

# SERMON OUTLINE James 1:26-27

The Right Kind of Religion

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## **THE RIGHT KIND OF RELIGION**

### **RIGHT RELIGIOUS CONTENT**

### **RIGHT RELIGIOUS OUTPUT**

*Bridled Tongue*

*Care for Orphans and Widows*

*Holiness*

# SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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## MAIN POINT

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The main question James answers in our passage is, "What is the right kind of religion?". Religion itself is good or bad, James tells us, based on its content and output. In his letter, and in this passage, James was mostly concerned with the kind of religious output that is pleasing to God. And to that end he gives three more charges concerning the kinds of things good religion does—it does not allow for an unbridled tongue, but it does care for those in society who are most vulnerable and strive for holiness.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. What were your thoughts on the text/sermon? What most stood out? How was it helpful? Confusing?
2. Have you ever heard someone say (or said yourself) anything like these: "I'm not very religious, I'm more spiritual." or "I'm into Jesus, not religion." or "You don't have to be religious to be a Christian."? What do you make of this idea?
3. Are you able to easily articulate the content of good religion? Can you confidently share the gospel?
4. Is it easy for you to appreciate how no religious output is pleasing to God without the right content in place first?
5. Which of James's three religious outputs (bridled tongue, care for vulnerable, holiness) is most natural for you? Least? How can you maximize your strengths and grow in your weaknesses?
6. Which types of unbridled speech are you most susceptible to?
7. On a scale of 1-10, how burdened are you to care for the vulnerable in our community?
8. If you were to chart out your growth in holiness since becoming a Christian, what would your chart look like?
9. How does the knowledge that your religion is always in the sight of God, your Father affect your daily life?
10. In what way do you most clearly see the greatness of God in this passage?

## AREAS OF APPLICATION

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11. Practice sharing the gospel in less than a minute and less than five minutes.
12. Ask a few people close to you how well you bridle your tongue. Make a list of the ways you struggle to do so. Make a plan to address those struggles. Make sure your plan involves specific passages in God's Word, specific prayers, and specific people.
13. Ask our Together for Good coordinators to give you one specific way to help care for a vulnerable family. Ask Jen Blevins to give you one way to practically care for the kids in Haiti. Ask our deacons if they know of an older woman who could use help.
14. Identify the greatest current hole in your holiness. Ask someone in your DG to help you fill it with righteousness.
15. What is one specific thing you mean to do differently in the power of the Spirit as a result of the things you saw or heard in this text or sermon?

## PRAYER POINTS

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16. Adoration. Praise God for being holy. Praise God for being a good Father to the fatherless.
17. Confession. Confess any aspects of worthless religion in your life. Confess any ways you've been indifferent to your tongue, the vulnerable, or the holiness of God's people. Confess any ways you've let the world shape your understanding of good religion more than God's Word.
18. Thanksgiving. Thank God for the gospel. Thank God for saving us not based on the quality of our religion, but on the righteousness of Jesus. Thank God for giving you the strength to live as He commands.
19. Supplication. Ask God to make our church stronger. Ask God to comfort the war widows and orphans in Eastern Europe. Ask God to fill us with a proper burden for proper religion. Ask God to take away our appetite for sin.