “Gimme that Old Time Religion”

## James 1:26-27

James 1:26–27 (NKJV)

<sup>26</sup> If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion *is* useless. <sup>27</sup> Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, *and* to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

### Introduction:

In 1889 a young man was assisting his father, who was a Baptist preacher, in a tent meeting right here in Lexington South Carolina. The Father had decided to lend the tent to a group of black brothers and sisters who wanted to have a singing that afternoon. It was at that meeting that young Charles Tillman heard the song for the first time, “Gimme that Old Time Religion”

According the lyrics of this song. This Old Time Religion that was good enough for me

- It will do when I am dying, it will do when I am dying. It will do when I am dying, it's good enough for me.
- It will make us read our Bibles, It will make us read our Bibles, It will make us read our Bibles, it's good enough for me.
- It will make us love everybody, It will make us love everybody, It will make us love everybody, it's good enough for me.
- It will take us all to heaven, it will take us all to heaven, it will take us all to heaven, it's good enough for me.

“Gimme that Old Time Religion, Gimme that Old Time Religion, Gimme that Old Time Religion, it's good enough for me.”

Charles scribbled the words down on a piece of paper, and later published it

<https://dianaleaghamatthews.com/give-me-that-old-time-religion/#.Y266GC-B3CA>  
<https://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/gimme-that-old-time-religion-dr-odell-belger-sermon-on-church-262890>

The song became a staple in the diet of gospel singers for years, and was sung in many churches for years.

Although there is no mention of Jesus or the way of salvation, it was generally understood that this song was talking about the Old Time Religion of long ago, when Jesus and His disciples walked the earth

and Paul preached with passion of the salvation that is only in Christ alone.

That religion was not the self righteous religion of the Pharisees, or the works religion of Judaism. But was that true religion and only one that can make a man right with God and that is the religion that teaches Jesus Christ is the only true Savior and that its not works I have done but only by the blood am I saved.

The Old and New Testament are replete with examples, admonitions and warning of not being seduced by the false religions of the world. In the Old Testament it was idolatry of the Pagan around Israel. In the N.T. it is the vain speculations and religious ideology of the Greeks and the works base self righteous religion of the Jews.

Set at odds with all of this the true way, the only way, which is through Christ Alone.

Paul gives one of the clearest statements of his departure from false religion to Christ in

Philippians 3:3–9 (NKJV)

<sup>3</sup> For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, <sup>4</sup> though I also might have

confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so:  
<sup>5</sup> circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, *of* the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup> concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

<sup>7</sup> But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. <sup>8</sup> Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;

Review:

James 1:17–25 (NKJV)

<sup>17</sup> Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

<sup>18</sup> Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

<sup>19</sup> So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; <sup>20</sup> for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

<sup>21</sup> Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

<sup>22</sup> But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. <sup>23</sup> For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; <sup>24</sup> for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. <sup>25</sup> But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

## **Lesson:**

I. False Religion

II. True Religion

Often we here that Christianity is not a religion but a relationship. And we understand what is meant by this. We want to separate True Christianity from all

the other external, false religions of there world. And it is true that Christianity is not about rituals and ceremonies and doing good deeds, and keeping a list of rules and commandments to be in right relationship with God. It is about trusting a person, Jesus Christ, and his work to save us. That truly sets Christianity apart from the world of religions. But with that said, it should be noted and clarified that this relationship with Christ and trust in Him alone, should not be void of internal and external works and fruit. Keeping commandments and doing good deeds, and observing certain ceremonies (i.e. Lord's Supper and baptism) participation is spiritual, religious services should be the result of the relationship not the cause.

The words "religious" (v. 26) and "religion" (v. 27) are rare in the NT (Acts 26:5; Col. 2:18); and for much the same reason that many Christians avoid them. For they are very general in meaning, referring to worship in general, and especially often to the outward practice of ceremonies in honor of a god. Among Jewish writers, the words often referred to the cultic worship of the temple. Perhaps James deliberately chooses such broad terms in order to

sharpen his point: *anyone* who has a claim to genuine religious experience must submit those claims to these tests.

