

## Week Ten “Heartwork”: Issues I Didn’t Know Were Issues

*Do you ever have the sneaking suspicion that the way you see yourself and the way others see you (not to mention how God sees you) are waaaaaay different? I sure do. And honestly, if you don’t . . . um, you should. The truth is, as we have seen in the midst of all our “issues,” that not only do our issues flow out of our hearts as Proverbs 4:23 tells us, but our hearts actually trick us, deceive us. Jeremiah 17:9 tells us “The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?” So, what I think I know about all my issues -- what they are and where they affect me and how I should deal with them – just might not be entirely accurate. What? I might not really understand my own issues? AND I might have issues I didn’t even know were issues? I might be the last to see them rather than the first? Yep, that’s what we’re suggesting.*

*Fortunately, God doesn’t leave us there, in our confusion, with our blind spots. He’s taking us on an amazing albeit sometimes scary journey to freedom from our issues, and He’s providing the spiritual resources to get there. We don’t have to stay unaware, blind, or even blurry about our issues. He’ll show us the issues, AND He’ll show us the way to freedom.*

Observation: Pray and read the following passage. List your observations (aim for 20). You may find it helpful to read in one or two different translations.

### James 1:19-27

**19** My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, **20** for man’s anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires. **21** Therefore, 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. **22** Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. **23** 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 **24** and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. **25** But 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. **26** If anyone considers himself religious

and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless. **27**

Religion 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.

Interpretation: Sum Up what you saw in a sentence or two.

Personal Application: Use the SPECK method to find at least one way to apply this passage in your life, considering especially how God wants to keep you from self-deception and blind spots and give you clarity and insight into the journey to freedom He has for you.