

Deny Ourselves in 2012

New Years Edition

December 31, 2011

James 1:22 But be doers of the word, and not only hearers of it, blinding yourselves with false ideas.

23 Because if any man is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man looking at his natural face in a glass;

24 For after looking at himself he goes away, and in a short time he has no memory of what he was like.

25 But he who goes on looking into the true law which makes him free, being not a hearer without memory but a doer putting it into effect, this man will have a blessing on his acts.

26 If a man seems to have religion and has no control over his tongue but lets himself be tricked by what is false, this man's religion is of no value.

27 The religion which is holy and free from evil in the eyes of our God and Father is this: to take care of children who have no fathers and of widows who are in trouble, and to keep oneself untouched by the world.

- Being a doer of the word is more than a suggestion from James, but it's what we must do so our religion will be authentic and not superficial.
- Religion is defined as the belief in and worship of a superhuman controlling power, esp. a personal God or gods. So in this passage, James is saying that our belief in God must be shown outwardly as well as inwardly.
- James also tells us that if we only hear and don't do, we are basically studying ourselves, understanding our flaws, but not doing anything about them. When we don't change after hearing the word for long periods of time, we begin to accept our negative behaviors as character flaws instead of things we can change.

- Beholding yourself in a mirror and forgetting what you see is James way of describing a person that does not correct themselves after getting understanding of who they really are. The word is here to correct our behavior and change us.
- People that come hear the word and yet do not change are hearers only and that removes God's blessings and causes you to live on your own ability. How can you be blessed if you do not do what the blesser tells you to do?
- There is no self denial in doing our own thing. If we just hear and don't do, then how can we ever be what he wants us to be?





•We hear the phrase “Only what you do for Christ will last” in songs and sermons all the time. And though it's not written that way in the bible, it's suggested many times.

Matthew 6:19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where

moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

- Many do what they want and then desire for God to bless it. But God has spoken to us in his word to let us know that it has to be HIS way in order for us to be blessed by Him.
- Our prayers don't work, our efforts are unproductive, and our lives are in turmoil when we are not doing what we are hearing from the word.
- When we decide to do things just because we are able to without God's grace upon it, it doesn't last. Sure it may bring attention, fame, money, etc. but look at all the negative things it brings as well.
- Broken marriages, messed up children, sin addictions, depression, suicidal thoughts, and bad health are just some of the consequences of doing our own thing and not being directed by God.
- Using God, His Word, and His people to promote your own agenda is dangerous. The enemy was the first to use God's platform for his own way, so, when we do it, he becomes our leader. Our churches are being filled with selfish leaders that use God's people for their own fame and riches.

Jude 4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

-James 1:26 states that if you have no control over your tongue (self control) then your religion is fake. True religion rest on the fact that you can control yourself, how you speak to others, and how you reject that which is false. **James 3:6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.**

-James goes on to say that real religion is about helping others, not ourselves. So, investing in those that are fatherless and widowed should be our desire. In other words we should first help those that are victims of circumstance and not victims of their own decisions.

-Many times when our lives are in trouble, we are victims of our own decisions and we cannot focus on others because of our own issues. **Heb. 6:1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God.** This causes us to focus on ourselves and always feel we should be the focus of others.

-Our modern day, seeker friendly churches, have begun to center ministry around those that are victims of bad decisions vs. those that are victims of circumstance.

This cancels our religion because we must be in position to serve others before ourselves according to the word.

Summary - Self denial begins with knowing our issues and getting past them. We must grow past what we are dealing with and claim deliverance over our old mindset, taking thoughts captive, and casting down imaginations. Once we truly break free from our issues, we can have true religion. We can focus on the well being of those that are victims of life's circumstance. When people are not doers of the word and they keep making bad decisions in life, they become their own focus and they lose their ability to truly help others. Our focus in this new year should be to help others but we must first start by not just hearing the word, but applying it and growing past our issues.

Matt. 16:24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.