Moo, D. J. (2000). [The letter of James](#) (p. 96). Eerdmans; Apollos.

With that said, we need to know that there is only one true Religion in the World, And that is Biblical Christianity. There are 1000s of different religions in the world (last count 4200) but only one true one.  
ONLY ONE

## I. False Religion

**26** **If anyone** among you **thinks** he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion *is* useless.

**If anyone** —-First class conditional sentence assumes the illustration to be a true representation of reality.

**anyone**— **τις** - this opens this up to a universal application. This is one of the axioms in the mind of James. Universally true!

**thinks**— δοκέω. **P.A.I. is considering**

① **to consider as probable, think, believe,**

**suppose, consider,** trans., of subjective opinion

Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000). In [A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature](#) (3rd ed., p. 254). University of Chicago Press.

It is subjective, not necessarily based on objective truth. In our day, we might say, I feel like I'm a religious person.

The verb (*dokei*) denotes “the subjective mental estimate opinion about a matter which men form.”

The reference is to the erroneous opinion the man has of himself.

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 124). BMH Books.

### [King James Bible](#)

If any man among **you seem to be religious**, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

The rendering “seem to be religious” (KJV) may be understood to denote the reputation he has in the community

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 124). BMH Books.



The picture is not that of a conscious hypocrite but of a self-deceived religionist

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 124). BMH Books.

v. 26 **If anyone** among you **thinks** he is **religious**

## religious

thrēskos of unc. or.: religious.

**Original Word:** θρησκος, ον

**Part of Speech:** Adjective

**Transliteration:** thrēskos of unc. or.

**Phonetic Spelling:** (thrace'-kos)

**Definition:** religious

**Usage:** (refers probably to a careful observance of religious restrictions), religious (probably in a limited sense), devout.

In this adjectival form, this is one of the ***hapax legomenons of the N.T. It only appears once.***

The adjective “religious” (*thrēskos*) occurs only here in the New Testament, while the noun (*thrēskeia*), the last word in verse 26 and the first in verse 27,

occurs in Acts 26:5 and also in Colossians 2:18, where it is used for “worshipping of the angels.” No form of the term occurs in the Septuagint. Josephus used it freely of the public and ceremonial worship in the Temple at Jerusalem. Paul used it of his rigorous ceremonial worship as a Pharisee (Acts 26:5), but in Colossians 2:18 it has a bad connotation due to the added genitive “of angels.” The term denotes the zealous and diligent performance of the outward and ceremonial aspects of worship.

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 124). BMH Books.

The precise religious practices James has in mind are not certain, but they would include personal prayer and fasting and regular attendance at the worship services. Assuming a Jewish community, conformity to the ritual of the law may also have been involved. Clearly James applies the designation “religious” to an individual whose “piety” consists in the scrupulous performance of the religious rites of worship and who feels satisfied that thereby he is obedient to the demands of the Word.

Rotherham renders it “If any thinketh he is observant of religion.

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 124). BMH Books.

**is** religious

εἶναι

eimí (the basic Greek verb which expresses being, i.e. "to be") – am, is. **1510** (eimí), and its counterparts, (properly) convey "straight-forward" being (existence, i.e. without explicit limits).

**1510** /eimí ("is, am") – in the present tense, indicative mood

The picture given by James is a person who has been and is a seemingly religious person. He may be know as one. He appears to be.

In our culture, this can take on a number of forms.

He’s a church going man or woman, that attend church on a regular or semi regular basis or at least when it is convenient and suits is comfort level or schedule. Or he or she could be deeply devoted to the church they attend and are members of and the hold a position of ministry in the church. The have a bible, but it pretty clear they don’t read it much or care to apply it. They leave their bible at church but never miss it. Or he is one of those southern Bible belt professing christians who believes in the man

upstairs who can quote John 3:16. They may be the kind of person that feels the need to honor God in some way on Christmas or Easter. They make sure they have the Bible on some table at Christmas and a manger scene somewhere among the Santa Clause paraphernalia.

So externally he appears to be a religious person.. whether deeply devoted or marginally participating He is either known as a religious person, or at least he thinks he is.

