

Daily Bible Study

“You & The Word Of God” Part ~ 2

James 1:22-27

April 23– April 29, 2023

MONDAY –As we get back to our ongoing study of James this week we take as our text, **James 1:22-27:** *“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one’s religion is useless. Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.”* The title of our study, ***“You & The Word Of God”*** describes the main point of this last portion of **James 1**. The theme is about The Word of God and the relationship and response of the person to it. This week we begin to see that The Word of God must not only be received by the individual but it must be obeyed and practiced. Long term obedience to Scripture is one genuine proof of salvation not merely a momentary feeling of happiness or commitment to The Word (**John 8:31**, *“Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.”*) As we saw in **Part 1** of this study, we must listen (**19**) and take in (**21**) the Word of God but we also must also express it and carry it out (**22–23, 25**). In James’ words, we must be *doers of the word* and not merely *hearers, deceiving* ourselves. We will see what James means by this warning against self-deception as he will go on to illustrate it to us in the following verses of our text.

(Meditate) What truly is my attitude toward The Word of God?

(Apply) In what specific way can I change to better reflect that I take God’s Word seriously?

(Pray): Father, teach me this week from Your Word. Help me to not only receive Scripture into my life but actually go on to obey and practice it.

TUESDAY – **James 1:22:** *“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”* Listening to the Word of God is important and we must always begin there. Many

church members fail in the listening. You must understand this beloved, we cannot possibly succeed in the Christian life apart from the regular intake of the Word of God. Let’s be perfectly clear, refusal to take in God’s Word indicates that we have no spiritual life in us. But while we must always begin with hearing the Word, do not stop there. We must apply what we have heard. James tells us we can listen to The Word and be deceived. His meaning is clear and plain. Just as the person who has no interest in hearing the Word of God is horribly deceived about his or her spiritual condition, so is the person who is content to hear and not obey. You may say that no Christian obeys perfectly which is correct (**1 John 1:8**, *“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”*). But every genuine Christian has a desire to obey God and is grieved by a failure to do so. The Greek word for *doers* is the word *poiotes* {poy-ay-tace'} which means one who does, obeys or performs. It carries the characterization of the whole personality; mind, soul, spirit and emotions. It is one thing to be in a fight for a few days versus being a professional soldier whose life is dedicated to warfare. Anyone can do a few repairs in the house but it is another thing altogether to be a professional builder. When James is hear speaking of *doers of the word* he is speaking to who genuine Christians are and not just what they do. Their lives are dedicated to not merely hearing but to faithfully and continually doing what it says. The life is dictated in every way by The Words of Scripture. Mere hearers of The Word think they belong to God but in reality they do not. The biblical line between Christian and the unsaved man is abundantly clear. **1 John 3:10**, NLT, *“So now we can tell who are children of God and who are children of the devil. Anyone who does not live righteously and does not love other believers does not belong to God.”* It is not what one claims to have experienced but how one lives it out. To drive home the importance of this matter of obedience, James likens the Word of God to a mirror. Anyone who has any familiarity with Scripture knows that James is correct. It is indeed like a mirror because we cannot look into it very long without seeing ourselves for exactly what we are. But there are different ways to look in a mirror, and this is What James will show us tomorrow.

(Meditate) Do I genuinely desire to come and listen to The Word of God then go out and do it?

(Apply) What practical step can I take to help me to practice what I hear from God’s Word?

(Pray): Father God, help me to not be deceived and merely come and listen or read Sacred Scripture but instead to be a diligent, faithful, and obedient doer of Your Word.

