



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Be Hearers and Doers

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Tom McCullough/PO Box 503, Granville, Ohio 43023/tom.mccullough@capitolcom.org /www.capitolcom.org/ohio

The Epistle of James' (AD 45-50) likely author was James, the half-brother of Jesus Christ, the leader of the Jerusalem church, the leader of the Council of Jerusalem and a humble man. While James is addressing the twelve tribes that had scattered to all parts of the world and attempts to be encouraging to the believing Jews who were struggling with trials and tribulations, he confronts the issue of the testing of a faithful Christian's walk and the wise Godly righteous reactions of him when grounded in total faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. What is a believer expected to do? (James 1:19-27 NASB)

This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God. Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. (cf. Jas 1:19-21)

Hunger for the truth, God's Word. James continues to share the way to gain victory over the trials and troubles of this life is by seeking God's wisdom and knowing God through His Word (1Jn 2:21). Believers are to be 'quick', desiring, hungry to hear or know God through His Word. Christians are called to be slow to speak. He is to know the truth and share it accurately. While the Christian is called to share his story or witness of what Christ has done in his life, he is called to be careful and accurate in any teaching, not causing others to stumble due to inaccurate teachings (Mt 18:6).

James shares that the believer's witness will be tarnished by motives driven by anger. Christians are to share their faith with gentleness and respect (1Pe 3:15). Additionally, there is a warning for the believer to avoid and reject the sinful behavior of his past as well as to humbly focus on his new life found in Christ. What behaviors in a believer's life will result after hearing, believing and faithful pondering God's Word?

But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does. (cf. Jas 1:22-25)

God's Word demands action. While it's important for the believer to know God's will, the test for the believer is to not rebel but rather to obey God's will and put his faith into practice (Jn 7:17). "But prove.." the Gk word is *ginomai*; meaning, be born or become. So the believer is to become a doer of the word or be born, a new person, one who now is a doer of God's Word. The Father expects His children to seek His direction and then do His will and not their own will.

James uses the example of looking in a mirror. If we just look briefly in the mirror we will not see (or don't want to see) our imperfections. The Word of God is represented by the mirror and suggests that just having knowledge of God Word's without pondering, identifying and acting upon His direction becomes that brief look into our shortcomings and imperfect nature and an opportunity lost to be in His will. So meditating and acting on God's Word, the perfect law, the law of liberty found solely in the saving grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ provides a freeing of the believer from the bondage of sin and will be blessed in what he does. What about religious behaviors?

If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless. Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world. (cf. Jas 1:26-27)

Religion, public ceremonial worship. While the previous verses speak of private lives and action, James now turns to public expressions of any religious routines and ritual that had no meaning or had lost their sincerity and shares that loss of control and compassion make that person's religion worthless. Christianity is a relationship with a person, Jesus Christ, and not a religion. Believers are to be in the world but not of the world.

For Your Consideration:

- Do you hunger for and ponder God's Word?
- Do you seek God's will for your life?
- Are you consistently a doer of God's Word?

BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS: WEDNESDAYS (SESSION OR HEARING DAYS) AT 7:30AM, STATEHOUSE ROOM 44

STATE STAFF AND LOBBYISTS: WEDNESDAYS AT 12:10PM, STATEHOUSE ROOM 44