And this is why James brings up the topic of the use of the tongue.

**26** If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion *is* useless

James has hammered the point “not to be hearers only, but doers. obey obey obey.

But he does not want us to think that this is purely an external thing. But true obedience and a doer of the Word is internal first that shoes its fruit externally.

One of the test that he brings to the front the proves the valid nature of your religion is your tongue. It is the fountain head of the the heart. What is in the heart flows off the tip of your tongue. A man is what He says....

You and I might think that there should be some grandiose and glorious spiritual activity or work that is the best indicator of true faith, something very profound...

But according to James, the answer is no, that is not it. We can simply listen to the words roll off the tongue and determine the validity of ones religion.

The old adage,

“You are what you eat”

might be better

“You are what you say.”

**26** If anyone....., and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion *is* useless.

This is astounding, and shocking.

James is saying you can determine true and false religion based on how you or if you tame the tongue.

Or how we tighten the reins on one of the most evil parts of our body.

People often debate gun control and state that more guns means more people with die. No that is not true. What is true is that the more people we have with no moral restraint and self control, the more people with die.

But guns are a light weight when we compare it to the damage the tongue can cause.

It is and amazing muscle set back behind to walls one of flesh, sometimes with lipstick, and the other of ivory whites, sometimes real, sometimes false.

The tongue has the ability by God's creation to do amazing things.

1. It is the most sensitive muscles in the body.
2. It is the only muscle that works without any support from the skeleton and is the most flexible.
3. It has over 8000 tastebuds that each have 15 receptors and the tongue has somewhere between 50 and 100 taste sensing cells. No individual cell is capable of tasting more than one taste. It can taste a huge variate of flavors
4. You have a tongue print much like a finger print that is uniquely yours. Just don't stick it to a frozen metal pipe to try to see what that print looks like.
5. If you don't keep your tongue clean and you will get bad breath. Why so? That's because our mouth is the home of 600 different types of bacteria and a

single saliva drop contains 1 million of those bacteria.

6. The longest human tongue to be ever recorded was 3.86 inches from back to tip. The widest tongue measured 3.1 inches. The longest female tongue to be ever recorded was 2.76 inches. But normally, the mans tongue is longer.

7. Your tongue never stops working. Even when you sleep it is pushing saliva into your throat.

8. Sticking your tongue out at people is seen as childish or rude in many countries, however, in Tibet, it is considered a greeting.

9. The blue whale has the largest tongue. It is the size of an elephant and weighs 5,400 lbs.

So the tongue like all of creation is an amazing creation by God. But like all other parts of our human anatomy, it has been affected by the fall of man into sin.

In and of itself, the tongue is not evil, much like the eye or the hand or the foot. Yet the according to Romans 3 the feet can be swift to shed innocent blood.

Its not the parts of our body that are the problem, it is what they are connected to.... the heart. Not the pumping muscle but the sinful disposition, the fallen nature, the evil desire.

But of all the parts of the body, no part has as strong a language referring to its evil tendencies than the tongue or the mouth.

Romans 3:13–14 (NKJV)

- <sup>13</sup> *“Their throat is an open tomb;  
With their tongues they have practiced deceit”;*  
*“The poison of asps is under their lips”;*  
<sup>14</sup> *“Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.”*

Psalms 5:9 (NKJV)

- <sup>9</sup> For *there is* no faithfulness in their mouth;  
Their inward part *is* destruction;  
Their throat *is* an open tomb;  
They flatter with their tongue.

Psalms 52:2 (NKJV)

- <sup>2</sup> Your tongue devises destruction,  
Like a sharp razor, working deceitfully.

Isaiah 59:3 (NKJV)

- <sup>3</sup> For your hands are defiled with blood,  
And your fingers with iniquity;  
Your lips have spoken lies,  
Your tongue has muttered perversity.

Jeremiah 9: (NKJV)



3 “And *like* their bow they have bent their tongues  
for lies.

They are not valiant for the truth on the earth....  
And every neighbor will walk with slanderers.

