

James 1:21-27 “Pure Religion” ENCORE

- 1) Discuss the process of changing & growing in verses 21-22
 - a. Lay aside
 - b. Receive the word
 - c. Be doers of the word

- 2) According to James, what is the right response of a child of God to the Word of God?

- 3) Christians are often deceived into thinking that they can gain spiritual insight from the Word of God without dealing with sin in their lives. But the book of James says that God’s people must put off their old ways of thinking and living (v.21).
 - a. If a Christian is not willing to do these things, what can be said about him (v. 22, 25)?

 - b. If a believer is exposed to the truth of the Word of God but does not personally apply it to his life, to what is he compared (v.23-24)?

- 4) What does it mean to look in to the perfect law of liberty and continue in it?

- 5) James introduces another heart test that he will expand upon in chapter three. What does James say about the Christian who does not bridle his tongue (v. 26)?

- 6) How does this relate to being a “doer of the word”?

- 7) James mentions deception and forgetfulness several times in these verses; what point do you think he is trying to make?

- 8) From a positive standpoint; discuss the difference the word of God has made in your life this year.

- 9) Are you aware of any specific situations in your life in which you are not doing what you know God’s Word calls you to do?
 - a) Why the reluctance on your part to obey?

 - b) What are the potential consequences of your disobedience?

 - c) How could Christian friends help you in this struggle?

James 1:21-27 Pure Religion LA

Monday (James 1:27) Was Adolph Hitler a Christian? Hitler knew how to dissemble. One had to look very closely at his terrible book *Mein Kampf* very carefully to see the cloven hoof beneath the angel's luminous robes. He made free use of the Christian vocabulary, talked about the blessing of the Almighty and the Christian confessions which would become the pillars of the new state; he rang bells and pulled out all the organ stops. He assumed the earnestness of a man who is utterly weighed down by historic responsibility. He handed out pious stories to the press, especially the church papers. It was reported, for example, that he showed his tattered Bible to some deaconesses and declared that he drew the strength for his great work from the Word of God. He was able to introduce a pietistic timbre into his voice which caused many religious people to welcome him as a man sent from God. And a skilled propaganda machine saw to it that despite all the atrocities which were already happening and despite the rabid invasions of the Nazis in the churches, the rumor got around that the good Fuhrer knew nothing about these things. —Helmut Thielicke

Tuesday (James 1:27) Was Adolph Eichmann a Christian? The 56-year-old former Nazi officer, who was convicted of playing “a central and decisive part” in the killing of six million Jews, was the first man to be hanged in the 14-year-old state of Israel. To a small group who witnessed the execution at Ramleh Prison near Tel Aviv, he said, “Long Live Germany, long live Argentina, long live Austria.... I had to obey the laws of war and my flag.” For a number of weeks before his death, Eichmann had been counseled by the Rev. William Hull of Winnepeg, pastor of an evangelical congregation in Jerusalem. Just before he dropped through the gallows trapdoor, Eichmann told the witnesses in German, “After a short while, gentlemen, we shall all meet again. So is the fate of all men. I have lived believing in God and I die believing in God.” In reaffirming belief, Eichmann used a term employed by Nazis who had left the church but still professed a belief in God.

Wednesday (James 1:27) Was Sammy Davis Jr. a Christian? Sammy Davis Jr. turned heads at the NAACP's Image Awards ceremony in Dec. 1989 by thanking Jesus for standing by him during a bout with throat cancer. Some wondered if Davis, who converted to Judaism in the 1950s, had become a born-again Christian. Not so, says Davis. He was so overcome by the sea of black faces that he “immediately went back to my upbringing. My grandmother used to go around saying ‘Thank Jesus.’ It's more of a black thing to say ‘Praise Jesus’ than a religious thing or a denominational thing.”

Thursday (James 1:27) Was his host a Christian? A Hindu visitor asked his American hostess, a professing Christian, what she thought of Jesus Christ. “We don't talk about that at the dinner table,” she replied. The next day he asked a businessman the same question. He replied, “Let's go out on the balcony and talk about this.” Later the Hindu said: “This is the first nation I've been in where the people are ashamed of their God!”

Friday (James 1:27) Are all your neighbors Christian? New religions and immigration from the Far East and Arab world have barely dented the overwhelming Christian composition of the U.S. population, a survey of 113,000 adults has found. Study director Barry Kosmin of the City University of New York Graduate School called the findings the most extensive religious profile available of 20th-century America. The survey found 86.5 percent of Americans identified with Christian denominations, including 26 percent Roman Catholic and 60 percent Protestant. Richard John Neuhaus, editor in chief of *First Things*, a monthly journal on religion and public life, said one surprise in reading the survey was the researchers' conclusion that Muslims represented 0.5 percent of the U.S. population, or 1.4 million Americans. The finding indicates that half of Arab-Americans either have Christian origins or were converted in America. About 40 percent of the Muslims are black, but only 2 percent of the blacks surveyed are Muslim. The survey also found that most Asian-Americans are not Muslims, Buddhists or Hindus, but Christians. And most of those who say they are of Irish ancestry are Protestants, not Catholics. “Another surprise was the way the so-called new religions were much smaller than we anticipated,” said Professor Seymour Lachmann, CUNY dean for community development. The researches estimated that 20,000 adults describe themselves as part of the New Age movement, which combines mysticism, psychology and holistic healing. Now as you think about our land, those you work with, your extended family and your neighbors would you say that almost 90% of them are true believers in Jesus Christ? What do you think this might indicate?

Saturday (James 1:27) Have you ever read “The Ancient Mariner”? I dare say you thought it one of the strangest imaginations ever put together, especially that part where the old mariner represents the corpses of all the dead men rising up to man the ship—dead men pulling the rope, dead men steering, dead men spreading sails. I thought what a strange idea that was. But do you know, I have lived to see that time. I have gone into churches, and I have seen a dead man in the pulpit, a dead man as deacon, a dead man handling the plate, and dead men sitting to hear. —C. H. Spurgeon