

**FAMILY LESSONS ON
THE MIRROR OF TRUTH**

Based on James 1:23-24

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**LESSON #3
BOOKS ON A SHELF**

**“Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says
is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself,
goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.”**

James 1:23-24 (NIV84)

I have collected many books over the years. Some I have read and some I have not. I could tell you that I own all of the books in my library, but the truth is I only really own the ones I have read and spent time with. For example, I've read *Pilgrim's Progress* several times. I can picture the people and stories in my mind and recall the lessons the author described. There is a way in which I will always possess *Pilgrim's Progress* because I have actually read it and been changed by it. But the other books that just sit on my shelf haven't really helped me yet because I haven't been changed by them.

Knowing the truth is a lot like that. We sometimes think the truth is something we can collect like an object, like a book we put on a shelf. We think we own it just because we've heard it or listened to someone talk about it. Or sometimes we think we benefit from a truth because we have studied it, taken notes on it, or even memorized it. But the Bible says, “Do not merely listen to the Word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says” (James 1:22). The truth we have learned should never be something that just sits on a shelf. It's not just something to gather and collect, store and file away. Truth should move us to action. It should cause us to change in some way.

The only truth that really helps us is the truth we use. When Jesus taught large crowds of people, there were many who wanted to hear what He had to say. But He would often emphasize to those people, “Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them” (John 13:17). In my experience, the greatest challenge in the Christian life is not the challenge of knowing the truth, though that is certainly important. The greatest challenge is actually living the truth. People want to know the secret to happiness, but God says the secret is in the truth we already know but haven't learned to live (John 15:11 and 1 John 1:4).

*What did the Apostle Paul say we should do with all the truth we have learned (Philippians 4:8-9)?
Can you think of an example of truth you have acted on? What about truth you have not acted on?*

For additional study materials on the Bonus Verse and a copy of the “Ten Step Bible Memory Method for Life,” go to www.icsva.org/student-life/bonus-verse on the Immanuel Christian School website.