



# CAPITOL COMMISSION™

## TRUE FAITH IS BEING “DOERS OF THE WORD”, Part 5 – JAMES 1:27

COLORADO

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*James would say you are deceived if you say you are a Christian, you are hearing God's Word and yet not exercising self-control. Not responding to Scripture with humility and giving way to its work in your life is deception and we have made a gross miscalculation as to the true condition of our soul. True faith results in obedience to the Word of God. Don't be deceived, it matters how we live. Therefore, if you think you are a Christian, then take an honest look. Just because you do religious things; you go to church, serve on committees, go on mission trips or may even be an elder in your church, know that these things do not necessarily mean you have a true and genuine faith. God is not looking at outward actions, but He is concerned with the condition of our inward heart. It's critical to understand the contrast between a vain and worthless religion and a true and pure religion. As we saw last time, a good indication as to the condition of our heart is our tongue. Our speech reveals the condition of our heart. As we turn to James 1:27, we will see that just as our speech reveals the condition of our heart, so our attitude towards those in need represent the condition of our love. James issues a clear invitation of immense importance; receive the Word of God with submission and humility and respond to the Word of God without deception.*

### I. A TRUE FAITH, A PURE RELIGION-JAMES 1:27

*“This is pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father, to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.” James 1:27*

You are genuinely religious when your life is characterized by obedience to Scripture and a love for others. James makes a clear contrast between the person who has a vain and worthless religion and a pure and undefiled religion. The first one has a mere form of godliness (2 Timothy 3:5) that is external and possesses an unholy heart revealed by an uncontrolled tongue. A religion that does not transform the heart accomplishes nothing and is absolutely useless. But the second man is characterized by true obedience to Scripture with a pure heart and genuine love for others in need. True faith is not “religious” merely in an outward sense, but true faith is distinguished in God's eyes by a lifestyle of response to God's truth beginning with an inward change of the heart reflected in a life of pure love. True faith responds to the Word and that means in every area of our life.

### A. A TRUE FAITH: PURE AND UNDEFILED RELIGION! – JAMES 1:27A

*“This is pure and undefiled religion ...” James 1:27a*

Do you really want to know what true faith is? Then James will give us the definition here in this verse by directing our attention with the words, “This is”. This is what pure and undefiled religion is! This is true faith! James gives us markers so we don't miss the truth and aren't deceived.

“pure” Greek word “*katharos*,” meaning to cleanse, to wash clean.

One who has a “pure religion” is one who has been washed clean. What has he been washed clean from? Sin of course. Purity in heart can only come through Jesus Christ. It begins first with repentance from our sin and believing in Jesus Christ alone for salvation from our sin. Because of Christ's sacrifice for us on the cross which paid for the penalty of our sin, I can be cleansed and washed clean by turning from my sin to Christ. Only He can cleanse us from sin, making us pure.

“undefiled” Greek word “*amiantos*,” meaning freedom from contamination.

Not only does Christ free us from the penalty of sin, but also the power of sin. No longer does sin have control of our lives. James has taught us in this chapter about a true faith that endures through trials to maturity and does not give into a temptation to sin but responds to the Word of God with obedience. As we live out our faith in a world that constantly tests our faith, it is with a holy, godly life; free from sin. At the moment of salvation, God is at work in our lives bringing about maturity and true godliness. Of course, we still sin but our life is no longer under the control of sin. We are set free to serve God.

### B. A TRUE FAITH: IN GOD'S EYES! – JAMES 1:27B

*“This is pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father ...” James 1:27b*

Who decides what true faith really is? Who sets the standard for measuring pure and undefiled religion? God does, not man. We cannot live a religious life based on what is right in our own eyes. In fact, the Old Testament book of Judges closes with this verse, “In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.” (Judges 21:25) And because everyone lived according to what was right in their eyes, there was chaos.

God is the One Who sets the standards for what is true religion, true faith. He is the judge of true religion. And true faith is measured according to the standard which is found in God's Word. James will sum up the essence of true faith according to the standard of God's love and purity. Therefore, it is clear that you are genuinely religious when your life is marked by obedience to the Word of God and lived out in love.

