

How to Avoid Spiritual Self-Deception

James 1:16-27

James 1:16-27

NIV **James 1:16** Don't be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters.

¹⁷ Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

¹⁸ He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

¹⁹ My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry,

James 1:16-27

²⁰ because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.

²¹ Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

²² Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

²³ Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror²⁴ and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.

James 1:16-27

²⁵ But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it-- not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it-- they will be blessed in what they do.

²⁶ Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless.

²⁷ Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

How to Avoid Spiritual Self-Deception

- The genuineness of your faith is measured by your attitude and response to God's Word.
- Jesus explains who is going to heaven:
 - **Matthew 7:21:** "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.
- God's "will" is given to us in God's Word!
- A Christian must believe all of God's Word and obey what it says.

How to Avoid Spiritual Self-Deception

- Our passage picks up on the truth first mentioned in James 1:5 – God is a giving God – and further develops the thought.

I. Understand the nature of God's activity in human affairs.

- NIV **James 1:16** Don't be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters.
- NET **James 1:16** Do not be led astray, my dear brothers and sisters.

I. Understand the nature of God's activity in human affairs

1. Do not be deceived about the reasons for trials, temptations, and tests. (1:16)

- God uses tests, trials, temptations, to refine and strengthen our faith and build in us spiritual endurance.
- Satan uses them to dwarf us, diminish us, and defeat us – to get us to believe lies about God.

I. Understand the nature of God's activity in human affairs

2. God is good and the Giver of all good gifts. (1:17)

- NIV **James 1:17** Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.
 - God is not the author of evil – sin – wrong.
 - God does permit it.

I. Understand the nature of God's activity in human affairs

2. God is good and the Giver of all good gifts. (1:17)

- God promises in 1 Corinthians 10:13:
- No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

I. Understand the nature of God's activity in human affairs

3. God is the author of the Christian's spiritual life. (1:18)

- ¹⁸ He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.
- God provided for our salvation.
- The means of our salvation: “word of truth”
- The goal of our salvation: “firstfruits”

II. Proper Response to God's activity in human affairs

1. Be very careful when you feel angry! (1:19)

- ¹⁹ My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry,
- Trials, tests, irritations, hurts - can easily make us angry.
- Christians are to practice the discipline of “slow” or controlled speech.

II. Proper Response to God's activity in human affairs

- Be very careful when you feel angry! (1:19)**
 - When you feel anger, listen, think, pray, and keep quiet until you are no longer angry!!
 - When you are wrongly accused, hurt, wrongly treated, keep quiet until you are no longer angry!!
 - Why??????

II. Proper Response to God's activity in human affairs

2. Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires. (1:20)

- ²⁰ because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.
- **Righteousness** = measuring up to God's standard in His Word.
- Our words must have **A.G.E.** or they are corrupt from God's point-of-view.

II. Proper Response to God's activity in human affairs

- **Ephesians 4:29** Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.
- “good” = **A**ppropriate
- “minister grace” = **G**racious
- “use of edifying” = **E**difying = build up, strengthen
- **A. G. E. - required of all our words!!**

II. Proper Response to God's activity in human affairs

3. Receive, protect, cultivate and obey the Word of God that comes to you. (1:21-22)

- ²¹ Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.
- ²² Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

II. Proper Response to God's activity in human affairs

- ²¹ Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.
- “**get rid of**” – a definite break with these things.
- This is not optional!!
- “**moral filth ... evil**” – words, viewing, listening, attitudes of the mind that desires the injury of others, ill-will; malice, ungodliness,
- “**humbly accept ...planted**” - open your heart and mind to God’s Word.

II. Proper Response to God's activity in human affairs

- ²² Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.
- Listen – **YES!** – but also **OBEY!!**
- If you hear and do not change, you will deceive yourself!
- Walk in the light of God's Word.
 - **1 John 1:7** But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

II. Proper Response to God's activity in human affairs

4. Your response to truth shows your true spiritual condition. (1:23-24)

- ²³ Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror
- ²⁴ and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.

II. Proper Response to God's activity in human affairs

5. God promises blessings on the person who obeys His Word. (1:25)

- ²⁵ But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it--not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it - they will be blessed in what they do.
- **God's Word** is “the perfect law that gives freedom”

II. Proper Response to God's activity in human affairs

- 6. A genuine relationship with God is shown by carefulness in speech and compassion on those who cannot help themselves. (1:26-27)**
 - ²⁶ Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless.
 - ²⁷ Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

Summary

- I. Understand the nature of God's activity in human affairs.**
 - 1. Do not be deceived about the reasons for trials, temptations, and tests. (1:16)**
 - 2. God is good and the Giver of all good gifts. (1:17)**
 - 3. God is the author of the Christian's spiritual life. (1:18)**
- II. The Proper Response to God's activity in human affairs.**

Summary

- 1. Be very careful when you feel angry! (1:19)**
- 2. Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires. (1:20)**
- 3. Receive, protect, cultivate and obey the Word of God that comes to you. (1:21-22)**
- 4. Your response to truth shows your true spiritual condition. (1:23-24)**
- 5. God promises blessings on the person who obeys His Word. (1:25)**
- 6. A genuine relationship with God is shown by carefulness in speech and compassion on those who cannot help themselves. (1:26-27)**

James 1:16-27

How to Avoid Spiritual Self-Deception

The genuineness of your faith is measured by your **attitude** and **response** to God's Word.