

Lectionary Bible Study

For Sunday, September 1, 2024 (Pentecost 15)

Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9

Discussion Starters

1. What are the benefits of God's law, according to this text? Is the law primary a benefit or a burden, as described here?
2. What impact does the law have on both Jew and non-Jew?
3. Verse 9 encourages the people to remember. Is this different than obeying? If so, in what way? How might remembering be different?
4. What responsibilities do the people have in regard to the law, according to this passage?
5. In what way(s) might someone violate the teaching of verse 2? What would the consequences of that be?

James 1:17-27

Discussion Starters

1. How would you summarize the teaching in verse 19-20? Does James teach that anger is wrong?
2. How does one "get rid of" moral filth and evil (v. 21)?
3. What does it mean to "look intently into the perfect law"? How is that different from looking in the mirror?
4. How does James define genuine religion? What would that look like in practical terms?
5. Would there be other groups that might be like the widows and orphans of James' day? Who might they be?
6. What are two "good and perfect gifts" for which you can give God praise?

Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

Discussion Starters

1. What is the issue being debated here? How would each side define what it means to be "religious?"
2. How does the quote from Isaiah address the issue?
3. What was the original purpose of this law? How would it have helped the people worship God better? How did it end up overshadowing the original purpose?
4. From the perspective of Jesus, how does one become clean?
5. Why do you think Jesus doesn't offer a solution to the problem?
6. How do religious practices (even those that were well-intended) end up becoming hindrances to genuine religion? What might some of those religious practices be for current Christians?

WRAP UP

What key insight did you gain from this Bible study? How might it make a difference in how you live today?