

If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless. Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world. James 1:26-27 (NIV)

Pollution

There is a lot of pollution in the world. What does that mean? **I think you know. You tell me about pollution that is in the world.** Are we talking about things in the world that might pollute my heart and mind and life? Are we talking about things in the world that might ruin my faith? **Yes, that is what we are talking about.** Then, I can comment on that. I have some thoughts about that. **Let me hear your thoughts.** My life is under bombardment from the world. My heart and mind and life are under constant attack whether I realize it or not. **How you under bombardment and under attack?** The world would like me to adopt all its thoughts and opinions and values. The world would like me to live according to its principles and practices. The world would like me to mold me into its likeness. These are the constant and unrelenting messages that I am receiving from everything that is in the world around me. **What would your life look like if you allowed it to conform to the pattern of this world?** My life would be self-centered and self-serving. My life would be self-reliant and self-indulgent. I would have no need of you. My own thoughts, opinions and values would take the place of needing to hear from you. I would follow my own counsel. I would chart my own course. I would plot my own destiny. I would do my own thing. In a sense, I would be like my own god. I would do what I wanted, when I wanted, when I pleased. I would walk on a path that led away from you. I certainly would not live a life that would be pleasing to you. That thought would be the farthest thing from my mind. I have no desire to live this kind of life. **That's good.**

What kind of life do you want to live? I want to live a life that is good and right and pleasing to you. I want to live a life that shines like a light in this dark world. **How will you do that?** I will rely on you. You will help me to keep my life from being polluted by the world. **How so?** You will help me to remove anything from my life that is not pleasing to you. You will help me to keep a tight rein on my tongue. You will help me to think and speak in ways that are pleasing to you. **Yes, I will. What else will I do for you.** You will give me things to go and do for you. You will give me ways to serve you by serving others. You will make it not only my thoughts and words but also my actions demonstrate the reality and vibrance of my faith in you. **Yes, I will.** That will be very good. **Yes, it will.**

Lord, I want to live a vibrant life of faith with you. With that in mind, I will keep a tight rein on my tongue. With your help, I will keep from life from being polluted by the world. Then, I will also go and do what you ask of me. I will fulfill the ministry you give me. Amen

Becoming Like Christ *Pure And Faultless*

If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless. Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

NIV James 1:26-27

Becoming Like Christ *Pure And Genuine*

If you claim to be religious but don't control your tongue, you are fooling yourself, and your religion is worthless. Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you.

NLT James 1:26-27

Becoming Like Christ *Pure And Undefined*

If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefined before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

NRSV James 1:26-27

Becoming Like Christ *Pure And Unblemished*

If anyone thinks himself to be religious (piously observant of the external duties of his faith) and does not bridle his tongue but deludes his own heart, this person's religious service is worthless (futile, barren). External religious worship [religion as it is expressed in outward acts] that is pure and unblemished in the sight of God the Father is this: to visit and help and care for the orphans and widows in their affliction and need, and to keep oneself unspotted and uncontaminated from the world.

AMP James 1:26-27

Becoming Like Christ *Pure And Undefined*

If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless. Pure and undefined religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

NASB James 1:26-27

Becoming Like Christ *Pure And Undefined*

If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefined before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

ESV James 1:26-27

Becoming Like Christ *Pure And Undefined*

If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless. Pure and undefined religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

NKJV James 1:26-27

Becoming Like Christ *Passes Muster*

Anyone who sets himself up as "religious" by talking a good game is self-deceived. This kind of religion is hot air and only hot air. Real religion, the kind that passes muster before God the Father, is this: Reach out to the homeless and loveless in their plight, and guard against corruption from the godless world.

MSG James 1:26-27

Becoming Like Christ *Pure And Without Fault*

Anyone who says he is a Christian but doesn't control his sharp tongue is just fooling himself, and his religion isn't worth much. The Christian who is pure and without fault, from God the Father's point of view, is the one who takes care of orphans and widows, and who remains true to the Lord—not soiled and dirtied by his contacts with the world.

TLB James 1:26-27

Becoming Like Christ *Pure And Without Fault*

People who think they are religious but say things they should not say are just fooling themselves. Their "religion" is worth nothing. Religion that God accepts as pure and without fault is this: caring for orphans or widows who need help, and keeping yourself free from the world's evil influence.

NCV James 1:26-27

Pure And Faultless

Year _____ Week _____ Day _____ Date _____

Becoming Like Christ – James 1:26-27

In Context: *Read James 1*

Begin With Prayer:

Here I am Lord. I Am Listening.

Meditating On God's Word: ***(What is God speaking to your heart?)***

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Considering The Words: ***(What words speak to your heart?)***

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Praying The Scripture: ***(What prayer from your heart will you write?)***

Lord, I want to live a vibrant life of faith with you. With that in mind, I will keep a tight rein on my tongue. With your help, I will keep from life from being polluted by the world. Then, I will also go and do what you ask of me. I will fulfill the ministry you give me. Amen

What It Means: ***(What questions speak to your heart?)*** *(Suggested questions for small group discussion are in bold)*

How are you making sure to keep a tight rein on your tongue?

How might it be possible for your own tongue to ruin your testimony as a follower of Christ?

Why are the words of your mouth a good barometer of the condition of your faith?

How might you be in the most danger of allowing the world to pollute your life?

What have you had to remove from your life so that your life would not be polluted by the world?

What ministry has the Lord given to you as you have followed and served Him?

How does fulfilling the ministry you have been given demonstrate the reality and vibrancy of your faith?

Living It Out: ***(What action step is God guiding your heart to take?)***

Keep your life from being polluted by the world so you can live a vibrant life of faith with and for the Lord.

Seeing It Happen: ***(What are you trusting God for in your heart?)***

Have faith that the Lord will help you to keep your life from being polluted by the world.

Get Ready To Share: ***(What can you share with others from your heart?)***

Share with another person or your small group how the Lord has kept your life from being polluted by the world.

Close With Prayer:

Quiet Yourself Before The Lord

Pause And Offer Prayers Of...

With An Attitude Of Faith Listen To What The Lord Wants To Say To You

Adoration... _____

Thanksgiving... _____

Confession... _____

Intercession... _____

Petition... _____

Journal

As You Quiet Yourself Before The Lord

What Do You Want To Say To Me Lord?

What Prayers Are You Praying Today?

Prayer Of Blessing

(What Prayer Of Blessing Can You Pray For Another?)

May your keep yourself from being polluted by the world.

Prayer To Carry

(What Prayer Would You Like To Carry Throughout Your Day?)

Lord, help me keep myself from being polluted by the world.

What Do You Want To Remember About Today?

A Question To Ask God

(What Would You Like To Ask God?)

Lord, how will you help keep me from being polluted by the world today?
