

BELIEVE IT.

James: A Bible Study

■ DAY ONE

READ James 1:19-20 using the

PRONOUNCE IT Bible study method.

READ the verses several times, stopping after each word to write down your thoughts.

Which words or phrases are most meaningful to you? Why?

As you think about becoming a more perfect person

- a person whose inner life and outer actions,

attitudes and words are in sync -

how does the advice James gives help us do that?

What difference might being quick to listen, slow to speak and

slow to become angry make in your day-to-day decisions?

Interactions with others?

■ DAY TWO AND THREE

READ Matthew 5:21-22.

Which principle is Jesus teaching his audience in these verses?

Jesus shows us that if we follow Him, we live above *contempt*.

Anger? Frustration? Maybe so, but contempt?

Could we really have contempt in our hearts?

c o n t e m p t *(Pastor Paul's definition)*

a self-certain, self-superior disdain for anything we consider beneath us and thus worthy of disrespect, criticism, scorn or ridicule.

c o n t e m p t *(wikipedia)*

an intense feeling or attitude of regarding someone or something as inferior, base, or worthless — it is similar to scorn.

It's also used when people are being sarcastic.

In the fall of 2010, Pastor Paul led a teaching series which challenged us to become aware of contempt in our society and within our own hearts.

Prayerfully **READ** the following symptoms and/or signs of contempt. Don't rush through this process. **TAKE** a couple of days to allow yourself enough time, thought and prayer to consider each of the symptoms.

ASK God to open your heart and your eyes to any words, behaviors, or attitudes in which anger and frustration are taking root as contempt.

JOURNAL your thoughts as you read through the symptoms.

SYMPTOMS OF CONTEMPT:

- *Sarcasm* ■ *Ridicule or cynicism of the sacred or special* ■ *Negativity*
- *Resentment* ■ *Glorification of knowledge and ridicule of heart*
- *Bitterness* ■ *Disrespect* ■ *Arrogant judgment and gossip*
- *Disbelief in the power of character and change* ■ *Isolation and division*
- *Anger and rage* ■ *Certainty/arrogant resolve - "I'm right"*

Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit.

Matthew 12:33

Are the words, attitudes and actions in my life

helping me become the person God wants me to be?

Are they leading me on the path toward becoming a more perfect person?

■ DAY FOUR

READ James 1:21-25 using the **PARAPHRASE IT** Bible study method.

LOOK for how the concept of *perfect* is described in these verses.

What does James say about how we can live a blessed life in these verses?

What's the thing I must get rid of which is

making me a conflicted and out-of-sync person?

■ DAY FIVE

Who we are is demonstrated by what we say and do (**how we live**).

REFER to the diagram below. The *What I Say* circle may include things

like "I love God," and "I love others." If my actions testify to others that

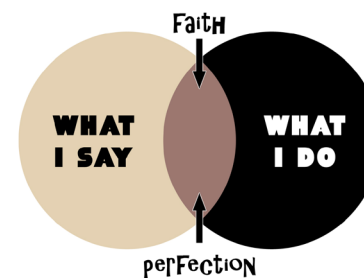
I love God and love others then this part of my life is truly harmonious.

However, if I say those things but treat people with ridicule or disrespect,

while harboring anger and resentment in my heart,

I'm living in conflict and am out-of-sync.

I'm two-souled.



READ Matthew 5:23-24.

These verses describe a type of **two-souled** situation.

What do I see when I look intently at the things God's showing me?