5 Everyone will deceive his neighbor,  
And will not speak the truth;  
They have taught their tongue to speak lies;

But some of the strongest most graphic languages referring to the destructive evil nature of the tongue is found in

James 3:6 (NKJV)

6 And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.

There is a lot of ways you can hurt someone and destroy there lives the tongue is #1 on the list.

It has destroyed, devastated, discouraged, decimated, deceived more lives than any other instrument of war or evil device of man.

With one word you can destroy.

With one word you can decimate years of reputation.

With one word you can so discourage a person that the will give up.

But also has the power to bring life  
With it you can encourage, enable, exonerate and exalt.

You can take the down and outcast and bring him out of the miry pit.

You can show love, care and compassion to the unloved, hated and sick.

You can encourage the depressed with words of light and truth.

With it, you can speak the greatest news every given man whereby he can be saved from God's wrath.

All of us have been on the receiving end of the tongue.

We have felt it lash across our face, leave deep gashes and unhealable scars

But we have felt the gentle words of encouragement in our deepest darkest hours.

We know what it is to cut and cured by the same tongue.

But what you may not know is that the tongue is a vivid High definition picture of the heart. What is really there is put of full display.

You want to know what a man is really like, listen to him talk.

Listen to the words of Christ...

## Matthew 12:34–37 (NKJV)

<sup>34</sup> Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. <sup>35</sup> A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. <sup>36</sup> But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. <sup>37</sup> For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

This is amazing! Christ is saying that He can determine your justification by your words. Your words betray your heart. He can determine whether you are saved or lost by your words.

### Footnote:

There is a trend today among professing Christians, that for some reason, they feel it permissible or cool to cuss and use vulgar language. Sadly there are some preachers who believe and practice the same.

But let me exhort and admonish you to....

### Ephesians 4:29 (NKJV)

<sup>29</sup> Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary

edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.

And I know the vocabulary changes from culture to culture and different point in history. But it is very clear what is corrupt and what is not. Even the lost world knows it and they know in some cases that it needs to have a bleep or a mute to remove it.

Christians should be known for what they say but also for what they don't

But here, James primary point is that the tongue reveals the heart and reveals the true nature of the religion, or saving faith.

**26** If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless

The negative fact is his characteristic failure to “keep a tight rein on his tongue.” The compound verbal form (*chalinagōgeō*),

**88.85 χαλιναγωγέω:** (a figurative extension of meaning of χαλιναγωγέω ‘to control with bit or bridle,’ not occurring in the NT) to exercise close control over some function—‘to control, to exercise self-control

Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In [Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains](#) (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 751). United Bible Societies.

which occurs only here and in 3:2 in the New Testament, means to guide and to hold in check with a bridle (*chalinós*). The man’s tongue is like a wild horse that he does not hold in check. “Exactly how his speech offended is not indicated, whether it be by his cutting criticism of others, by uncleanness, by dishonesty, or by other means.”

It is implied that a sincere acceptance and personal application of the Word of God will result in curbing the tongue. James makes no comment on how his unbridled tongue reveals its untamed nature; the crucial fact is that it remains untamed. “Bridling the tongue,” Johnstone asserts, “is a peculiarly excellent test of genuine religion”<sup>69</sup> (cf. 3:6–9).

His failure to control his tongue is an index of his inner spiritual destitution; the gospel has not wrought a transformation in his inner life. “To guide the tongue, hold it in check, restrain it, is a task so difficult that he who has the grace to accomplish it has grace to accomplish anything. Such self-control is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:23).”

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, pp. 124–125). BMH Books.

**26** If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless

The verb for “deceive” (*apataō*) is more common than the term used in verse 22, where the reference is to self-deception due to erroneous reasoning. Here the deception comes from the erroneous evaluation of his conduct, leading him astray from the path of reality. He harbors the delusion that performance of the external rites of religion is all that is needed. He is deceived by “himself” (*kardian heautou*, “his own heart”). “Heart” denotes the seat

and center of his own personality and stresses the moral nature of his error.

