“Pure and Undefiled Religion”

Intro. As we consider the power and _________ that surround religion, and that a countless multitude of Christians have indeed given their lives for the cause of Christ, we find the issue of religion to be of immeasurable importance.

A. If we are going to _______ and ______ for something, it must be for that which is right, true, and of _________ value.

1. True religion is not about satisfying human lusts, but God’s _______! True religion is not about selfishness, but _______. True religion is not about what we will get but who our glorious God is! Our being saved is not about our glory, but _______.

B. As those who are impassioned when it comes to the Christian religion, we must be _________ to _________ our hearts with the Word of God so as to be sure that we are living and dying for that which _______ declares to be a pure and undefiled religion.

James 1:26-27

I. From these verses we read that true religion is a matter of a _______ _________.

A. How _________ it would have been for James to end saying, “Be effectual doers” without qualifying his statement with verse 26, which speaks of a false religion that externally obeys the letter of the law, but leads to death; and with verse 27, which speaks of the true religion that is of God and from a heart _________ by God obeys the spirit of the law and leads to life. One is of the human will and is _________, the other is born of the spirit of God and living and dying for.

B. In this context the word “religious” refers to _________ religious practices.

C. The _________ we speak are a clearest and best indication of what lies in our heart - the _________ of our heart before God.

1. One who does not _________ his tongue controlling it, proves that his heart has not been bridled (made right) and brought under the control of the Master, no matter his outward works.

   a. Such a person _________ himself having given himself to a false religion.

D. That religion that is merely an external work - an obeying of the letter of the law - is a false religion and it is as James writes, “___________."

II. There is a religion that is _________ and undefiled in the sight of God.

A. “Pure” emphasizes _________ while “undefiled” emphasizes freedom from adulteration (the _________ of the purity).

1. Thus, James is not stressing the actual work, but the _________ of the work. Again, pure and undefiled religion is a matter of a heart made right by God!
B. The religion that is pure and undefiled in the sight of God is revealed in a __________ heart (visiting widows and orphans in their distress), and a __________ heart before God (keeping oneself unstained from the world).

1. This falls __________ in line with Matthew 22:37-40. When Jesus was asked what the greatest commandment was, he responded by saying, "'You shall __________ the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' 38 "This is the great and foremost commandment. 39 'The second is like it, 'You shall __________ your neighbor as yourself.' 40 "On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

2. Pure and undefiled religion __________ to the needs of the needy as exemplified by ministry to widows and orphans.

3. Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of God is to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength living right lives to His glory by __________ ourselves __________ by the world.
   a. 1 John 2:15-17, “Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God __________ __________.”
   b. This is a religion that is of __________ value, and is worth living and dying for.

III. Those pure and undefiled outward religious works are pure and undefiled because they are born of a pure and undefiled heart. How do we come by that kind of a heart when every inclination of the heart is __________?

A. We must __________ __________ to God!
   1. True religion comes to us only as we place our faith in __________! There is no other name by which men can be saved, but Jesus Christ __________!

By the grace and mercy of God, we __________ you this day that you would turn from your sin __________ God to purify your heart through Christ Jesus that you would possess the true religion.

From this hour forward go and sin no more; and from a heart made right be a doer of the word, loving God and your neighbor, living and dying for the cause of __________. This is the true religion that is born of God!

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