

James 1:19-27 - Listening and Doing

Read James 1:19-27

V. 19 - To receive the Word you must be ready to listen. To display the power of the Word in your life requires the same ability.

Why is being “quick to listen” so difficult? Is it a natural reaction?

Look up: Proverbs 17:28, Proverbs 21:23, Proverbs 29:11

He who answers before listening that is his folly and his shame. - Proverbs 18:13

What are the possible ramifications for those who are not slow to speak, especially in their anger?

Look up: Proverbs 15:4, 1 Peter 3:10

V. 20 – The word anger is translated from the Greek “*orge*”, meaning violent passion, anger, indignation, vengeance, wrath.

What would you say is the greatest basis for an individual’s violent passion or thirst for vengeance?

Look up: Proverbs 13:10 Proverbs 29:23

V. 21 - James tells us that to grow spiritually, we must first “get rid of all moral filth.” We need to get the sin out of our hearts and mind, our actions and attitudes. We must set aside our personal ill-will toward others. (Colossians 3:12)

V. 22 - James gives us our marching orders here. "Do what it says," Literally, "Be doers, continual practitioners or performers of God's Word" (from the Greek *poietai*). This is not an "option" for the believer, but a command. Not to obey makes a person a hearer only, who betrays himself. Many Christians drop out of church each year and blame their spiritual condition on someone else. Notice, James says that they do it to themselves.

For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous.
Romans 2:13

What is meaning of verses 23 and 24? How does one forget what he looks like? Look up: Ephesians 2:10

James uses a mirror as an example of God's Word. It illustrates that God's Word reflects the kind of people we are. The forgetful hearer looks at the scripture, but once he leaves the setting, he forgets what God has said. His life is unaffected.

V.26 - **What are some of the ways that the tongue can reveal that our religion is worthless?**

Going to church, fasting, giving to charity, public praying - these acts are useless if there is no control on the tongue. Once we declare ourselves as ambassadors of Christ, every word that flows from our mouth either adds to, or diminishes the credibility of Christ’s gift and message. Look up: Ephesians 5:3-5

V.27 - In the first century orphans and widows had very little means of economic support. Unless a family member cared for them, they were reduced to begging, selling themselves as slaves, or starving. By caring for these powerless people the church put God’s word into practice.

What is the return on your investment when you give with no hope of receiving a similar response?

Look up: Matthew 5:46, Galatians 6:9

Do not withhold good from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act.
Proverbs 3:27

James closes this chapter by talking about true religion. True religion is the outward expression of belief through worship and service. A religious person whose behavior is not consistent (in word or deed) with the Christian faith is "worthless and self-deceiving". James tells us that real faith is consistent.

James has shown the importance of putting spiritual truth into practice. Service to our church and our community is not an option. Those with true religion must serve. In chapter 2 James says it as clearly as possible:

“What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds”?

- James 2:14