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). *James* (Revised Edition, p. 125). BMH Books.

this one's religion *is* useless

“Worthless” (*mataios*) does not mean that it is hollow and without content (which would be *kenē*), but that it is futile because it fails to bring him to the goal for which religion is intended.

**empty (vacuous)** adjs. — devoid of significance, point, or benefit.

**mataios: vain, useless**

**Original Word:** μάταιος, αία, αιον

**Part of Speech:** Adjective

**Transliteration:** mataios

**Phonetic Spelling:** (mat'-ah-yos)

**Definition:** vain, useless

**Usage:** vain, unreal, ineffectual, unproductive; practically: godless.

3152 μάταιος (an adjective derived from 3155 /mátēn, "without purpose or ground") – properly, aimless (vain), without purpose; (figuratively) without profit because without basis, i.e. fleeting (transitory), ineffectual ("groundless").

**3152** /μάταιος ("aimless") emphasizes the "absence of purpose or failure to attain any true purpose" (Moulton and Milligan). **3152** (μάταιος) refers to what is "vain, unreal, ineffectual, unproductive" (Souter).

His concern with the external leaves the inner nature unchanged; it is futile because it does not bring into operation the power of the gospel upon the whole man. In the Septuagint, this adjective is used of pagan idols and idol worship (2 Chron. 11:15; Isa. 44:19; Jer. 2:5; 10:3; Ezek. 8:10). A professed Christianity that centers on the external expressions of faith—attendance at worship, rote prayers, church membership, participation in the ordinances—but is devoid of the regenerating power of the gospel—is as futile and unprofitable as idol worship.

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 125). BMH Books.

James says, futile, worthless, vain religion doesn't get to the heart of the matter but merely remains external, physical, rote, sacramental, ceremonial and habitual but never changes the heart. It never changes the inner man. The lost man. He is externally appearing to be a religious God fearing man, but inward he is full of sin and death and it



spews from his mouth in angry, violent, mean, demeaning and sometimes dirty speech, filled with cursing and bitterness. The pattern erupting from his mouth is less than God honoring but betrays a sinful disposition and an unwillingness to repent and correct this is a valid indicator that He is not regenerated.

So now we have seen False Religion #1 indicator, the uncontrolled, sinful tongue.

## I. False Religion

# II. True Religion

**27** Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, *and* to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

As opposed to External, ceremonial religious practices that never change the sinful heart.

True religion is

1. Pure
2. Undefiled.

It is authentic and real because it can stand the test of the omniscient God who sees past the external to the heart.

Pure — — καθαρά  
**katharos: clean (adjective)**  
**Original Word:** καθαρός, ἅ, ὄν  
**Part of Speech:** Adjective  
**Transliteration:** katharos  
**Phonetic Spelling:** (kath-ar-os')  
**Definition:** clean (adjective)

**Usage:** clean, pure, unstained, either literally or ceremonially or spiritually; guiltless, innocent, upright.

2513 καθαρός (a primitive word) – properly, "without admixture" (BAGD); what is separated (purged), hence "clean" (pure) because unmixed (without undesirable elements); (figuratively) spiritually clean because purged (purified by God), i.e. free from the contaminating (soiling) influences of sin.

undefiled — — ἀμίαντος  
**amiantos: undefiled**  
**Original Word:** ἀμίαντος, ον  
**Part of Speech:** Adjective  
**Transliteration:** amiantos  
**Phonetic Spelling:** (am-ee'-an-tos)  
**Definition:** undefiled

**Usage:** undefiled, untainted, free from contamination.

283 *amíantos* (an adjective, derived from 1 /A "not" and 3392 /*miaínō*, "to stain, defile") – properly, untinted (unstained); (figuratively) undefiled because unstained.

For Jewish readers, these adjectives might carry ceremonial suggestions, but James uses them here with a moral and ethical sense. The two terms view the same obedience from a positive and negative standpoint. “Pure” denotes that which is intrinsically free from moral pollution or corruption, whereas “faultless” (*amiantos*) or “undefiled” negatively declares that it has not been soiled or stained by contact with moral evil, hence not “worthless” as unacceptable before God. For James, moral purity has replaced the concern for ritualistic purity.

