

# LimitLESS- Live It Out Loud! Part 3

James 1:26-27

**Purpose of series:** The purpose of this series is to assist you in taking off the limits of God's expression through you and in your life and His blessing on your life. The book of James reveals many practical duties and activities of Christian, that is not heeded will hinder God's expression through them and blessings on them, especially during difficult seasons of our life. This series will provide us with a practical view of how to live a life of spiritual impact and personal fullness in a difficult world under pressure.

**Purpose of this message:** Today, it is our goal to get the push that many of us need to act on the Word planted in us. We cannot discuss the scripture we are covering today without allowing the Word of God to shine a light on our lives and reveal the true side of us. We are going to be challenged to respond so we can celebrate in blessing.

## 1. I Must Receive God's Word If I Am Going To Be Blessed By It

*“...accept the word planted in you, which can save you.”*

James 1:21b

- Be Careful- James 1:19a
- Be Calm- James 1:19b
- Be Clean- James 1:21a
- Be Compliant- James 1:21b

## 2. I Must Reflect God's Word If I Am Going To Be Blessed By It

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

James 1:23-24

- Read It- “Looks Intently”-
- Review It- “Continues To Do So”
- Remember It- “Not Forgetting”

## 3. I Must Respond To God's Word If I Am Going To Be Blessed By It

I can receive God's Word, I can spend some time to reflect but if I am going to live out loud, if my life will reflect the blessings of God, I must respond to God's Word. I don't just try it or attempt it, I've got to live it and practice it.

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

James 1:22

John MacArthur says that the word for a hearer here, *akroates*, is the term used to describe students who **audits a class**. **An auditor usually listens to the lectures, but is permitted to treat assignments and exams as optional...**mere hearing is no better than unbelief or outright rejection. In fact, it's worse! **The hearer-only is enlightened but unregenerate.** (MacArthur, J. The Gospel according to the Apostles: Word Pub)

To be an auditor is to be a hearer only, never responsible for the exam of life and therefore do not live their life out loud when it comes to Christ. They limit life, to be less, they forgo the blessing of the Lord for the short few pleasures of life that is in no comparison of eternity. Jesus spoke very strongly against the deception of hearing without doing (Mt 7:21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27).

It's possible that you have spent your whole life in church, auditing your relationship with God. Maybe your heart has grown cold toward God and you have moved to the back of the class. Just listening to God's Word is not enough, it has to change us if we are going to be blessed, if you want to become limitless in your life. We lived deceived when we don't let it change us. God is not into the motions, he is into the obedience.

When we live according to our own plan, God's blessing cannot function fully in our lives; in fact when we "do our own thing," we are more positioned to receive the results of our actions as a direct disregard against God. So not only are we living without the blessing of God, but also we are actually living a life that is fighting against God and will have high consequences.

To fight against God is insanity! Rejecting His plan, His purpose, His love and thinking that God will just back away is an awful delusion. Even more than that, we can make an attempt to claim that there is no God and that life here, as we know it is all that there is, this is ridiculous. If you chose this path it will not be long until you are in full attack against those who believe God is all He says He is. You will wonder how you moved so fast from what you used to believe.

### **Living It Out Loud Is Living It Fully Inside**

To spend your life living like a Christian without living for God in your heart is a long life of acting. We are accountable for what we hear.

*"That servant who knows his master's will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows...From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked."*

**Luke 12:47a-48**

It's important that we mark up our bibles, but it's important that the bible marks us too. You can believe that you know a lot about the Word of God and fool yourself that you actually know God himself. Knowledge can make you feel mature, but knowledge puffs up.

James wants us to know that to be blessed we can't just have a working knowledge of God and His Word, we need to know Him, personally.

Matthew 7, Jesus tells the story of the wise and the foolish builder. He says the foolish builder builds on sand. He is like the guy who hears the word of God but doesn't do what it says. The wise man is the one who hears it and then goes out and makes an honest attempt to put it into his life. Practice it.

John 13:12-17, Jesus has just finished washing His disciples feet, he put his robe back on and sat down. He told them that they should wash each others feet, He was living by example. And He tells them in verse 17,

**“You know these things-now do them! That is the path of blessing.”**

**John 13:17**

If you really want to know what maturity in the Word of God is, it is one who does what the bible says. The truth is, we know far more than we are capable to put into practice. It's not that we need to know more, we just need to know enough. We need to practice what we already know.