WEDNESDAY – **James 1:23-24:** *“For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.”* We all depend on mirrors to tell us what is

wrong with our clothes, hair, faces, etc... But what about a person who looks and sees a problem and then fails to correct it? We would say that there was absolutely no point for that person to look in the mirror at all. Looking in the mirror is useless if we make no corrections. If you come to church and are a *hearer of the word and not a doer* you're doing some useless looking. The mirror of The Word of God does its work as it shows and tells us the truth about ourselves. When a man looks in the mirror, he sees what is out of place but it is then his responsibility, not anyone else's to fix the problem. He can ignore it, and *go away, and immediately forget what kind of man he was* or he can act on what he has seen and make the corrections needed. What does the Word of God reveal to you when you look into it and how do you respond? We can go on as we have been and continue *deceiving* ourselves or we can apply the truths that God has shown us.

(Meditate) What has the Word been revealing to you that you need to change in your life?

(Apply) What specific action can you take to correct the attitude/behavior God has pointed out?

(Pray): Father God, help me not be deceived, merely listening or reading Sacred Scripture but instead to be a diligent, faithful, and obedient doer of what You show me from Your Word.

THURSDAY – James 1:25: “*But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.*” Thankfully James gives us an alternative to just coming to The Word and seeing our issues and walking away. He speaks here of one who *looks* parakupto {par-ak-ooop'-to. This Greek word speaks of a person stooping down, bending over to carefully look at something and intently examining it. It is used of both Peter and John when they looked into Christ's empty tomb after His resurrection. What is the purpose of this looking? To learn God's Word with a view to putting it into practice. James here refers to God's Word as *the perfect law of liberty*. It is *law* because it was given to guide and regulate our conduct. Law without penalty is advice and God wasn't giving advice. It is *perfect* because it was given by God Himself. And it is the *law of liberty* because it gives liberty to those who subject themselves to it. Satan works very hard to portray sin as the greatest freedom and God's Word as the greatest bondage, but the very opposite is actually true. The old Puritan Thomas Manton said, “Duty is the greatest liberty, and sin the greatest bondage.” Jesus taught this principle in **John 8:34-36** and Paul refers to it as well in **Romans 6:16-18**. What a privilege to be able to look into The Word which tells us how to act to experience genuine freedom. Finally, James gives us a promise. He says that the man who looks into Scripture, continues in it with obedient perseverance, *this one will be blessed in what he does*. The word blessed literally means happy but it goes beyond a

mere sentiment. He is saying this obedient doer of the word will be happy and fulfilled in a world that is striving for happiness, peace and fulfilment. This man won't be restless. In a quest for happiness and a sense of fulfilment, people try pleasures, possessions, and everything in between these days. But the more they seek fulfilment, the more it eludes them. James says it is found in doing the Word of God and that should not surprise us. We were made by God and for God. If you want to be *blessed*, be a doer of the Word.

(Meditate) Do I look into the perfect law of liberty intently? Am I happy, fulfilled and blessed?

(Apply) What specific area of my life is Satan promising freedom if I do my own thing?

(Pray): Father, help me to live in obedient trust toward you. Let me see that Your perfect law of liberty not only promises but actually delivers true blessing, peace and happiness.

FRIDAY– James 1:26-27: “*If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless. Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.*” In closing out **chapter 1**, James gives us a quick test of what true Christian religion is and whether ours is valid or not. Three points are in view which we'll see in detail in our sermon Sunday; Our speech, selfless service, and separation. As Simon J, Kistemaker says, “keep your tongue in check, get your hands dirty helping people in need, and keep yourself clean from the filth of this world... If man fails to keep his tongue in check, his religion is worthless. The unruly tongue engages in lying, cursing and swearing, slander, and filthy language. From man's point of view the hasty word, shading of the truth, the subtle innuendo, and the questionable joke are shrugged off as insignificant. Yet from God's perspective they are a violation of the command to love the Lord God and to love one's neighbor as oneself. A breach of this command renders man's religion of no avail.” We will look more at length on these verses this upcoming Lord's Day.

(Meditate) Is my religion a farce or do I pass the test of genuine faith given by James?

(Apply) Which of the 3 areas mentioned by James do I need to clean up to be more like Christ?

(Pray): Father God, I need your help in living the way You would have me to. Thank You Jesus for paying the price of my failure and rebellion. Give me strength and consistency in obedience.