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 126). BMH Books.

pure and undefiled with our God and Father”  
(Rotherham) must unite the inner and outward effects of the gospel. A living religion must know the reality of the divine life within

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 126). BMH Books.

## 27 Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father

### θρησκεία καθαρά και αμιάτος **παρα τω Θεω και πατρι**

The Greek has no pronoun “our,” but the definite article uniting the nouns may have that force. The formula, familiar from Paul’s epistles, is distinctively Christian. Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 126). BMH Books.

**παρα** — with or alongside of—- shows the intimacy with which God is acquainted with our worship. He is not some distance God that we have not relationship with. In Him we move and have our being. All that we do is fully exposed to Him. Unlike ourselves, who can be so easily deceived, God cannot. HE is truth.

Our God and Father knows what is genuine worship and what is not. He knows the heart and knows the motives and knows the mind.

John 4:22–24 (NKJV)

<sup>22</sup> You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. <sup>23</sup> But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. <sup>24</sup> God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

The names used to refer to God are important  
 As “God,” He is (Holy)omnipotent, sovereign, and will authoritatively deal with our religious practices. He is also our “Father,” not merely an impartial Judge but a loving Father, who has the interest of His children at heart

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 126). BMH Books.

That fact that He is God means that He is separate from His creation, He is other than or Holy.

He is transcendent. Therefore those that are saved by him and have Him living within them will be separate from the World.

“unspotted from the world”

But as Father, he is Loving, caring, compassionate and cares for the destitute and deserted like the

widows and the orphans. The forgotten are not forgotten by the Father.

Therefore, those that are most like God in salvation will be the most compassionate and caring for the helpless, and hopeless.

Lets take a deeper look into what James describes as true Religion... Pure and undefiled

**27** Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father ***is this:*** to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, *and* to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

Again, we might would expect something more grandiose or glorious or more ceremonial. We might expect to be involve in great efforts of evangelism. Preaching the gospel in streets. Studying the Bible and becoming filled with scripture. Being great servants of the church, sacrificing time and money to serve the Lord.

But James, as he does with the rest of the book, is immensely practical. He brings the high and lofty done to the earthy and lowly. It is simple yet profound, and tremendously insightful and convicting

He boils down true religion that is an expression of true faith to

1. Compassion
2. Separation

## 1. Compassion

1. to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, visit-ἔπισκέπτομαι; Pres. A. Inf. be continually visiting.

**to check on** v. — to visit someone in order to determine his condition.

ἔπισκέπτομαι; to look upon or after, to inspect, examine with the eyes; in order to see how he is, i. e. to visit, go to see one: b. Hebraistically, to look upon in order to help or to benefit, equivalent to to look after, have a care for, provide for

It carries the ideas of caring for others, exercising oversight on their behalf, and of helping them in whatever way is needed. It is from the same root as *episkopos*, which means “overseer” and is sometimes translated “bishop” (see the nasb and kjv texts of Acts 20:28; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:7; 1

Peter 2:25). *Episkeptomai* is used frequently in the New Testament of God's visiting His people in order to help, strengthen, and encourage them (see, e.g., Luke 1:68, 78; 7:16; Acts 15:14 kjv; the nasb reading uses the expression "how God first concerned Himself about"; and Heb. 2:6 kjv; the nasb reading uses the expression "concerned about").

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1998). [James](#) (p. 89). Moody Press.

In speaking of the separation of the sheep and goats in the day of judgment, Jesus used the word to describe those who truly belong to and love Him, saying, "I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you *visited* Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me" (Matt. 25:35–36, emphasis added). Actually, all of those ways of ministering could be included broadly under *episkeptomai*. **To visit** in a way that is pleasing to **our God and Father** is to meet as best we can all the needs of **orphans and widows** and any others **in their distress**.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1998). [James](#) (p. 89). Moody Press.



Please notice that no where in the the text does it say that pure and undefiled religion is to pay the preacher the visit. This is not the job or responsibility of the pastor/elder or deacon. It is the Christians responsibility. To many christians have relegated their personal responsibility to do ministry to the paid staff. Not only is that wrong, it is ungodly and direct violation of this text.

