

## Hearer/Doer – Are You Teachable? James 1:19-27 “Faith Works”

19 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; 20 for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

21 Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23 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;

24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.

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.

26 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. 27 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.

### Question: Are you a teachable person?

A) If I were to ask your wife, roommates, your boss, your best friend.  
How would they respond?

B) James tells us in our text Today **teachable people are fruitful people** and **teachable people are blessed**

1) In our text - James gives us **four insights** into what a teachable person looks like.

### Teachable people Have:

#1 A Listening heart V.19-20

19 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; 20 for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

The phrase **so then** is meant to connect us to what James has been saying thus far in this first Chapter!

A) Recall There are 3 movements in this first Chapter of James:

- The first movement is how a Christian copes with trials; V.1-11 –
- The second movement is how the believer copes with temptation; V.12-18
- The third is how the believer connects with the Word (1:19-27).

So then...V.19-21 Are what would call transitional verses – that link movements 1-2 to movement 3.

A) **Don't forget James' Audience** – He is talking to the believers dispersed throughout the Roman Empire, undergoing unbelievable persecution,

B) Movement 1-2 James has been encouraging them to realize- trials are producing something in them

1) Developing a spiritual maturity and Stamina  
**Let it work – lean into it**

C) **Resist that temptation to Doubt God, disappointed with God**

**Remember – God is good – He loves them – He is for them**

A) Placed his divine nature inside of them to help them Endure the trials

B) James also realizes in the trials we can have the tendency to complain – gets Angry/ Cynical.

1) **Therefore, don't GROW cynical**; don't be quick to complain about your situation. – Get angry

C) Instead, stop speaking and start listening—and you'll hear God's voice in your trial.”

1) **Be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;**

### LISTENING HEART

**Some people never learn – never grow – because they never stop talking enough to listen!**

A) Recently I had a lady complain to me that she doesn't have anyone she can talk to – no one listens to her – no one is there for her.

B) Now **I have had 4-5 conversations** with this woman in the past – every time she talks for an hour nonstop – no breath –

1) Never seen anything like it – always starts – need prayer – 30 minutes in I am still trying to figure out – what she is needing prayer for.

C) Hard life – really feel sorry for her – but after the last time – happened recently

1) She made that statement – no one is there for her

D) I lovingly said to her that the reason might be she is never quiet enough to let anyone speak into her life.

1) Told her of my experience – Her reply – Movie waiting to Exhale –

Maybe you've experienced that with your spouse or one of your kids where they just don't seem to listen

A) Or they don't seem to stop talking enough for you to get in a word -

B) Or this one: You are talking to your spouse or one of your kids – they are looking right at you – they nod their heads

1) They walk out and – do the opposite and you realize they didn't hear a word that you said

C) That can be so frustrating can't it

D) You think God has ever experienced that with you?

1) Come to the point where you're just complaining about everything - that you never stop to listen

Teachable people are ones who have a listening heart!

A) They know the importance of being quiet – so that God can speak to them

B) So the first question we need to answer today – Listening heart? Two ears and one mouth –

1) Listen twice as much as you speak!

Teachable people Have:  
#2 A Prepared heart

21 Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

James is big on metaphors: Last week – hunting and fishing and child birth – today Gardening: Talks about the implanted word.

A) God's word is like a seed that gets planted in our hearts. –

B) Seed has power to grow something – produce something – bring forth fruit

C) Sometimes before seeds can be planted in a garden – we need to pull out the weeds.

1) Here in our text – James identifies the weeds as filthiness and overflow of wickedness.

D) His point – Before you can receive the implanted word of God which is able to save your soul- you need to lay aside ..... Filthiness... wickedness.

Similar idea to what the Apostle Paul wrote about in Ephesians 4:22 “that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, <sup>23</sup> and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, <sup>24</sup> and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.”

Put off old man – put on the new

A) Like taking off an old coat and putting on a new one.

B) Now we understand that analogy – Never think of working all day in the sun – dirty smelly

1) Going to dinner – Put on a new coat over our dirty smelly clothes.

C) No we are going to put off first – Old – Shower – then put on the new

That is the same point James is referring to here: Lay aside filthiness and overflow of wickedness – so you can receive .....

A) Filthiness - used to describe wax build up in a person's ear.

B) Overflow of Wickedness = Past sinful patterns of the former life - Carnality - constant flow and constant activity of sin

C) So James is saying we need to unplug our ears from all the garbage of this world and lay aside our former sin

1) So we can hear – what the Lord is trying to say to us –

D)What God is wanting to do in us!

