

# Readings

## Scripture

<sup>1</sup> James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings. ...

<sup>26</sup> If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. <sup>27</sup> Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

- James 1:1, 26-27 (*English Standard Version*)

## Reflection

"I like good strong words that mean something."

- Louisa May Alcott, *Little Women*

"If words are to enter men's minds and bear fruit, they must be the right words shaped cunningly to pass men's defenses and explode silently and effectually within their minds."

- Rev. J. B. Phillips

# Sermon Outline

## Words Have a Way

James 1:1, 26-27

*True Religion*

Brad Anderson

*Words have a way of getting inside a person.*

### How does this book of James get inside, calling brothers and sisters to live life under the Lordship of Jesus Christ?

By exposing our motives... (*James 2:1-4*)

---

---

---

By testing the truth of our religion... (*James 1:26-27*)

---

---

---

By awakening our lives to the transforming grace of Jesus Christ... (*James 1:16-21*)

---

---

---

### Reflection Questions (*taken in part from the Serendipity Study Bible for Groups*)

- What books or movies have gotten inside you, touched something or moved you in some direction?
- Read the Book of James in one sitting. As you do, take note of what stands out? What are the main points and what illustrations are used to make those points? Who are the people James addresses? James names people. What people does he name? Why would the language of sibling and family be important?
- The proper relationship between faith and works found throughout the Old Testament AND the New Testament, the Apostle Paul AND the book of James is that True Faith results in Salvation expressed in good works. Describe why the following are not proper formulations: 1) Works result in Salvation; 2) Faith results in Salvation; 3) Faith and Works results in Salvation. Consider Ephesians 2:8-10 to shape your response. Remember that James was writing to people who knew the proper view, so what was his point?
- What are tests of true religion? Which do you think presents the greatest challenge and why? While each of these three tests are presented individually, how are they all ultimately related? (See James 1:26-27)
- If James were dropped from the Bible, what would be missing from the story of God's redemptive work in history?