

Introduction:

The story I am about to tell you is true. There is no intention to be ethnically insensitive or make stereotypical comments about regions of our country. The story is offensive, but extremely instructive and revealing for our learning purposes today.

Deceive: An illusion, fraud, trickery, to be ensnared, seduced, to counterfeit, to lie – “to fool someone so completely that what is false is accepted to be true.”

(Webster’s New World Dictionary)

God's Antidote to Spiritual Deception:

James 1:21-27

²¹Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the Word planted in you, which can save you.

²²Do not merely listen to the Word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

²³Anyone who listens to the Word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror ²⁴and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. ²⁵But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.

²⁶If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless. ²⁷Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

Step 1– We must receive the truth objectively

James 1:21

Step 2 – We must respond to the truth practically

- **The Command** = “Be doers of the Word” James 1:22
- **The Illustration** = “Look in the mirror” James 1:23-25
- **The Application** = “Are you deceived?” (3 Tests) James 1:26-27

A Game Plan for Doers:

1. Determine a regular time, place, and book of the Bible to begin reading/studying.
2. Set aside twenty minutes.
3. Use the 2 PROAPT Method to apply God's Word to your life this week.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is deception so dangerous to our spiritual lives?
2. What aspect of this message really "hit home" with you? Why?
3. Read verse 21 out loud and discuss its implications for your heart to be a fertile and objective place where God's Word can grow.
4. What does it mean to be a "doer of God's Word?" In what ways do you see yourself as a "doer" of the Word? In what ways are you much more a "hearer" than a "doer" of the truth? Is there a specific area the Holy Spirit convicted you of with regard to applying God's truth in your life? How will you do that?
5. Discuss the three tests of the spiritually deceived described in verses 26-27. What does your report card look like in these areas?
6. **STOP!** Read the last part of verse 25! Why does God want you to apply and practice the truth you know? Whose interest and good does He have in mind?