

WHITFIELD PARISH

St James' Church † St Luke's Church

LIFE Group Notes w/b Sunday 13 September 2009

Walk the walk – James 1.19-27

Read again James 1:18

1. This verse speaks of being born again through the word of truth. What is the 'word of truth' and how can it make anyone born again?

The 16th century protestant reformer John Calvin, and probably also Augustine 1100 years earlier, spoke of the **church visible** and the **church invisible**, i.e. the church members and institutions as we see things, and *'the Church as it really is before God, the Church into which none is admitted but those who by the gift of adoption are sons of God, and by sanctification of the Spirit true members of Christ.'* (Calvin's Institutes 4.1.7)

2. It is not our place to judge anyone (God will do that on the Last Day) but for pastoral purposes it can be useful to get an idea of a person's walk with God so that we know how best to encourage, teach and pastor them. But can we ever really know where someone is with God? Why / why not?

Read James 1:19-27

From vv19 and 26 (and 3:1-12) we might deduce that the Christ-followers to whom James is writing are not keeping their tongues (i.e. their speech) in check.

3. On the *quick to listen - quick to speak - quick to become angry* scale where are you (personally and your LIFE Group) and what opportunities or challenges does this raise for you?
4. James uses the word 'word' (*logos* in Greek, the language in which the New Testament was originally written) three times in three verses (21-23) then switches to the word 'law' (*nomos*, v25), which he develops in 2:8-13. Why might James suddenly switch to using this different word?

He has shown all you people what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6:8 (TNIV)

5. In vv26-27 James mentions three specific ways in which God's law needs to be practised. What are they (we have already thought about one of them) and are they the hallmarks of a genuine Christ-follower? Either way, how can we be more like this today?
6. How might the concept of the word being *planted* (v21) within the Christ-follower help us to be the kind of people that God wants us to be?
7. In v21 James speaks of us humbly accepting the word planted within us. He is speaking to Christians. Why is humility before God's word sometimes difficult and what could we do to help each other in our LIFE Group with that?