



MIRROR, MIRROR

START UP

In this section of James, which we've been studying during our *Life Hacks* series, the Word of God is described as a mirror. In it, James gives us a straight-forward warning that knowledge about the Bible isn't what causes us to grow. In fact, if we're not careful, it can lead to hypocrisy.

- Take a guess—how many minutes each day do you think the average person spends in front of or near a mirror doing personal grooming, applying make-up, shaving, and bathing? (*Leaders: Studies show it's about 37 minutes a day for men and 53 minutes a day for women.*)
- Do you feel like you get enough “mirror time,” or are you ever forced to do make-up/shaving on the run (or in the car)?
- How big of a problem do you think hypocrisy is in the Christian church? Has the hypocrisy of someone else ever discouraged you in your faith journey?

DISCUSS TOGETHER

Read **James 1:22-27** and **Matthew 7:24-27** together.

- What are some similarities between what James teaches and Jesus says?
- What does James mean by “the word”?
- We often think of Bible study as simply a good and healthy thing. However, James and Jesus give us a warning. How is it possible to approach studying the Bible in an unhealthy way?
- Do you think it's really “worthless” to hear God's Word without doing it? Why or why not?
- While knowledge isn't everything, it's still important. Following Jesus means learning more and more about what He says to do and then doing it. Do you feel like you have a good handle on what God says to do? What plan do you have in place to discover more?
- Have you personally experienced the Bible acting like a mirror, where it gave you a timely reminder you of who you really are or what is most important? Share a specific example with the group.
- **James 1:26-27** focuses on the word, “religion.” How would you define “religion”? Do you think James is using the term “religion” in a positive way? Why or why not?
- James mentions three actions to define religion. What are they, and why do you think he mentions these three?

Ronnie challenged us to think through if we are bearing more of our own image or reflecting God's image. He asked us two important questions.

- How freely is the love of God flowing through your life right now, especially in your actions and words?
- Is your soul satisfied in the love of God, or is this a difficult season? If you are comfortable, share with the group any challenges you are facing.

TAKE AWAY

James challenges us to not just listen to sermons or read about the words of Jesus but to put them into action through grace and love.

- How are you doing at serving the neediest in our community? Is there a particular need in our community that breaks your heart?
- The church has several “partner teams”—teams of Chase Oakers who come around and serve our local partners. Is anyone serving on a team? If so, please share what that team is doing. If you aren't serving, have you thought about joining one?