When I came here to be your pastor we only a handful of children that attended faithfully and 2 of them were mine. We had one widow. Mrs. Faye. but at that time she was not in distress. She was living with Marie and Kenny. But now many more children and a number of widows. Our orphans are in India but we have widows right here in our midst. Some of them are not able to attend due to health reasons and physical restraints that don't allow them transportation. And that is a normal thing in a growing church and and expected need for more ministry.

But what is troubling to me is that in cases of our widows who are in distress and are facing hard times in their health, I can count on one hand how many have ask how can I get in contact or go and visit them and about the same or less who have actually made a visit.

I'm not saying that you are lost if you didn't ask but I'm am saying something is wrong. IF the the heart of God the Father is seen in this simple act of compassion, what does that say about us who have no time for such an intrusion in our schedule. In this area there may be a need for repentance. We all will get old and we will all end up in various needs for our physical and spiritual needs. We will be where our widows are..... So what are we doing. We just playing church. Reading our Bibles praying for these widows. God did not say Pure and undefiled religion is praying for them. You go and visit them.

Generally, the neediest people in the early church were **orphans and widows**. There were no life insurance or welfare programs to support them. Jobs for either group were scarce, and if they had no close kin, or at least none who would help them, they were in desperate straits. But the principle applies to anyone in need. Because such people without parents and husbands are unable to reciprocate in any way, caring for them reveals true sacrificial love.

God has always had special concern for **orphans and widows** and has commanded His people to reflect that same concern. David affirmed that “a father of the fatherless and a judge for the widows, is God in His holy habitation” (Ps. 68:5). The Mosaic Law included the instruction, “You shall not afflict any widow or orphan” (Ex. 22:22), and,

“At the end of every third year you shall bring out all the tithe of your produce in that year, and shall deposit it in your town. The Levite, because he has no portion or inheritance among you, and the alien, the orphan and the widow who are in your town, shall come and eat and be satisfied, in order that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do” ... “Cursed is he who distorts the justice due an alien, orphan, and widow.” And all the people shall say, “Amen.” (Deut. 14:28–29; 27:19)

Through Jeremiah, the Lord declared to Israel, “If you truly amend your ways and your deeds, if you truly practice justice between a man and his neighbor, if you do not oppress the alien, the orphan, or the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, nor walk after other gods to your own ruin, then I will let you dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers forever and ever” (Jer. 7:5–7).

Loving, selfless service to others, especially fellow believers, is also a frequent New Testament theme. Paul gave the command to “honor widows who are widows indeed” (1 Tim. 5:3), which included bestowing financial and any other help that was needed

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1998). [James](#) (pp. 89–90). Moody Press.

to visit orphans and widows in their trouble,

**thlipsis: tribulation**

**Original Word:** θλίψις, εως, ἡ

**Part of Speech:** Noun, Feminine

**Transliteration:** thlipsis

**Phonetic Spelling:** (thlip'-sis)

**Definition:** tribulation

**Usage:** persecution, affliction, distress, tribulation.

2347 thlípsis – properly, pressure (what constricts or rubs together), used of a narrow place that "hems someone in"; tribulation, especially internal pressure that causes someone to feel confined (restricted, "without options").

2347 /thlípsis ("compression, tribulation") carries the challenge of coping with the internal pressure of a tribulation, especially when feeling there is "no way of escape" ("hemmed in").

### 1 John 2:10–11 (NKJV)

<sup>10</sup> He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. <sup>11</sup> But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

### 1 John 3:10–15 (NKJV)

<sup>10</sup> In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor *is* he who does not love his brother. <sup>11</sup> For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, <sup>12</sup> not as Cain *who* was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous.

<sup>13</sup> Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you. <sup>14</sup> We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love *his* brother abides in death. <sup>15</sup> Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

### 1 John 4:7–12 (NKJV)

<sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. <sup>9</sup> In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. <sup>10</sup> In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. <sup>11</sup> Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

<sup>12</sup> No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.

