

PURE RELIGION

JAMES 1:26-27 | AUGUST 31, 2025

PASTOR MIKE KRAFT

PREPARE YOUR HEART & MIND

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you can recall, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word, and asking for His Spirit to guide you in your time.

THIS WEEK'S PASSAGE

²⁶ If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless. ²⁷ Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Men's Fall Bible Study

WEDNESDAYS | SEPT - NOV

Fall Community Kick-Off

SEPTEMBER 3 | 7 PM

Military Women Brunch

OCTOBER 11 | 10 AM

Men's Chili Cook-Off

OCTOBER 4 | 7 AM - 1 PM

Some events have registration requirements/deadlines, so be sure to check our website or app for more information and registration.

REFLECT/CONNECT

- Who's someone you know who uses their words with wisdom and care? How does that affect how you or others relate to them?
- Where have you seen someone live out "true religion" by caring for those in need, especially widows or orphans? How did their example impact you?

Use these questions to reflect privately in prayer, or journal, or to start a meaningful conversation in your Life Group.



GROW IN THE WORD

James warns that religion without control of the tongue is worthless. If a person claims devotion to God but fails to bridle their speech, they deceive themselves (v. 26).

- Why do you think James connects religion with controlling the tongue? Why does he use such a strong word like “worthless”? See also Proverbs 10:19; Psalm 39:1; James 3:5-6.
- How have you seen careless words harm relationships or hinder faith?
- What practices could help you better bridle your speech so that your words better honor and reflect Christ?

James defines pure and undefiled religion before God as caring for orphans and widows in their distress, and keeping oneself unstained by the world. He describes true devotion to God as being marked by love in action and a life of integrity. (v. 27).

- Why do you think James highlights orphans and widows? Psalm 68:4-5; Deuteronomy 24:17-21.
- Who are the vulnerable or overlooked in your community today? How can you participate in caring for them more intentionally?
- What does it look like to keep yourself “unstained by the world”? Where is God calling you to greater purity or integrity in your daily life?



PRACTICE TOGETHER

- Ask God to show you one area where your speech needs more restraint or more encouragement. Share it with a trusted friend or group member and invite accountability this week.
- As a group, family, or individual, identify a practical way to care for someone in need, whether by serving a widow, single parent, refugee, or someone isolated. Take one step toward meeting that need this week.

This section provides an easy way to live out the truths of the passage in daily life, whether you're with your Life Group, family & friends, or on your own. These practices help turn reflection into relationship & action.

