

“The Church Helps Me Look Better”

James 1:21-27

The Smartphone has killed:

- | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| • Cameras / VCR | • CD/MP3/Radio | • 411 |
| • GPS | • Watches, Alarm | • “information” |
| • Books | • Clocks | • Flashlight |
| • Wallets | • Phone Booth | • Rolodex |
| • Remote Controls | • Paper Maps | |
| • Video Games | • Voice Recorders | |

... and, the personal mirror.

1. Get under God’s Word.

James 1:21, So get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the word God has planted in your hearts, for it has the power to save your souls.

- Remove the ick that makes us sick.
- Replace with seeds that meets our needs.

NOTE: God’s word has the power to save our souls! The Bible is our parachute, safety-harness, and life-jacket that softens our fall, catches us when we slip, and keeps us afloat in hard times.

2. Go beyond listening.

James 1:22-24, But don’t just listen to God’s word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. ²³ For if you listen to the word and don’t obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. ²⁴ You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like.

- The dazzle is in the doing!
 - Option one: be dazzled by outward appearance.
 - Option two: be dazzled by inward change.
- HEARING lasts for a little while, DOING changes us for good.

3. Gaze into God's perfect law.

James 1:25, But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.

SLOGAN: "When you LOOK BETTER you will LOOK BETTER." "Look better" means when you look (gaze, watch, see) at God's Word better, you are transformed by its power, and therefore, "look better" (appearance, demeanor).

4. Grab the good stuff.

James 1:26-27, If you claim to be religious but don't control your tongue, you are fooling yourself, and your religion is worthless.²⁷ Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you.

One of the awesome characteristics of God is that He lets us adopt His definition of "the Good Stuff." Things like caring for hurting people (orphans and widows) and refusing to let the world corrupt you.

The world LOVES to corrupt us! Kenny Chesney produced a song in 2002 called "The Good Stuff" that earned the ACM song of the year award. The song talks about a guy who's just had a fight with his new wife ... and now he's in a bar and asks the barkeep for "the good stuff." Let's see what happens ...

PLAY VIDEO, "The Good Stuff."

I want to be the kind of person that helps others choose God's good stuff. If my tongue is out of control, if my religion is worthless with no compassion, if I am so polluted by the world's corruption ... I can't point people to the good stuff, or enjoy it myself.

A closing prayer ... "Dear God, we want the 'good stuff.' I want to be in line with Your Word, going beyond just listening, but actually experiencing the inward life-change that Your Word brings. Help us to have a dazzling faith! In Jesus' name, amen."