



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

TRUE FAITH IS BEING “DOERS OF THE WORD”, Part 1 – JAMES 1:22-27

COLORADO

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A faith that is real and genuine receives the Word of God resulting in salvation. But it doesn't stop there, for James goes on to say that the Word of Truth not only brings about salvation, but then we must have teachable and pliable hearts that are totally willing to submit our lives before the principles and precepts of God's Word. We must receive God's Word with purity and holiness, setting aside all sinful actions and desires. Then, with a humble and teachable heart, we must be ready to accept what God has to say with a willingness to put it into practice, obey. For true faith not only receives the Word of God resulting in salvation, but is willing to put the Word into practice.

I. HEARING AND DOING THE WORD -JAMES 1:22

“But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.” James 1:22

James says that a true faith responds to trials with endurance to maturity and does not give in to temptation to sin. True faith receives the Word resulting in salvation and now James proceeds by showing that true faith receives the Word resulting in obedience.

A. HEARING AND DOING THE WORD– JAMES 1:22A

“But prove yourselves doers of the word...” James 1:22a

In all true believers, the work of the Word of God has brought about salvation as James 1:18-21 makes clear but it doesn't stop there. “But” in James 1:22 takes us one step further by showing that the work of the Word will result in obedience. Since the Word of God has power to save your soul, then we do more than just listen to what it says, our listening must lead to action. Not only do we put away all sin, but we must become a “doer of the Word”.

First James says that we are to “prove ourselves”.

“prove” Greek word “*genomai*,” to be or become.

This is an imperative, a command. We must continually become one who is a “doer of the Word.” We are to become “more and more”, day in and day out, constantly striving to be a “doer of the Word.” Is that what consumes our life each day? Is that our focus, our pursuit more and more? We are to not just receive and hear the Word, but also become “doers of the Word.”

What does it mean to be a “doer of the Word”?

“doer” Greek word “*poiete*,” is characterized by the sum of the whole person's personality, all of a person's inner being, mind soul, spirit, and emotions.

This word means so much more than “just do it”. The idea is to convey the difference between one who builds their home verses the one who is a builder. I might say I am building a house, but I am not the one hammering the nails; *my builder is*. James is saying that true believers are the ones carrying out the action, the doing of the Word of God, the hammering of nails if you will. The first one in this example has carried out an action like making a decision to build and putting up the money. But the second one is actually doing the work, pouring their whole life into being a builder of the house and doing the work day by day. James exhorts us day in and out, more and more, as true believers to become people who pour our whole being into a life of obedience. We then carry out the principles and precepts of God's Word each and every day. For the mark of true faith is not just hearing the Word of God, but doing the Word of God. Obedience is the dividing line between any who would call themselves believers and those who truly are.

It is important to note that our obedience is not to win our salvation, for that has already taken place in James 1:18-21. Jesus Christ in His love and grace has already purchase that for us through His death on the cross. Our works can never save us; Christ alone is our hope for salvation. (Ephesians 2:8-9) Instead, we obey because we now belong to God. In gratitude, because of all that Christ has done, the very least we can do is to please Him with our lives in obedience. John 14:23 says, “Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word...”. Conversely, 1 John 2:4 says, “the one who says “I have come to know Him,” and does not keep His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” It is clear that if we possess a true and genuine faith, we will love God and His Word, obeying Him more and more. We will do more than listen to what God's Word has to say. Listening and hearing must lead to living! It's not just a profession of faith but it becomes our practice. We must connect our creed; *which is what we believe* together with our conduct; *living what we believe!* Since the Word has the power to save our soul (James 1:18, 21), we must do more than listen to it, we must be compelled to live it.

B. HEARING AND **NOT** DOING THE WORD– JAMES 1:22B

“But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.” James 1:22

BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS, GOVERNOR & SPOUSES: TUESDAY AT 7:15AM, CAPITOL BASEMENT, ROOM 0109

STAFF, LOBBYISTS, JOURNALISTS & SERGEANTS: TUESDAYS AT NOON, CAPITOL BASEMENT, ROOM 0107

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In contrast, James goes on to say that those who hear the Word only delude themselves. Any response to God’s Word other than obedience is a serious error. It is not enough to sit and hear the Word of God and have little or no reaction to what has been heard. You will identify with the choice of words James uses here.

“**hearer**” Greek word “*akroates*,” means to merely listen, used of people who sit passively in an audience and listens to a singer or speaker and have no reaction to what is heard. Today it could be used of those who audit a college class which they are required to attend and presumably listen to, but for which they are not required to do outside study, write papers or take any tests.²

Maybe you have audited a class before, because it is way cheaper to do so. You go to class and hear the lectures but you don’t have to do any of the assignments. There are many who think they can “*audit*” Christianity, sitting in the pews and hearing God’s Word without any response. And any response other than obedience is deception. Those hearers James says have “*deluded themselves*”.

“**deluded**” Greek word “*paralogizoma*,” incorrect reckoning, deceived, deliberate false reasoning for the purpose of deceiving, in mathematics it means that of miscalculation.

It doesn’t stop with *hearing* the Word of God. That is not an end in itself, but rather it is the means to the end which is maturity in Christ. James is saying that the person who hears the Word but does not respond to it is making a serious mistake, more a grave miscalculation if they think they are a Christian. While that person thinks he is saved, his own pride and arrogance keeps him from totally submitting to God and His Word. He does not respond in joyous obedience, or as James would say, a “*doer of the Word*.”

Again, obedience is the dividing line between any who would call themselves believers and those who truly are. The mark of a true believer is obedience to the Word of God. If we think we can hear and not obey, then we have deceived ourselves, having no one else to blame for our deliberate and false reasoning. It is like dying of hunger with bread in your hands. Don’t be deceived by letting God’s Word go in one ear and out the other. It is not enough to just hear it, you must do it. You are missing out on the beautiful conviction of the life changing, life giving Word of God. Don’t miss out on

the opportunity to grow. Remember, James talks about a faith that is real, a faith that is genuine. True faith is a doer of the Word, not just a hearer.

A faith that is real and genuine receives the Word of God resulting in salvation and is willing to put the Word of God into practice. James invites us to evaluate our lives by asking these questions:

>How do you respond to trials?

>How do you respond to temptations?

>Have you received the Word of God?

>How do you respond to the Word of God?

Deuteronomy 8:3 says, “...*man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord.*” Do you hunger for the Word each and every day? If we were to live by everything that proceeds from the mouth of God, would we starve for lack of knowing His Word?

Has the Word been implanted in your heart and saved your soul? Then obey it! James knows obedience is no simple matter. But we must commit ourselves to God and His Word, daily seeking His face and doing His will by the power of the Holy Spirit which enables us live godly lives that please Him. Everything we are and have must be devoted to hearing and doing, loving and honoring, adoring and serving God. And really loving God means honoring Him by obeying, for James 1:22 stands as a warning to any who would think differently.

¹ Mayor, J.B., *The Epistle of St. James*. Macmillan and Co., London and New York, 1892, pg 64.

² MacArthur Jr., John, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: James*. Moody Press, 1998. pg. 80.