John 13:35 (NKJV)

<sup>35</sup> **By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”**

True Christianity is manifested from a pure and loving heart by the way believers talk and by the way they act. It is manifested by how they love and care for those who are in need, not by how they love and care for those they prefer, those who are close to

them, or those with whom they share common traits and interests. Love is to be the central and most visible manifestation of salvation

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1998). [James](#) (p. 91). Moody Press.

1. Compassion

## 2. Separation

2. *and* to **keep** oneself unspotted from the world

unspotted

**aspilos**: spotless, unstained

**Original Word**: ἄσπιλος, ον

**Part of Speech**: Adjective

**Transliteration**: aspilos

**Phonetic Spelling**: (as'-pee-los)

**Definition**: spotless, unstained

**Usage**: unstained, undefiled, spotless, pure.

784 áspilos (an adjective, derived from 1 /A "without" and 4696 /spílos, "spot, blemish") – properly, unspotted (unstained); (figuratively) undefiled and hence fully acceptable.

784 /áspilos ("unspotted," literally, "without spot or stain") refers to what is morally (spiritually) untainted, i.e. morally unblemished (pure) – "free

from censure, irreproachable, free from vice, unsullied" (K. Wuest).

**keep** téreó: to watch over, to guard

**Original Word:** τηρέω

**Part of Speech:** Verb

**Transliteration:** téreó

**Phonetic Spelling:** (tay-reh'-o)

**Definition:** to watch over, to guard

**Usage:** I keep, guard, observe, watch over.

5083 tēréō (from tēros, "a guard") – properly, maintain (preserve); (figuratively) spiritually guard (watch), keep intact.

from the world

**apo: from, away from**

**Original Word:** ἀπό

**Part of Speech:** Preposition

**Transliteration:** apo

**Phonetic Spelling:** (apo')

**Definition:** from, away from

**Usage:** from, away from.

keeping **oneself unstained by the world** is the perpetual obligation of Christians, allowing for no exception or qualification. Those who belong to God are to be characterized by moral and spiritual purity, by **unstained** and unblemished holiness



MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1998). [James](#) (p. 91). Moody Press.

## 1 Peter 1:17–18 (NKJV)

<sup>17</sup> ..... conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay *here* in fear; <sup>18</sup> knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers,

But I would add not only are we to be separate from the worlds morals but also it's ideology and philosophy. Much of the church has been seduced by men in ministry and ministries that may have had good intentions but have pulled in the Trojan horses of CRT, Social Justice, Phycology, psychotherapy along with theist evolution, and Business methodology and have undermined the sufficiency of the Bible.

## 2 Corinthians 10:3–5 (NKJV)

<sup>3</sup> For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. <sup>4</sup> For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, <sup>5</sup> casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the

knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,

*Kosmos* (**world**) has the basic meaning of order, arrangement, and sometimes of adornment. In the New Testament it is used figuratively of the earth (see Matt. 13:35; John 21:25) and the universe (see 1 Tim. 6:7; Heb. 4:3; 9:26). But most often it is used to represent fallen mankind in general and its ungodly spiritual systems of philosophy, morals, and values (see John 7:7; 8:23; 14:30; 1 Cor. 2:12; Gal. 4:3; Col. 2:8). That is the sense in which James uses the term in the present text. (See discussion below on 4:4.)

With that meaning of **world** obviously in mind, John warns, “Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world” (1 John 2:15–16). Love of God and love of the world and the things of the world are totally incompatible and mutually exclusive. The phrase “the things of the world” does not pertain to such things as participating in business, being involved in social activities, or buying and using the material necessities of life. It is the overriding love of

and allegiance to such things that are ungodly and come between men and God.

Godly **religion**, that is, biblical Christianity, is a matter of holy obedience to God's Word—reflected, among other ways, by our honesty in regard to ourselves, by our selflessness in regard to the needs of others, and by our uncompromising moral and spiritual stand in regard to the world.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1998). [James](#) (p. 92). Moody Press.

I don't want the religion the world offers or in some cases what some forms of Christianity offer. Give me that Old Time Religion that James talked about, that Paul preached about and that Jesus came for and died for.