### **Three Ways of Responding To The Word**

James concludes this section with three examples of responding to the word. He covers each of these in the rest of the book so we will be back to them before long.

#### **1. A Controlled Mouth**

**“If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless.”**

**James 1:26**

**Everything that comes out of our mouth is a reflection of what we truly believe about God.** There is a challenge today, a daring demand questioning the rights of any true religion. There is no greater danger in all mankind than the individual who creates their own religion without the assistance of a true God. And in my opinion, the one true God.

#### **1. We All Have A Concept of What True Religion Is**

I find it interesting when I talk to someone who has become disillusioned with Christianity for whatever particular reason to ask them this question:

**“How would you describe a real Christian?”**

Do you know what I've learned? Everyone has an opinion of what a real Christian is. To consider means to suppose, presume or to be of the opinion about something, and in this case in the opinion of being religious.

- **Considers/Thinks** (1380) (*dokeo*) means to suppose, presume or to be of the opinion. The present tense pictures him continually thinking of himself as religious.

James was not caught up on the word “religious” like we are today. Today when we say “religious” and why we have a tendency to want to have nothing to do with it is because we picture it like this:

- **A Formal activity for God without relationship with God**
- **Religious** (2357) (*threskos* which some say derives from *threomai* = to tremble, whereas more modern scholars link it with *therap-* = to serve) is used only in this verse and describes **the individual who is preoccupied with religious observances.**

Many people who have come out of “religion” have discovered a fresh relationship with God that they did not know existed. They were led to

believe that going to church, doing certain activities both ceremonial or works was an acceptable form of Christianity. When they discovered their relationship with Jesus Christ it showed the light on the “religious” activity and brought this relationship into a new perspective.

James did not have this problem or definition of “religion or religious.” He was dealing with the true form of religion,

### **Being in relationship with God that transfers on to others**

When talking about *dead* religion verses *true* religion, we can look at our four banners on the walls of our sanctuary with the four purpose statements on them. The purpose statement of our “**SHARING**” banner is stated like this,

1. Sharing our life with God
2. Sharing our life with Others

We get this from I John 1:3

*“Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.”*  
I John 3:18

It is a religion that not only encourages the believer to share their life opening with God but to turn around and share that life with the world.

What do you think when I ask you this question, what is your religion? You might say, “Well, I’m not religious?” Well I think we all are, the bible says that we worship something, it might not be a God or a visible idol, but we do worship it.

Being religious for the most part today is simply submitting to rules and regulations given to them by a religious institution but not in relationship to God or His Word. They may be sincere but they are still wrong.

God is real, and He has an opinion about religion. He cares for us and wants us to be blessed but when we refuse to do what causes us to be blessed, we tie His hands. He wants us to accept reality. He wants us to understand His feelings about our actions so we can respond in a way that blesses Him. God does not want His wrath to be on anyone any more than a good dad wants his wrath to be displayed toward his children. But because good dads love their children, they do feel wrath when their children make major mistakes.

## **2. We All Have A Challenge With Our Tongue**

One of the ways you can know that you are a doer of the word is you have a controlled mouth.

**It is amazing that one sentence in less than three seconds can contradict and cancel one years worth of disciplined living.**

Jesus said in Matthew 12:34, that it is out of the abundance of our heart

the mouth speaks. It is what you are overflowing with is what you will say. And what you will say is what you will be known for.

### It Constantly Needs Restraining

“Even a fool is thought wise if he keeps silent, and discerning if he holds his tongue.”

Proverbs 17:28

It's like one aged man responded to a young man full of the zest of life,

“You seem like a sharp young man, why do you open your mouth to let me believe otherwise?”

James uses some very visual wording here.

**“...yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue...” James 1:26b**

He wants us to understand how important it is for us to control our mouth. The picture word that Paul uses is that of a bridle or a “tight reign.” If you can picture someone leading a horse around by the bridle, this is the picture of what Paul is telling us.

- **Tight Reign/Bridle** (5468) (*chalinagogeio* from *chalinos* = a bridle + *ago* = to lead) **signifies the picture of one leading or alternately restraining by use of a bridle.** The present tense use of this word indicates continuous action. Constant restraint.

