

From the Pastor:

The theme of much of the rest of the next two chapters of James is basically the same. James simply deals with the fundamental principle from different angles. Remember the message of James 1:21-25 was “We are to be practioners of God’s way of life (doers of the word) and not just hearers.”

In James 1:21 James said, if someone hears what God says but does not seek to live by what God says, that person deceives himself.

Likewise James wrote in verse 26, “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.”

It is interesting that in the Greek there are five different words that are used to refer to the worship or devotion to God (or, gods). Obviously, in the Greek world, the worship of gods was most often discussed. Some of those words Jesus and the apostles used to refer to the worship of the true God. The Greek word used here (translated “religion”) is threskos (pronounced thrace’-kos). The Online Bible Greek Lexicon describe this word as “one who is diligent in the performance of the outward service of God.” The word, as used here, refers to an outward show of religion and not what is actually from the heart.

In this verse, James is saying that if a person is truly striving to live a godly life, he/she will be very careful about what he/she says. Otherwise that person’s religion is useless.

This brings to mind what Jesus said of the Pharisees who were all about looking devout. However, what came out of the heart did not match the appearance. Matthew 23:27 records, “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness.”

True religion is more than just show. James continued in verse 27 to describe pure religion, “Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this; to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.”

This is what all of us should be seeking to do. We must grow to have, and thus show, real outgoing concern for the needs of those in need. We have no difficulty thinking about our own needs; but, how often do we think about helping others in their need. Sadly we all tend to fall down in this effort.

James also said that pure religion was to keep ourselves “unspotted from the world.” We must seek to be on guard so that the thoughts, words and ways of this world do not find a foothold in us.

Only if we are indeed seeking to practice this pure religion, will we not be deceiving ourselves that we are following God.

	Victoria	Corpus Christi	Harlingen
Sunset Today in:	5:32pm	5:36pm	5:41pm
Sunset Friday 12-21	5:35pm	5:39pm	5:43pm

Church of God South Texas

Victoria - Corpus Christi - Harlingen



December 15, 2018

Victoria

Sermon: Steve Moody

Corpus Christi

Split Sermon: Mark Monsivais

Split Sermon: Arnold Mendez

Harlingen

Bible Study: Arnold Mendez

“The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverse mouth I hate.”

Proverbs 8:13

Announcements and Schedule

Sabbath 12/15	Regular times and locations for all congregations.
Sabbath 12/22	Regular times and locations for all congregations. Mr. Moody will be in Corpus Christi. There will be DVDs in both San Antonio and Victoria. Mr. Mendez will be in Harlingen.

Winter Family Weekend:

Friday evening, December 21 through Tuesday night, December 25 in Louisville, KY.

Friday Night Live--COGWA Bible Study for Young Adults:

Join us this Friday evening, Dec. 14, for our "Friday Night Live" webcast Bible study, which will begin at 8 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (7 p.m. Central, 6 p.m. Mountain and 5 p.m. Pacific).

This month's study, presented by Kevin Epps, is titled "Social Media and the Bible."

Psalm 139:7 asks, "Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?" The answer, of course, is nowhere. But sometimes it seems as if some might say, "Social media! That's a place where I can say virtually anything that I want—without being judged. There's nothing like online freedom. And that's where my real friends are." Does the Bible govern every aspect of our lives—including the Internet? Does God "like" our online presence?

Please join Kevin Epps for this analysis of "Social Media and the Bible." That's this Friday evening, Dec. 14, at 8 p.m. Eastern time, for Friday Night Live.

Upcoming Activities: Dates to Remember

San Antonio Pot Luck: The next potluck will be January 5.

Harlingen: Bible study and potluck the Sabbath of December 15.