

JAMES

A Faith That Works

Study 6

True Spirituality: A Picture of the Doers of the Word

James 1:26-2:4

A. We need to understand what true spirituality is and not be self-deceived.

James 1:26

Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless.

1) a) Discussion question. What does it mean to “keep a tight rein on their tongues”?

b) Reflection question. How can we know if we are deceiving ourselves?

James 1:27

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

c) Objective question. Choose the most appropriate. What does God our Father value as “religion”?

- A. Good talking skills about God and religion
- B. Showing God’s loving character by being loving to orphans and widows

d) Discussion question. What practical steps can you take to help the powerless in your community?

B. The sin of Discrimination is due to our misunderstanding of the true nature of glory

James 2:1-4

My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism. Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, “Here’s a good seat for you,” but say to the poor man, “You stand there” or “Sit on the floor by my feet,” have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

2) a) Discussion question. ESV of James 2:1 says “My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory.” and Leviticus gives a similar command. The word “glory” means “weight, worth or value”. Why do people tend to give more glory or value to rich people instead of poor people?

Leviticus 19:15

“Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly.

b) Reflection question. How might we be guilty of playing favorites in school. At church, at work, or among our friends and family?

C. We need to be transformed by His glory and this will transform how we treat others

3) Objective question. Select all that apply. What does the Lord of glory - (the one with the most glory, basically the “richest” person in the whole universe, has unlimited power and can make money, animals, mountains and time appear out of thin air), wants us as his followers to think about glory? (Refer to the video lecture for the answers)

A. Financial riches is a glory all Christians should pursue

B. The glory of Christ is in service, instead of in wealth, race, strength, beauty, pedigree, wisdom and education.

C. We should do charity to gain glory

D. We should do charity because it is Christ’s glory

Takeaway

True Spirituality is Picture of Christians being the Doers of the Word, because Jesus Christ the Lord of glory, came down and served us and this glory is worthy to be imitated.

Case Study

Case 1 – All talk no action

Toh Kit Eve is always sharing the about Jesus and him dying for our sins. She want people to avoid going to hell and so they can go to heaven. She is very quick to defend God and the gospel whenever she feels her belief is threatened, even cutting people halfway when they are asking a question about her faith.

Kit always forwards long chain in messages in Whatsapp group, whether that is bible verses, good morning messages, some new fact about the apostles, Jesus or God, politics, food promotions or health tips without verifying if it is true or not.

Kit always have something to say and complains about everything: the people who don't dress nicely to church doesn't respect God and his Holy place, the musicians in the church service didn't sing well enough, the sermons were too long, the toilet is too wet, there is not enough car park at church, the air cond is too cold, and the ushers and church office staff are not friendly enough. She loves meeting people to complain about certain individuals. When a life group members asked Kit to not complain so much, she says "But it's true what!"

Kit's life group leader has invited her to serve on mission trips to a local orphanage multiple times, but Kit says she is busy but will pray for the trip and the kids.

1) a) Discussion question. What do you think of Kit?

b) Reflection question. Can you relate to Kit?

Case 1.1– Polluted by the World in Acts of service

The orphanage is called Second Hope. It has kids from single parent families or abusive families. Kit didn't tell the leader but the reason she does not want to serve in Second Hope is because she heard that some of the parents of the children did not marry and had the kids before marriage and other parents are drunks. She thinks that the parent should take responsibility for their own kids, and doesn't deserve financial help from the church.

The Second Hope kids are of a different race than Kit and she thinks that this race is inferior, lazy and will eventually grow up just like their parents, always asking for more help and more money just so they can buy alcohol and get drunk.

d) Discussion question. What can you say to change Kit's mind?

e) Discussion question. Do you think Kit will change her mind with the answers from the last question?

f) Discussion question. Do you think God made some races and people more inferior than others?

g) Reflection question. How can you guard against becoming “polluted by the world” (v.27), particularly in the area of service?

h) Reflection question. How can I love the poor or even my enemies – and treat them equally without favoritism?

Case 2 – Partiality

Parshell is on duty as an usher during the Christmas play. She holds a high position in a successful healthcare company and invited some of her non-believer VIP clients from overseas to watch the Christmas play.

One of her workers also attended this Christmas play with his son and took the front seats while waiting for the event to start. The VIP clients came late to the event and when Parshell saw this, she asked her worker and the kid to go sit elsewhere so that the VIP guests who are non-believers can have the good seats.

b) Discussion question. Since the clients are non-believers, do you think what Parshell did is okay?

c) Reflection question. In your home, workplace, church or other social circles, have you shown favoritism and trivialized the grievousness of this sin?