

Sermon for January 20/21, 2024



SMALL GROUPS

Share Life | Pursue God | Invest In Others

THREE THINGS TO KNOW

DON'T MISS THIS. Join us for a special **BEYOND THE WEEKEND PODCAST** just for this sermon series. Senior Pastor Aaron Buer joins other Ada Bible staff for a casual conversation to dig deeper, review things that didn't make it into the sermon and answer your questions. They'll discuss helpful insights and how the teachings are impacting their faith and can impact yours too. **Listen to the podcast [HERE](#).** You can also submit your questions about the sermon or the book of James [HERE](#). Your question could be featured on the podcast!

GROUP VALUES. This January, we are focusing on **RELATIONAL INVESTMENTS**. It's about developing a heart for those in our lives who haven't accepted the good news of Jesus. Discuss ways your group can make praying for them a regular part of your group.

GROW AS A LEADER. Have you checked out the **leader's Facebook page** lately? It's a great place to stay informed about what's going on around Ada Bible Church and in small groups. The group's staff posts regularly. Connect with us at facebook.com/groups/adasmallgroupleaders.

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

Welcome to the second week of our series **MAKE IT REAL**. This week, we look at James's instructions about what makes real religion.

ICEBREAKER

What was the highlight of your past week?

THIS WEEK'S TEXT

Have someone read James 1:19-27 out loud.

What surprises you in this passage?

What characteristics or habits does James associate with real religion and service to God?

James contrasts two different responses to God's Word. What are the blessings and dangers of each response?

THIS WEEK'S SERMON

Pastor Aaron Buer taught that real religion is not doing the right things to earn God's approval, but allowing our lives to be transformed out of gratitude for God's love for us. As a group, recall some of the sermon's big ideas or main points.

Why do you think the word "religious" sometimes carries a negative connotation in our culture today?

In which situations or relationships do you struggle to be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to get angry?

What are some practical ways to rein in your words in those situations?

Why do you think caring for vulnerable people like orphans and widows is so central to living out biblical faith?

Discuss who the vulnerable people are in your families and community that God might be calling you to care for right now. What could caring for them look like?

In what ways do you see our culture's values and beliefs conflicting with biblical truths?

Have there been times when you realized you had embraced some "worldly" beliefs that don't align with God's Word? What was that like?

What are practical ways to combat being "polluted" by beliefs and values that conflict with biblical truths?

Which part of the sermon encouraged or challenged you the most, and why?

WRAP UP

Today, we discussed what it looks like to make religion real—living a life that has been transformed by Jesus. What is one thing you can do this week to apply truths from our discussion?