

“IF YOU CLAIM TO BE RELIGIOUS”

(2nd Sermon in the Series: “IF”)

James 1:26-27

Everyone is religious, because all are born with a religious instinct, but to say that we are religious is not necessarily to say anything good about ourselves. There are two kinds of religion — the true and the false; or, as James puts it, religion that is “worthless” and a religion that is “pure . . . and undefiled.”

I. Three Marks of False Religion

- A. False religion is hypocritical – “. . . *thinks himself to be religious . . .*” (v. 26a)
- B. False religion is self-deceiving – “. . . *deceives his own heart . . .*” (v. 26b)
- C. False religion is worthless – “. . . *this man’s religion is worthless.*” (v. 26c)

II. Three Marks of True Religion

- A. A controlled tongue – “. . . *yet does not bridle his tongue . . .*” (v. 26)
- B. A compassionate heart – “. . . *to visit orphans and widows in their distress . . .*” (v. 27)
- C. A consecrated life – “. . . *to keep oneself unstained by the world.*” (v. 27)