

James 1:22-27

Intro: Having a proper reception of the word is important, but if all we are doing is getting smarter, we are missing the point and calling upon ourselves greater responsibility at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Christ said, "if you love me, keep my commandments." It is only as we are doers of God's word are we the lights in this lost and dying world that God has called us to be. We also find our assurance of salvation in becoming the people God wants us to be. As we are being transformed by the word of God, transforming grace changes how we live.

In Mt 7:21-23, Jesus says, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' Notice they had their works, but were practitioners of lawlessness. They knew that they needed to do, but they hadn't become in order to do.

In the long run, character is evidenced in lifestyle. Jesus said in Mt 7:16-20, "You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? "Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. "A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. "Therefore by their fruits you will know them."

VI. Belief that Behaves - Part 2 - A Proper Reaction to the Word

A. Willingness to Apply the Word Without Deception - vs 22b-26 - Attitude of the Heart

1. be doers of the word

a. Be - *ginomai* - to cause to be, to become (come into being),

i. Present middle imperative

- to be continually

- Keep on striving to be

ii. Prove yourselves

b. doers - *poietes* - a performer; specially, a "poet"; --doer, poet.

i. carries the characterization of the whole personality - the whole inner being - mind, soul, spirit, and emotions

ii. deals with what they are, rather than what they do

2. and not hearers only

a. hearers - *akroates* - a hearer (merely).

b. someone who sits passively to listen to a singer or speaker

i. one who audits a class

ii. Has no responsibility for HW, quizzes, or tests

iii. Gets no grade or compensation

c. line between saints and sinners

i. 1Jo 3:10 In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.

ii. 2Pe 1:10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;

3. deceiving yourselves

a. *paralogizomai* - to misreckon, i.e. delude--beguile, deceive.

i. literally means to reason beside, incorrect reckoning

ii. often includes the idea of deliberate false reasoning for the purpose of deceiving

- iii. when used in math, it is a miscalculation
 - b. Example of one who is a hearer of the word and not a doer - vs 23
 - i. a man observing his natural face in a mirror;
 - ***katanoeo*** - to observe fully:--behold, consider, discover, perceive.
 - carries the idea of careful cautious consideration of what is being looked at
 - 1st century mirrors made of highly polished brass or bronze
 - the rich could buy silver or gold
 - very primitive compared to glass of today
 - gave a dim and distorted reflection of the person
 - by carefully turning it to catch the light, one could get a reasonable glimpse of their reflection
 - ii. After he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.
 - no reason given as to why he forgets
 - doesn't like what he sees
 - is distracted by something else
 - poor memory
 - whatever the purpose for looking was, it is over and forgotten
 - c. in context,
 - i. the trial would show him his heart
 - ii. Overcoming showed faith
 - iii. Failure showed all filthiness and overflow of wickedness - vs 21
4. Contrasted with the doer - vs 24 –25
- a. he who looks into the perfect law of liberty
 - i. ***parakupto*** - to bend beside, i.e. lean over (so as to peer within):--look (into), stoop down, to carefully examine from the best possible vantage point.
 - stronger verb than ***katanoeo***
 - used by Luke to describe Peter's looking into the empty tomb - Lk 24:12
 - ii. the perfect law of liberty
 - ***teleios*** - complete (in various applications of labor, growth, mental and moral character, etc.); completeness:--of full age, man, perfect.
 - scripture is inerrant, sufficient, and comprehensive - Ps 19:7-9
 - Law focus' on the Lord's commands to men
 - many think the law brings bondage
 - opposite is true - Ro 6:16-18 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.
 - ***eleutheria*** - freedom (legitimate or licentious, chiefly moral or ceremonial):--liberty.
 - liberty focus' on its redemptive power in freeing believers from the bondage of sin and to righteous obedience - Jo 8:34-36
 - b. Being a doer

- i. and continues in it,
 - **parameno** - to stay near, i.e. remain (literally, tarry; or figuratively, be permanent, persevere):--abide, continue.
 - Ro 8:4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.
 - Jo 15:1-8
- ii. and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work,
 - **epilesmone** - negligence:--X forgetful.
 - contrast with Ps 1:1-3; Ro 12:2; 2 Co 3:18
 - doer - **poietes**
 - **ergon** - toil (as an effort or occupation); an act:--deed, doing, labor, work.
- iii. this one will be blessed in what he does.
 - **makarios** - supremely blest; fortunate, well off:-- blessed, happy.
 - **poiesis** - action, i.e. performance (of the law):--deed.