### 3. **We All Have Two Results Because of A Loose Tongue**

#### A) Deception

What occurs in you head becomes distorted. A loose tongue gives way to a deceived mind. It seems like it should be the other way around that a deceived mind would lead to a loose tongue. But it is saying that you can have a sound mind, but if you lose the restraints on your tongue, you will eventually become deceived unable to make accurate and righteous statements or judgments.

- **Deceives** (538) (*apatao* from *apate* = deceit, that which gives a false impression, whether by appearance, statement or influence) means to lead astray, mislead, cheat, delude, beguile, seduce into error. *Apatao* means to cause someone to have misleading or erroneous views concerning the truth.

#### B) Worthlessness

What occurs in your life becomes worthless. A loose tongue gives way to a wasted life.

**It is amazing that one sentence in less than three seconds can contradict and cancel one years worth of disciplined living.**

- **Worthless** (3152) (*mataios*) from *maten* = groundless,

invalid) means vain, empty, devoid of force, lacking in content, nonproductive, useless, dead, fruitless, aimless, of no real or lasting value. This adjective describes an ineffectual attempt to do something or an unsuccessful effort to attain something.

### **Being Deceived Is Revealed In Action**

<sup>12</sup> *A scoundrel and villain, who goes about with a **corrupt mouth**,*  
<sup>13</sup> *who **winks** with his eye, **signals with his feet and motions***  
*with his fingers,* <sup>14</sup> *who plots evil with deceit in his heart— he*  
*always stirs up dissension.”*

Proverbs 6:12-14

- **Scoundrel/naughty-** *beliya'al* 1100- worthless, good for nothing, unprofitable, of no value
- **Villain-** *'aven* 205- Something that is done in vain. Actions that do not add value to themselves or others. In all that they attempt and act, all their efforts equal zero...nothing.
- **Wink** (*razam*, literally, "to roll the eyes"): This act of winking or rolling the eyes was not only disrespectful but it was considered evil, worth punishment from God. This is an everyday act on the job and at home. It should be correctable because God hates it and labels those who do so as a worthless nobody going nowhere in life. It is mentioned more than once in the Bible and always connected to sin. It is a reflection of conceit, pride, and rebellion against God. (Watkinson, *Education of the Heart*, "Ethics of Gesture," 194 ff.)

King David cries to God that he would not be a victim of "winkers."

*“Let not those gloat over me who are my enemies without cause; let not those who hate me without reason maliciously wink the eye.”*

Psalm 35:19

*“He who winks maliciously causes grief, and a chattering fool comes to ruin.”*

Proverbs 10:10

**“Therefore disaster will overtake him in an instant; he will suddenly be destroyed—without remedy.”**

**Proverbs 6:15**

**The first way that I can respond to the Word of God is...**

**A Controlled Mouth**

2. **A Caring Heart**

*“Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress...”*

James 1:27a

In 1990 I planted a church 12 miles south of Dallas, Texas. It was the second most poverty community in North Texas. I grew up with impoverished people my whole life but didn't realize it until high school. I remember that T-shirts and cheap tennis shoes were the fad, not because it was a popular trend, but because that was all that many kids could afford. I was more fortunate than most. I remember that I had two friends who had two pair of jeans and four shirts. If it were not for the T-shirts, they would have been out of luck.

I'll never forget hearing about a ministry while I pastored that church south of Dallas. I heard it was a food outreach and a place for children to stay, sort of a hotel for the weekend. I found out the location of the ministry and arranged to meet with the director. The ministry was in one of the toughest part of south Dallas. There a short man met me and I could tell right off hand that he wasn't impressed with me at all.

The first thing he asked me is, “What do you really want to talk about?” He was a bottom line guy. I had mentioned that we were looking as providing a food outreach in our community and I had heard that he had one of the best in the area. Again, he was not impressed. He said, “I'll show you around if you will keep up with me.” He worked as he showed me through his facilities, a spotless, well kept once a vacant lot and now a fortress of hope in a very clear hopeless community.

I remember him walking through the freezers pulling out food, barking orders to his help and making comments about how many people want to do an outreach until they realize it's work. He also mentioned that many people want to do one as long as someone else does it.

There was frustration in his voice, not because he had recently come to realize the true nature of man, but because he had done this for over 15 years and he could spot a hypocrite a mile away. I had the feeling that he saw me in that category, and I was quickly coming to the realization that I had been hiding behind a Christian front, a mask desperately needing to be ripped off.