**Teachable people have:**

#1 A Listening heart

#2 A Prepared heart

#3 A Humble heart - **HOW are we to Receive?**

<sup>21</sup> receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

A)Meekness = Humility

B) **Receive = to take with the hand.** – Grab a hold of something. Shake a hand or Hug – Embrace

1)"**putting out the welcome mat**" for God's word as one would for a good friend or guest, inviting them to come into your house

C)Do you receive God's word in that way – **or with Skepticism**

1)Probably not going to get anything out of the study today.

**Yearly Pastors Conference: One guy on the schedule: bummed – not my favorite.**

A)All have our flavors – Not my style – not on my podcast play list- **Skip that session.**

B)God showed me the problem wasn't him it was with me. – **my heart was not right** – I CHANGED

1)Pen and paper and prayer – Lord speak to me – He did – sometimes the best nuggets came in his sessions

➤ **Teachable people can receive from anyone!**

**Humility describes the quality of not being overly impressed by a sense of one's self-importance.**

A)When I am not impressed with myself – I am much more receptive to hear from others.

B)Heart that says – Lord I need to hear from you!

**Teachable people have:**

#1 A Listening heart

#2 A Prepared heart

#3 A Humble heart

#4 A Responsive heart

<sup>22</sup> But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. <sup>23</sup> 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; <sup>24</sup> for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. <sup>25</sup> 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.

**Teachable people have: A Responsive heart:**

A)They don't just hear God's word – they put it into practice.

B)**Hear = comes from the word Auditor** –

Bb)College class - You can audit - not going to get a grade- don't have to do any of the work.

1)James is saying - don't be a spiritual auditor -

C)**See it is nice to listen to Bible studies - nice to read the word - get fired up –**

1)But it is a whole different thing to put it into practice.

D)Hearing is not **a means to itself** - it is **a means to an end** –

Luke 6:46 - <sup>46</sup>“**But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?** {Oxymoron – Lord

E)Many people only hear! – They mark their Bibles but their Bibles NEVER mark them.

**James says – when we do that we are Deceiving ourselves!**

A)**Deceive = to reason with one's self but to make a major miscalculation.**

B)James gives us a graphic illustration- we can all relate to – Mirror Mirror on the wall

C)**Beginning of each day: Morning routine.**

1)Somewhere in the morning we come face to face with the mirror and for most of us it is not a good thing.

D)Eyes are puffy, hair is all messed up - others look in the mirror and wonder - where did the hair go.

E) We have impressions on our skin. Some things are horizontal that should be vertical - not a pretty Pic

**Why is that ?- Mirrors are honest.**

A) They don't gloss over the defects - every wart, wrinkle and Zit IS EXPOSED

B) They don't tell us that we are better than we really are.

C) **Except at certain stores** - mirrors that make you look skinnier - buy something and get it home. - try it on again. Doesn't look as good - why ?

1) Your mirror is honest.

D) **Choice: Lose some weight / take it back**

1) **Buy some mirrors like the ones at the store** that make you look skinnier -

E) I am Sure you can get those on line.

**Now have you ever had this happen?**

A) You wake up look in the mirror - **Discover - Giant zit on the end of your nose - Grew over night - huge**

B) Or you have **this super long nose hair** - coming out of your nose.

1) Lipstick on teeth - or mascara - not on right

C) You say: I need to deal with that - you intend to - but then - wife calls you to help her with something -

1) Phone rings - Distracted, caught up in this conversation

D) **Now you are running late: You rush out the door - completely forgetting what you saw in the morning - Zit / Nose hair - / Mascara**

E) All day long - you are wondering why people are starring at you!

**That is the picture that James paints for us of the person who hears the word and doesn't do it!**

A) He sees what he looks like in the mirror - He sees the problem - but gets distracted - goes out forgetting what he looks like - what the problem is.

B) **Very important truth** - God's word is like a mirror

1) **Examines us** - See ourselves in light of Jesus - See ourselves in light of God's standards.

C) The mirror - shows areas where we have grown - we are encouraged

1) But the mirror of God's word also exposes us - Shows the areas that need to be dealt with.

D) In fact, One of the reasons that people don't read their Bibles is they don't like the way it exposes their sin/ **THE FLAWS - OUR HEARTS**

**Missionary and the witch doctor - Mirror to shave**

The local witch doctor happened by and curiously looked into the strange glass—and seeing her hideously painted features she jumped back! -

**Immediately she began to bargain with the missionary for the mirror.**

The missionary didn't really want to part with his mirror but, realizing that the witch doctor would not be put off, he let her have the mirror—

She immediately threw it to the ground, breaking it to pieces, shouting, **“There ... it won't be making ugly faces at me anymore!”**

E) True we don't always like it when the mirror of God's word **exposes our flaws but it is necessary** and helpful if we respond to it rightly

**Here is the point of the analogy: When you see the Zit - the nose hair - the flaw - Deal with it RIGHT AWAY! - Don't wait -**

A) Don't allow yourself to get distracted.

