



**Going Deeper**  
**James Week 3 - Genuine Faith**  
**July 26, 2020**

King David faced a great deal of danger and persecution in his life. Many of the Psalms we have are his cry out to God when he was face-to-face with danger. Yet, when David is facing these trials, he not only prays for physical safety, but to remain spiritually pure as well. While facing evil men David writes, “Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord; keep watch over the door of my lips. Let not my heart be drawn to what is evil, to take part in wicked deeds with men who are evildoers; let me not eat of their delicacies.” (Psalm 141:3-4) David’s desire was to remain rooted in God’s word, and to have his actions remain pure.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells us to build our lives on the rock that is Him and His Word, so that when the storms of life come, as they did for David, we have a firm foundation to put the words of Jesus into practice in all circumstances.

James continues this exhortation to not just hear the words of God, but to have our hearts and minds rooted in them so that we can have a “religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless.” The type of religion that James refers to here is not just a certain group that one claims to belong to, but it is a personal and outward observance of worship and active service to God. James boldly writes that if we just listen to the word, but don’t do what it says, then we deceive ourselves. We are called to live out the gospel with our lives.

We must first listen to God’s Word, and humbly accept what God plants in our hearts. This is the firm foundation which we build our lives upon, the Word of God which has the power to save us. We humbly accept the free gift that God gives us, and let his Word take root within us. Then that Word is supposed to grow! We cultivate that seed and allow it to grow and mature in our hearts and then it bears fruit in our lives, which is seen in our actions.

We then boldly activate the Word of God by doing what it says. How foolish it would be to look at ourselves in a mirror, but upon turning away immediately forget what we look like. The same is true for our faith: if we are not putting into action what God has been teaching us, then we are deceiving ourselves. We are to live it out and embody the Word to those around us by doing justice, loving the marginalized, and telling others about the freedom that exists with Christ. Both our words and deeds should bring honor to God and love to those around us.

James is calling us to spiritual maturity. He writes not to condemn, but to convict us and challenge us to grow and become the people that God created us to be. Let our lives and our actions be a reflection of the Word of Life that God has placed in our hearts!

**SO, CONSIDER:**

1. What are you doing in your life to ensure the Word that has been planted in your heart, grows and matures?
2. Who are the “orphans and widows” you encounter in your life? How can you care for them?
3. Why is controlling the tongue so essential in living out our faith? What is the relationship to what we say and our keeping ourselves from being polluted by the world? (1:27)

**TAKE ACTION:**

Think about this progression - humbly accepting the Word planted in your heart, boldly activating the Word by doing what it says, and willingly embodying the Word to those around you. Identify which of these steps you could use the most growth in. Read what James has to say about it and think about how you can facilitate growth in that area within your life. What steps can you take to mature in that area of your life? - *Pastor Justin*