



SERIES: JANUARY – BECOMING SPIRITUALLY FIT

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Tuesday, 02/15/2022

Scripture: James 1:26-27

TITLE: Sailor or Saint?

18,000 words. That's how many words the average person will speak each day. That's enough for a fifty-four page book. In a year, that's sixty-six 800 pages novels. The question is, what does your daily book reveal about you? Would your book be a Christian book, or a book written by and for sailors?

Here's what James says about the revealing nature of your words. James 1:26-27, (CSB)

If anyone thinks he is religious without controlling his tongue, his religion is useless and he deceives himself. Pure and undefiled religion before God the Father is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

Dang. Sometimes I do not like what the Bible reveals. Can I get an amen?

James says, "if anyone thinks he is *religious*..." This is a word that does not mean godly or holy. Instead, it means something liturgical or routine without inward reality. He's saying if you're a churchgoer, a public servant, or a religious show-off, but your heart isn't transformed by God, then your faith is useless. No religious activity apart from true saving faith and right motives to glorify God is useless. And guess what, your inner condition will be revealed by your mouth. Even the most religious prayer apart from a right heart derived from a child of God is worthless.

Remember Jesus said out of our mouths flow the condition of the heart. It can save us or condemn us (Matt. 12:34,37).

You see, if the tongue is not controlled by God, it is a clear sign that the heart is not, either. A right heart conformed by the Word of God reforms our words. It is only the Spirit who can tame the tongue.

Then James says, pure and undefiled religion before God is the care of the less fortunate and conformed to the mind and character of God. In other words, saving faith works. Authentic faith results in a soul saved and life changed. Anything short of this a false gospel. One of the marks of this saving faith is an outflow of the grace of God to those who need it most.

So here's my challenge for you today. Rewrite your book. Today, you're already writing a new edition. You want it to reveal your heart. So do you want it filled with gossip or grace? Do you want it to be full of cursing or compassion? Do you want it filled with selfishness or sharing? And remember, right motives result in righteous worship. So write the chapter He desires.

When our lives reflect Christ's power in us, we will win the day.