B) Same is true of God's word - When God is speaking to you - Exposes something!

1) Instructs - something to do - or change - repent of or ACTION TO TAKE.

C) **RESPOND IMMEDIATELY!** - Don't wait -

1) Chances are you will get distracted and forget what it was that God was saying

D) **Response times:** Pray it in - Deal with it - get prayer! - Immediately

**Don't ever be afraid to come and get prayer - “what are they going to think...”**

A) **NO ONE IS JUDGING - WE ARE ALL FLAWED**

B) God resist the Proud – gives Grace to the humble –

Humble yourselves – you will be exalted!

C) We all need prayer!

The teachable person doesn't just hear the word – they respond to it!

A) They put it into practice.....

B) When we respond to God's word rather than resisting God's word **it has the power to transform our lives.**

C) Awesome promise:

<sup>25</sup> 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.**

Called the perfect law of liberty - you know why?

A) When we adhere to it and do it – it has the power to set us free!

B) Some people think that God's word is meant to imprison them – **NO FUN – DO'S, DON'TS**

**C) Opposite is true: Sin imprisons –**

1) Sin is pleasurable for a season - Fun sinning!

D) But the end of it is death – BONDAGE

1) HEARTACHE

**Some of you today! Jesus wants to set you Free!**

John 8:31-36 “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. <sup>32</sup> And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”..... “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. <sup>35</sup> And a slave does not abide in the house forever, *but* a son abides forever. <sup>36</sup> Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

**ABIDE – carries the same idea that James uses here in v.25 – He who looks = intently ... perfect law...**

A) AND CONTINUES IN IT

B) Continues speaks of a Pattern/ Lay aside the pattern of sin –

1) Establish a Pattern of getting into God's word – and letting God's word get into us!

C) Something amazing happens!

1) Transformation takes Place – Freedom and Joy

D) Save = Sozo – to rescue – The seed of God's word is rescuing us –

1) Continual saving – 1<sup>st</sup> Sin/ Death - **Later from ourselves – from old habits – from situations**

**The Key is to Continue**

A) Never think of going a day without eating. - Or a week

B) Why do we think we can go a day or week - without the word

C) Jesus said: If you continue in my word - then you are my Disciples indeed.

D) Start acting like a Disciple – true follower!

1) **Pattern:** Drive the same way to work every day. - Doesn't wake up and go - I wonder how I am going to get to work today. Better - GPS

**James pinpoints 3 areas of our lives that God's Word will affect.**

**#1 Our Speech V.26**

<sup>26</sup> 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.**

A) Known people – before saved – just swore all the time

Pattern – without even thinking – words come out.

B) Got saved – started getting into the word – Something happened –

1) Stopped using those swear words

C) Get mad – no swear word – they were amazed!

**God's Word acts like a bridle on the tongue!**

A) Before – easily sucked into Gossip – now turning the conversation in a positive direction. – **Awesome!**

B) But the opposite is true – the Person who doesn't bridle their tongue

1) Have to wonder – if anything really genuine is happening in their hearts

C) Obviously – not being a doer of the Word!

1) Still the same old patterns

The first area of our lives that James points out that God's word will affect is OUR SPEECH.

**#2 Our Service V.27a**

<sup>27</sup> Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble,

“Orphans and widows” were the most helpless people in Jewish society.

A) A widow who didn't have family and orphans were to be taken care of by the believers.

B) Now before you say: I don't know any widows who don't have family

1) And I don't know any orphans –

C) Understand that James is using them as a picture of the most helpless people – the most needy

So we need to ask – who are the most helpless and needy in our sphere of influence?

A) Definitely the unborn! – PRC – Birth Choice

B) Homeless – who need help – Solutions for Change

C) Young boys – NO DAD!

## POTTERSFIELD

3 areas of our lives that God's Word will affect.

#1 Our Speech V.26

#2 Our Service V.27a

#3 Our Separation V.27b and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

DON'T MISS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF WHAT JAMES IS SAYING HERE!

A) Too many people think that in order to come to Christ they have to clean up their acts first –

B) They need to become better people.

C) James is saying the opposite: You come just as you are.

D) You come sincerely – Heart open and receptive to Jesus – Receptive to His word

E) Continue in it – Watch what happens -

God's word and God's spirit has the power to change you!

A) Power to help you – grow – trials help you build your spiritual muscles

B) Result is Freedom

C) Power to walk in Victory – to Keep yourself unspotted from the world

True faith – Works – it produces something in us

CHANGE!