



Don't Deceive Yourself! **James 1:19-27**

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves (James 1:22—KJV).

But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves (James 1:22—NASB).

But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves (James 1:22—NRSV).

In James' letter to Christians, he reminded them to repent of their sins whenever they disobeyed God. By repentance, James included the fact that Christians needed to turn away from all sordidness or decadence and any kind of wickedness or evil that still might be growing within them. But Christian faith and living involves more than moral reformation and following various religious laws or practices that many religions also encourage. Christian faith includes "welcoming with meekness the implanted word" (James 1:21). As true Christians, not only does Jesus Christ live within our hearts as the Word of God, but Christians meekly or humbly welcome the teachings of the Bible into their minds and implant them so they will grow in understanding and remember them to rightly apply them day-by-day. Christians learn the teachings of the Bible so they will look to the will of God when making decisions and apply the truth of God to the way they live in practical ways; such as, "in caring for orphans and widows in their distress" (James 1:27). The Good News of Jesus demands we repent of our sins and implant the word of God in our minds and hearts as "the power to save our souls" (James 1:21). James wanted Christians to know and understand that if we implant the word of God into our hearts and minds; then, we will do the will of God. One who hears the word of God, perhaps in Sunday School, Bible Study class, or in worship, but does not do the word of God deceives themselves into thinking they are Christians, but Christians remember and implant the word of God within them so they can do the will and work of God.

Thinking Further

1. In our relations with others, what ways of speaking does James want us to do or avoid doing?

2. How can praying and resolving to be quick to listen and slow to speak help prevent us from speaking quickly in anger?

3. From what are we to rid ourselves?

4. How can we best nurture the growth of God's implanted word in our hearts and minds?

5. What does James say is pure and undefiled religion? How might someone misunderstand his teaching on this?