

Faith in Action – James

James 1:19-27

“Be a doer of God’s Word” – August 30, 2020



Introduction

In the beginning of James 1, we’ve seen how trials (a testing of our faith) however difficult can be a tool in the hands of a loving and sovereign God *for our good*. But in the midst of a trial, with all the pain, confusion, and fog...how can we navigate our way through such that we *flourish* rather than *drift*? James answer: God’s word. It is by God’s word (the gospel word) the Christian life *begins* ([James 1:18](#)). And, it is by God’s word, the Christian life is *sustained* and we *grow*. But it’s not a matter of having a Bible on our night stand. We must respond *rightly* to God’s word when we read or hear it preached. James shows us how a Christ follower responds to God’s word...

Pray

Before you begin, take some time to ask God to help you understand His word, to reveal what needs to change in you, and for the grace to follow Him in response. To help, use [Psalm 119:33-40](#) as a prayer for God to open His word up to you.

Sermon Outline

- I. Hear God’s word with an attentive heart (1:19-20)
- II. Receive God’s word with a teachable heart (1:21)
- III. Obey God’s word with a whole heart (1:22-27)

Read & Discuss

- 1) Read [James 1:19-20](#)

Being ‘quick to listen’ means to listen with an *attentive* heart – much the way we listen when we’re interested in what’s being said or when what’s being said is *important* to us. With the constant noise of our smartphones, televisions, 24-hour news cycle, and social media; with the confusion of competing opinions and trials that affect all of us...it’s easy to ignore God’s word and find ourselves scrolling the latest ideas. It’s a good thing to be informed, but we must guard our hearts with the thorns that threaten to choke out God’s word in our hearts – thorns that make God’s word seem unimportant and the latest news headline *really* important. What are ways we can cultivate an attentive heart when it comes to God’s word? When we consider the reality of heaven/hell – how does God’s word to us about things which have *eternal* significance affect our attentiveness to His word?

Additional Reading: Luke 8:4-15, Proverbs 18:2

2) Read [James 1:21](#)

As James turns to how we are to receive God's word, pause to reflect: negatively we are to put off *filthiness* and *rampant wickedness* (also translated as 'mean-spiritedness')? Why does this matter? How are we tempted to mean-spiritedness during a trial? Positively, James says, we are to receive God's word with *meekness*. What does James mean by *meekness*; in other words, *not being impressed by a sense of one's self-importance*. Do you receive God's word with *meekness*? What makes this a challenge and how does James instruction grow in meekness?

Additional Reading: Matthew 11:28-30

3) Read [James 1:22-27](#)

Here, James reminds us that *hearing* God's word, as important or crucial as it is, is not enough by itself. We must also be *doers* of the word. The *law of liberty* is related to the word of God mentioned in 1:18 and 1:21. In other words, part of the gospel word is God's law. The law shows us the perfection of God's character – what we are to be like as *His* image bearers (truthful, faithful, generous, loving, just, etc.). But the mirror of God's law *also* exposes our sin – the ways we fall short (see [Romans 3:20](#)). Seeing what we look like and what needs to change isn't enough – we must, with God's help, change. Or as James puts it, to be a *doer* of God's word who turns from sin (repentance) and trusts in God (faith). Take a moment to reflect on the three categories James introduces: our speech (bridle your tongue), our love/care for the vulnerable (caring for orphans and widows in their affliction), and our godliness (being unstained by the world). James will go into greater detail in the coming chapters (chapter 2: love/care, chapter 3: speech, chapters 4/5: godliness). As we dive into those topics...do you come with a single-mind, a heart ready to go where God leads and commands in His word?

Additional Reading: Psalm 19

Prayer of Response

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand*, *believe*, *desire*, or *do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come.

If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at <https://fbcum.org/sermons-new/>

*Next week's sermon text: we turn to James 2:1-13 "The sin of partiality" (Sermon Card)