5. The Deceived - vs 26

a. thinks he is religious

- i. **dokeo** - to think; to seem (truthfully or uncertainly):--be accounted, (of own) please(-ure), be of reputation, seem (good), suppose, think, trow.
- ii. **threskos** - ceremonious in worship (as demonstrative), pious:--religious.
- iii. does not bridle his tongue
 - **chalinagogeio** - to be a bit-leader, to curb, bridle.
 - doesn't have capacity to control it - Jas 3:8
 - best indication of true spirituality - Mt 12:34, 37
 - 1Pe 3:10 For "He who would love life And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit.
- iv. deceives his own heart
 - **apatao** - to cheat, i.e. delude:--deceive.
 - self deception
 - Jer 37:9 "Thus says the LORD: 'Do not deceive yourselves, saying, "The Chaldeans will surely depart from us," for they will not depart.
 - 1Co 3:18 Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise.
 - 1 Jo 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

b. this one's religion is useless

- i. **threskeia** - ceremonial observance:--religion, worshipping.
- ii. **mataios** - empty, profitless, an idol:--vain, vanity.

B. Willingness to Apply the Word Without Selfishness - vs 27a

1. Genuine Religion

- a. Pure - **katharos** - clean (literally or figuratively):--clean, clear, pure.
 - i. emphasizes cleanness
 - ii. the positive side
- b. undefiled - **amiantos** - unsoiled, (figuratively) pure:--undefiled.
 - i. denotes freedom from contamination
 - ii. the negative side

2. What is best

- a. from man's perspective
 - i. the Jewish religious leaders had nullified what God had said
 - ii. Mt 15:6b-8 Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition. "Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me.
- b. before God and the Father is this:
 - i. to visit - *episkeptomai* - to inspect, to select; to go to see, relieve:--look out, visit.
 - From *episkepos* - overseer
 - Carries the idea of caring for, exercising oversight on their behalf, helping them however needed
 - ii. Used of God visiting His people in order to strengthen and encourage them
 - Lk 1:68, 78, 7:16; Ac 15:14
 - Heb 2:6 But one testified in a certain place, saying: "What is man that You are mindful of him, Or the son of man that You **take care** of him?
 - iii. Reason for judgment - Mt 25:35-36

3. The neediest people in the early church

- a. orphans and widows
 - w/o family to help them
 - w/o means to reciprocate
- b. in their trouble - shows sacrificial love

C. Willingness to Apply the Word Without Compromise - vs 27b

1. to keep

- a. *tereo* - to note (a prophecy; to fulfil a command); to detain (in custody; to maintain); to withhold (for personal ends; to keep unmarried); to withhold (for personal ends; to keep unmarried):--hold fast, keep(- er), (pre-, re-)serve, watch.
- b. a continuous regular action

2. unspotted from the world

- a. *aspilos* - unblemished (physically or morally):--without spot, unspotted.
- b. 1Pe 1:17b conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear;
- c. not speaking of sinless perfection - Ec 7:20 For there is not a just man on earth who does good And does not sin.
- d. Paul said of himself
 - i. Ac 23:1b I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day."
 - ii. 1Co 4:4a For I know nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this;
 - iii. Ro 7:18-19 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice.
- e. *kosmos* - orderly arrangement, decoration; the world (in a wide or narrow sense, including its inhabitants, (morally)):--adorning, world.
 - i. 1Jo 2:15-16 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world.
 - ii. Note - we are being transformed by the renewing of our minds - Ro 12:2