### C. A TRUE FAITH: A PURE LOVE! – JAMES 1:27C

## BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS, GOVERNOR & SPOUSES: TUESDAY AT 7:15AM, CAPITOL BASEMENT, ROOM 0109

STAFF, LOBBYISTS, JOURNALISTS & SERGEANTS: TUESDAYS AT NOON, CAPITOL BASEMENT, ROOM 0107

# Colorado

## TRUE FAITH IS BEING “DOERS OF THE WORD”, Part 5 – JAMES 1:27

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*“This is pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father, to visit orphans and widows in their distress ...” James 1:27c*

What is pure and undefiled religion in God’s eyes? What matters to the heart of God? It may surprise you. If our faith is real and genuine, then God says we will “*visit orphans and widows in their distress.*”

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“**visit**” Greek word “**episkeptomai**,” means bringing love, care to someone and exercising oversight.

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Obviously God means much more than merely stopping by for a visit. If your faith is real and genuine, then your life will be marked by a pure love for all those in need. That means going out of your way to encourage, help, love and care for others. God has always been concerned for widows and orphans. You see this throughout Scripture. They were the needy ones that He always made provisions for. Beginning with the commandments given to His people through Moses on Mount Sinai and carried through the New Testament church, God has always provided for widows and orphans. The following verses represent only a few examples of God’s constant concern and care for the widows and orphans; Exodus 22:22, Deuteronomy 14:28-29, Psalm 68:15, Jeremiah 7:6-7, Acts 6:1-6, 1 Timothy 5:3. An essential service of the church was to care for these ones in need. Regardless of what our world thinks today, this is not the responsibility of government. It is the clear mandate for the church of Jesus Christ.

James says that just as the tongue represents the issue of a pure heart, just so orphans and widows represent the issues of pure love. One who possesses a pure and undefiled religion, one who is a doer of the Word, one who has real and genuine faith will be marked by a sincere love for those in need. Are you?

### D. A TRUE FAITH: A HOLY LIFE! – JAMES 1:27D

*“This is pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father, to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.” James 1:27d*

James brings forward one more mark that exemplifies pure and undefiled religion. He says that we must keep ourselves unstained by the world. James exhorts believers to have a heart willing to apply the Word of God without any compromise. What does it mean to be unstained by the world?

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“**unstained**” Greek word “**aspilos**,” means unblemished, holy, without spot, absence of stain from outside source, no exception,

without influence.

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True faith responds to the Word and that means in every area of our life. One who possesses a genuine faith will pursue holiness, godliness and righteousness and will not be stained by the world and its lusts.

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“**world**” Greek word “**kosmos**,” meaning the evil world system that we live in. This includes the philosophy, the lifestyle, the morality, the standards, and the ethics.

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One who has a pure and undefiled religion will not be stained by the filth and evil of this world. Before Jesus Christ went to the cross He prayed on our behalf the following: “*But now I come to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy made full in themselves. I have given them Thy word and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I do not ask Thee to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth.*” (John 17:13-17) What keeps us pure from the world? Our Lord makes it clear that His Word, His truth will sanctify and keep us pure.

The world and the things of this world will be a temptation for us that can stain our lives with sin. We are to live in the world as a light giving testimony to God’s love, but we are not to have anything to do with the world for its lifestyle, its philosophy, its standards and morality are in opposition to what pleases God. The world is evil and one day will pass away. 1 John 2:15 commands us, “*Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.*”

Isn’t this the message of James? True faith receives the Word of God and responds to Scripture with humility, giving way to its work in your life. True faith is characterized by a sincere love for those in need and a holy life. True faith is a lifestyle of response to God’s truth and is marked by a pure heart with a pure love. Do you have a pure or vain religion? Watch your tongue for it reflects your heart. Do you demonstrate a love and compassion for those in need? What is your attitude towards the world? Remember, the blessings James talks about come not from merely hearing God’s Word but in the doing of it! What about you? Do you have true faith?