

Practicing Religion James 1

What Does It Mean To Practice Religion?

Many see attending services as practicing religion; Has no effect on rest of life
James says otherwise

We received blessing from God that we might be first fruits - **James 1:18**

Then gives six behaviors necessary to be religious

But first, notice his intended audience - **James 1:19**

This instruction is to those in God's family

First Three Directives Relate Learning James 1:19-20

Open Your Ears "*quick to hear*"

We must listen.

We need to give attention to what is said by God. Read, study, meditate, discuss.

Control Your Tongue "*slow to speak*"

Gives greater detail about this necessity later

Here mainly focused on need to be quiet and listen

Learn more from listening than talking - **Psalms 62:1,5**

We must learn to let God speak and give our focus to listening - **Matthew 11:15; Revelation 3:6**

Calm Your Spirit "*slow to anger*"

Anger gets in the way of understanding

It and other attitudes that distract lead to quick response rather than calm consideration

Getting rid of anger and other attitudes will make it easier to focus on the teaching that we need

Whether spiritual or physical understanding we need focus

Remain calm, keep your focus, then learning is easier

The Other Three Directives Relate To Action James 1:21-22

Clean Up Your Heart "*put aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness*"

First step to getting right (righteousness) is getting rid of wrong

One cannot come to God unless he first leaves the world - **1John 1:6; James 4:4; Matthew 6:24**

Remember this message is to "*my beloved brethren*"

Watch Your Attitude "*in humility receive the word implanted*"

We must control our urges to be in charge

We need to let the Word be so much a part of self that there is no self to get in the way.

As submissive to the word as a ship is to its rudder or a horse to bit - **Romans 8:7; 10:3; James 4:7**

Maintain Your Balance "*prove yourselves doers of the word*"

It all culminates in putting into practice what we have learned

Our learning should cause us to take action

Many were working without learning - **Romans 10:1-2**

Others learned but failed to work - **Revelation 3:15-16**

We must put into practice what we have learned from God

A Practical Illustration Follows James 1:23-25

Blessing is reserved to the one who practices religion; Doing is necessary to be a first fruit

Finally, A Warning James 1:26-27

Religion requires control and action

Means leave off some things & engage in others; all in accordance with the teachings from God

Leave the world and do God's will

Much more than coming together for worship & study

It is a daily walk with the Lord - **Luke 9:23**