As we walked through the facilities he took me to his pride and joy, his rough exterior melted when we walked into a small building about the size of our Outreach Center which was filled with bunk beds and living facilities. We stepped in the building and he was as proud as he could be while at the same time you could see pain and compassion drip from his heart.

He explained to me that many of the families in that area are run by single parents who have addictions and will start partying the minute they get off of work Friday until Monday morning and the kids are the real victims. And because of that, come Saturday mornings kids would come up to his compound asking for food because they hadn't eaten since lunch the day before. Here were five and six year olds looking for food. And he found out that many of them didn't see their parents until it was time for school on Monday mornings. As you

heard him speak you wanted to break down and cry.

He said that there were a couple of kids who would stay at his house on the weekends, eventually there was more. He was running out of room so he added a room onto his house. That soon became too small and eventually he built an 80 bed facility. He said that Dallas had tried to shut him down several times because you can't house kids like that and there was no city ordinance that provided guidelines for that type of operation. So he started calling it the sleep over at Uncle Jim's, (I think that was the correct name.) He said the city couldn't fight a sleep over.

Anyways, he told me that the kids got more attention and better food in that Friday night to Monday morning than they did the rest of the week. He was an incredible light in the midst of darkness. I will never forget him and the impact he had on me.

### **Real Religion**

To have a real religion, the kind that God the Father accepts is when I help the helpless. When I care, truly care for others. James is saying that if you have real religion, you will live it out loud. You will share your life with God and with others. It will make you care for others. It will cause you to take a little more time of your day to look out for the good of someone else.

### **God Only Takes Two Kinds of Religion**

I recently went to Manitou Springs in Colorado. I was surprised to find that most of the restaurants did not take any form of credit cards, they only took cash...can you believe that, a place that actually takes money? God only takes two kinds of religion and it is important to know what's in your wallet!

#### **1. Pure Religion**

Pure religion is one that is without self-serving motives. It is truly, laying down your life first to God and then for others. It is in response to a pure heart. It is not responding out of guilt, it is passionately driven by love.

- **Pure** (2513) (*katharos*; English = catharsis = purifying, cleansing, a term used in psychology and counseling for a cleansing of the mind or emotions - a "soul cleansing" if you will) literally describes that which is free of dirt and thus clean.

In the Old Testament, the Levitical laws placed heavy emphasis on ceremonial cleansing and thus contact with any unclean animal, substance, person, or place was strictly forbidden. When Christ came, He challenged this preoccupation with ceremonial washing and confronted the religion of the Jews, most notably the Pharisees. Jesus knew that they had developed a real formality of a caring religion without caring at all.

In Luke 11, Jesus had just finished His teaching when a Pharisee invited Him to eat with him at his house. Jesus reclined at the table to eat but

the man noticed that Jesus did not first wash before the meal, and you would have to understand that the washing here was not for hygienic purposes. He was surprised that Jesus didn't do the ritual ceremony of washing His hands before the meal. The man was shocked. Jesus seeing this responded to him:

***“Then the Lord said to him, “Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. You foolish people! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also? But give what is inside the dish to the poor, and everything will be clean for you.”***

**Luke 11:39-41**

Jesus puts emphasis on giving as an act of obedience, a pure obedience. It is not surprising why the New Testament focuses mainly on an inward cleanness (heart, conscience), rather than on an external or ceremonial cleanness. We will act out our religion, you cannot help from it.

## **2. Faultless**

What is the difference between pure and faultless, they seem to both land at the same place? Pure is a means of our service and faultless is a reaction to that service. I really believe that we can have a pure ministry with a fault filled heart. When we give to the poor or those needy it will be so easy that we do not become people full of judgment and resentment. We remain faultless in the process. We remain unstained and unsoiled because of our free giving. It is easy to become embittered, a gossip, judgmental and self righteous when you are giving to those less fortunate than yourself. Not only that, when you give when you know someone is taking advantage of the system.

- **Faultless/Undefined** (283) (*amiantos* from a = negates what follows + *miaino* = to defile by staining, as with color) means without contamination, unpolluted, untainted, unstained, unsoiled, without uncleanness or impurity.

