



# Faith and Truth

## The Marks of a Living Faith

**Main point:** Spiritual reality results from the proper relationship to God through His Word. Watch out for the dangers of self-deception.

### Expositional Outline

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#### A. The Reactions to the Word (vv.19-20)

1. The knowledge possessed (v.19a)  
*This you know, my beloved brethren.*
2. The reaction demanded (v.19b)  
*But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger;*
3. The reason stated (v.20)  
*for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God.*

#### B. The Reception of the Word (v.21)

1. The stripping off of sins (v.21a)  
*Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness,*
2. The appropriation of the Word (v.21b)  
*in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.*

#### C. The Obedience to the Word (vv.22-27)

1. The demand for active obedience (vv.22-25)
  - a. The command (v.22)  
*But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.*

#### b. The hearer described (vv.23-24)

*For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was.*

#### c. The doer described (v.25)

*But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.*

#### 2. The nature of acceptable obedience (v.26)

What does true religion look like in the sight of God?

*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 undefiled 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.*

True religion is active, loving, and pure.

## Interpretative discussion questions:

- Discuss the three actions demanded (*quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger*) and how they apply in your life.
- The word **“filthiness”** comes from a Greek word which describes the kind of wax in the ear that deafens. Can you identify “ear wax” that causes you to become dull of hearing? (Read Hebrews 5:11.)
- **“...all that remains of wickedness”** calls attention to our fallen nature which is not only twisted in its bent, but also still presently polluted in abundance. The warning is that we must never become comfortable with our sinfulness. What causes you to become comfortable with your sinfulness? What causes you to be uncomfortable with it?

## Applicational questions:

- If you have **accepted the Gospel**, you must also be willing to **accept the Gospel demands**. The Gospel demands: *worship (John 4:24)* and *obedience (John 14:21, 24)*. How are you fulfilling the Gospel demands? And are you fulfilling them with the right motives? (*Heb.4:12*)

## Memory verse for lesson 7:

- **James 1:22**—*But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.*



### Insights on Truth:

Keith Brazier

Sprawled out, exhausted, and sore—no one ever wasted an opportunity to rest. It never lasted long enough. There was always something to do. “Get up, line up over here!” Scampering, everyone fell into place. The drill sergeant barked, “Eyeballs!” In unison, “Click, sir!” “Ears!” Anxiety awaiting the next orders, “Open, sir!” Each set of directions, and every activity was a piece of something bigger—much bigger. Any deviation from listening attentively resulted in poor execution or being completely lost and unable to begin the task. Sometimes, a foolish recruit would want to question the orders before the drill sergeant was finished delivering them or not carry them out the prescribed way. Alternative intentions and/or a failure to listen always led to an undesirable consequence, which served to further drive the lesson home; there was always a lesson to be learned. Tasks were compounded by constantly having to learn and apply new information while retaining knowledge gained in the past. It was like a cumulative exam where a piece of every previous test was included. The pace was furious, and nothing ever fully made sense until a later point in time. You knew that you were being prepared for something, but there was no way to really grasp the magnitude of how that something was going to unfold or just how big it was going to be.

This Christian life is chock-full of lessons and trials, which can only be navigated by fixing our eyes on a perfect savior and strictly adhering to His Word (*Heb.12:1-3*). God’s Word is not philosophy to be debated and there is no room for discussion or rebuttal. However, we don’t relate to God like soldiers relate to their

drill sergeant barking orders. Our obedience is to flow, not from a heart of fear and self-effort, but rather from a heart of love and gratitude toward God, trusting in the grace that He supplies to obey.

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