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[James 1: Fleshly Religion](#)

Submitted by theshovel

To the diverse Christian Church of America, whether in buildings or homes, organized or not. Greetings from a servant called James who is joined to God and His Son, Jesus Christ.

I think it is apparent that the American Church has achieved an amazing level of success in this world. I say this because there is a stark contrast between what I read in the Bible and what I view of the modern form. I'm not referring to the drastic difference in culture, for EVERYTHING has changed in that respect. No, the discrepancy I see presents some pretty interesting questions which the church, as a whole, seems reluctant to deal with ... except in a superficial manner.

How is it that you have come to associate physical, temporal well-being with the blessings of the gospel and, therefore, any damage to that well-being as coming from a lack of faith? Is that why you hide your failures from each other? Does that mean you have forgotten the promise of God that says afflictions are a gift that increase your dependence on Him? Why, then, would you seek to hinder the results of the work that teaches you to stand, in faith, as perfect and complete, and lacking in nothing? Unless, of course, some of you really don't know God. If you are coming to realize that this is the case, then ask God, who gives impartially and generously and without ridicule -- and understanding will be given. But the request must be for the miraculous work of God, and not your attempt to motivate Him with deals or promises. Those who approach God like this may look like they have it all together, but on the inside they are raging back and forth like the ocean in a storm. Let such a person expect NOTHING from God; for in reality, they've asked nothing from God. They have only divided their mind to accommodate the idea of God, for they ask just in case He is there. In truth, their whole life is unstable, despite all appearances.

What difference should it make to the offspring of God how they are rated by the system? So, what measurement do you use to determine your worth? Don't you know that a nothing in this world is everything in God. Now, those who rate well by this world's standards also need to consider the poverty of that illusion. Haven't you seen enough to know that those who are caught up in the insane pursuit of wealth are cut off in the middle of their endeavors (no matter how long they live) and that they die unsatisfied? So, do you really think your worth can be validated by the ILLUSION that you are doing well in this world? What if true "approval" cannot be revealed except by means of its CONTRAST to the approval rating of the world? What I'm telling you is that God's validation of you will never rate well on any of the "checklists" of successful living; for those who truly "do well" are disqualified by their obvious ongoing failures. Your "fortunate" situation won't be seen until the approval rating of the world is gone for good, where those who actually love Him are revealed as the recipients of life. For this is what God has promised.

I can hear it already from some who would take this opportunity to say, "God made me do evil!" To which I say, "You're full of it!" Evil desires don't come from God so what you suggest is an impossibility. The desire to do evil comes from a source other than Him. A person gets carried away because of the corresponding desires within him. These desires conceive and give birth to sin; and when sin grows up, it produces death. Do you not realize what comes from where? There is only one source of true goodness and perfect gifts and that is from above. It comes from the Father, who is light, who doesn't change or have any hint of darkness in Him. Our miraculous birth is the result of HIS desire being conceived in us by the True Word. And what is the fruit of God's desire? He has produced a new creation from out of the old which belongs to Him!

Those who have been born of Him know this within themselves. So, I say, LISTEN ... and be quiet long enough to hear the reality of God. Do you really think those initial reactions of righteous indignation by which you defend yourself and attack another are God's doing? Don't you recognize the old motivation of using anger to say what you really wanted to say? Believer, why do you hold on to the old source as if it had value? Discard the perception that those evil motivations still belong to you. Instead, realize that your deliverance is not found in your abilities, but in the miraculous conception of the Word within you.

It is imperative to discover who you really are. Does the implanted word activate you from within, or are you one who only has the hearing of the natural which gives an illusion of godliness? It's just like a man who checks himself out in a mirror, and is hit with the stark reality of what others see. The problem is that the urge to do something

about it goes away as soon as he can't see himself and forgets what he looks like. But what if one's gaze was to be held in place upon the finished reality of freedom, and instead of becoming a forgetful hearer he miraculously becomes an effective doer of the word that has captured his gaze.

What difference does it make what someone thinks about himself if it's not true? How many consider themselves religious or God-fearing and yet their words reveal something other than their boast would suggest? Now, don't make the mistake of focusing on the occasional slip of the tongue, for one whose words deceive his own heart are right out there in plain view. Such a one cannot help BUT to reveal his true nature by what comes out of his mouth. But recognizing it requires listening past all the self-endorsing claims. And then, the worthlessness of this man's religion becomes obvious. Is there such a thing as a pure religion that isn't corrupt? As far as God is concerned it would be this: helping those you would be looked down upon for even associating with; giving where there is no possibility of a return; doing good, knowing it may be judged as evil; refusing the approval found in comparison.

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