**Tree: To have fault is much like the scene where after** a violent storm one night, a large tree, which over the years had become a stately giant, was found lying across the pathway in a park. Nothing but a splintered stump was left. Closer examination showed that it was rotten at the core because thousands of tiny insects had eaten away at its heart. The weakness of that tree was not brought on by the sudden storm; it began the very moment the first insect nested within its bark.

Martin Luther had it right when he said that...

**The world does not need a definition of religion as much as it needs a demonstration.**

We are always in a position to help. We just have to respond and do something about it.

## How Do We Do This?

***“...to look after orphans and widows in their distress...”***

**James 1:29a**

**Outreach Garden:** We have to get up and do something about it. We have worked very hard on our Outreach Garden. There are some people who have given so much of their time and they are incredible, pure and faultless in their service. But one of our leaders is down. Fred Palmblade has been restricted from almost all activity because of a recent heart condition. That has placed double responsibility upon Troy Huber's shoulders. I need you to understand that we are not doing this garden so we can feel good about our church. We are doing it in response to the Word of God. Please listen, we are simplifying opportunity to be obedient to the Word of God. It may not be your “thing” but does your “thing” have an accountability process tagged on to it? Are you committed to your “thing?” Or do you wait for some coincidence to take place, some “spiritual moment” to respond “Godly?”

**James tells us to visit**, not just drop off something so we can feel good about it, but listening to people as they share their world. To feel their pain and sorrows. To stand and pray with them, believing on their behalf for God do begin a good work in them.

- **Visit** (1980) (*episkeptomai* - from *epí* = upon or intensifying already existing idea in verb + *skopeo* = regard, give attention to, look at, contemplate) literally **conveys the picture of looking upon, and thus observing, of examining the state of affairs of something, or of looking after or overseeing**. This verb expresses careful regard of those in position of responsibility. It depicts one going to see another with the intent to render help.
- **Orphans** (3737) (*orphanos*; Latin = *orbus* - bereaved) signifies bereft of parents or of a father
- **Widows** (5503) (*chera*) is a woman who has lost her husband.

Visit those who are being crushed underneath the burdens of this world. The word for distress is the word that was used for a mid-evil torture that would place a heavy object on the victims chest and would little by little apply more and more weight. It was meant to eventually suffocate the victim and at times to crush them.

- **Distress** (2347) (*thlipsis* from *thlibo* = to crush, press together, squash, hem in, compress, squeeze in turn derived from *thláo* = to break) originally expressed sheer, physical pressure on a man. A mid-evil torture by pressing weight on the chest of the victim.

**The first way that I can respond to the Word of God is...**

**A Controlled Mouth**

**A Caring Heart**

### 3. A Clean Mind

*“...and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.”*

James 1:27b

This is Spiritual integrity. It is the same person on the inside as we are portraying on the outside. It should truly concern us that when we are challenged, what colors do we actually show.

There was a minister who lived passionately for God in Germany in the 1800's. Consequently, he was just as passionately hated by the emperor for the same reason. The emperor despised this man's zeal for God. Some of the ruler's advisors said to the monarch, "Burn him, confiscate his property, put him in irons, or have him killed." But others disagreed. They said, "You will not gain anything by all this; for in exile he would find a home with his God; . . . he kisses his chains, death opens heaven to him. There is only one way to render him unhappy; force him to sin. He fears nothing in the world but sin" (F. B. Proctor, Treasury of Quotations).

When we live with a passion and zeal for God, how many people do we know who fear "nothing in the world but sin"? Unfortunately, we often become so comfortable in sin's presence that we practice it rather than fear it. But remember how God views it. May we therefore, as lovers of Him, be haters of sin. —R. W. De Haan

- **To keep** (5083) (*tereo* from *teros* - a guard or warden) (present tense = continuously) means to keep an eye on, keep something in view, to attend carefully, or to watch over it. *Tereo* speaks of guarding something which is in one's possession. It means to watch as one would some precious thing. The idea is to observe attentively, to keep watch over and to retain in custody.
- **Oneself** (1438) (*heautou*) is a reflexive pronoun indicating the action exerting in the keeping or guarding is on ourselves not on others.
- **Unstained** (784) (*aspilos* a = without + *spilos* = spot) means without blemish or defect (outward condition) and figuratively in a moral sense, pure (inward character). James is calling for those who practice Spirit empowered, Christ-like, God glorifying religion to manifest a practice of flawless integrity and uncompromising holiness.

*“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

Romans 12:2

*“Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”*

1 John 2:15