



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Standing on God's Word (James 1:19-25)

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God's Word brings us a sense of peace in life's storms while fortifying us as we confront the evil in this present world.

INTRODUCTION

View your life from the athlete's perspective: always in training and occasionally being put through great tests of skill and endurance. We receive our instruction from the Word of God and are tested on the field of life. The rigor of these tests is intensified for those serving in the spotlight of leadership.

COACHED IN CHARACTER

James 1:19-20 My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.¹

James is addressing those in the faith, coaching the team. We are urged to be active listeners. The instruction is likened to one who reads highway warning signs. There will be applications ahead! Our skill is increased by studying and reflecting on God's Word. The resulting wisdom enables us to interact, crafting responses that address a real need rather than a question posed. A rich young ruler told of his success in relationships with others. Jesus shifted the focus to the need for a vertical relationship with Jehovah God (Mark 10:21). How effective are you at listening for a need rather than reacting to a statement or demand?

James cautions about anger causing us to sin. We may become angry when the truth of God's Word is revealed, exposing sin in our life. We may express anger over the sin of others and damage a relationship that God is incubating. The Apostle Paul gave steps for dealing with anger: "In your anger do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold" (Ephesians 4:26-27). Jesus gave us the prescription for recovering from anger produced sin: We are to ask for forgiveness (Matthew 5:22-26). Consider an application where this would work for a situation that you know of!

WORDS OF WARNING

James 1:21-25 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.²

Here is more emphasis on doing what the Word says to do. Have you given instructions to someone only to observe them proceeding in a different order or direction? The parable of the mirror image brings a profound illustration to the lack of diligence. The term "perfect law" is a synonym for the Holy Scriptures. Our love for God and His Word frees us from being driven by sin. This liberty is somewhat like that enjoyed by a son or daughter who works along with other employees in the family business. Love is a greater incentive than are rules. Jesus described this relationship between Him and His disciples (John 15:14) and with His Father (John 15:10). Have you been struggling, trying to manage your life, other people, or even the events that impact you?

CONCLUSION

Jesus promised His followers: "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

A PRAYER

Lord, help me to take Your instruction, especially on days where it feels like I am a sheep amidst a pack of wolves. Help me to be shrewd like a serpent, yet remain gentle as a dove (Matthew 10:16).

¹ The Holy Bible, New International Version (Biblica, Inc.) 2011

² Ibid