

### 1. Introduction

- a. The book of James tries to be the practical application of the Christian faith, answering the question: So What?
- b. James' audience is particularly important to understand considering today's text
  - i. They were the "diaspora" (James 1:1)—Christians living in a foreign culture trying to work out their faith
  - ii. More importantly these were the religious insiders—they were the ones in the church not outside and James is pushing them on how they apply their faith
- c. The topic of this passage seems to be centered on what James calls "the word" (v. 18, v. 21, v. 22, v. 23) and our relationship to it as believers
  - i. Going back to last week. James claims we are born again (v. 18)
  - ii. God has given us new life. This means a new nature, a new direction and we ought to experience this newness and then live it out.
  - iii. It's interesting that James doesn't spend time unpacking the metaphysical greatness of this truth
  - iv. He goes right into practicality discussing the "word" of God as it relates to being a "doers who act" (v. 25).

### 2. Hearing and Doing (v. 22)

- a. "Hearers" is a phrase referring to those who sat at the feet of philosophical or religious teachers and listened to what was taught.
  - i. Nothing was inherently wrong with this.
  - ii. They were studious and devout.
  - iii. Yet simply the accumulation of knowledge from the Bible is not what James is pushing for
- b. "Doers" is an entirely different word
  - i. It meant people enthralled with the "word" so much that it prompted them to action—It means action based on our convictions
  - ii. Not knowledge that puffs up or for us to "get something from it"—it's action to love and serve

### 3. Doing the Doing

- a. How do we become a "doer" in relationship to God's Word, the Bible, Scripture? James implores his readers to "welcome with meekness the implanted word" (v. 21)
  - i. It applies to relationships but it more precisely talks to the lack of humility in the church regarding the word of God.
  - ii. Humbly coming to the word means we have a humble attitude.
  - iii. It takes humility to let scripture begin to shake you.
  - iv. It removes entitlements from our heart.
  - v. We have to get rid of a proud know it all spirit.
- b. And we have to humbly accept the word implanted. What does he mean by this?
  - i. You'll only humbly accept the Word if you start to see its magnificence for your life
  - ii. The word "implanted" is the only use of it in the bible
    1. Something natural and not acquired.
    2. Isn't all information acquired? When we are born again there are essential truths that have been planted in us.
    3. How we react when we get into interaction with the scripture. If we born again and have the natural word planted in us then we have a new appreciation and reception of the scripture. It's not just head knowledge but heart change.
    4. It's not the assimilation of knowledge but the connection to a story.
    5. You begin to experience Scripture 3-dimensionally rather than just words on a page
- c. Because it's a love letter from God. Not a rule book from Him. This will prompt you to start putting into action what you read.
  - i. It's a love letter to you because it won't always agree with your life (you can't have a personal, loving relationship with a God who never disagrees with you)
  - ii. It's a love letter to you because the "word" that is implanted in you tells the greatest love story of all time—that Jesus would take the shadow of God's judgement for you! You get what he deserved because he got what you deserved!
    1. Luke 24:27 The Road to Emmaus. Jesus has to explain to the men that "beginning with Moses and the prophets" all of Scripture was a story pointing to him! (note: Luke's use of "in all the Scriptures")

2. How do you start to develop this relationship with the bible? How do you begin to see it as a love letter and not just a textbook?
3. To see the ultimate love story written in it—Jesus. The lover of your soul, given for you!

#### **4. Conclusion**

- a. Seeing the “word” as something planted in you (organic, natural, growing) and as steeped in love, forgiveness, truth, justice, and mercy (evidenced in Jesus’ sacrifice for you) will begin to make you approached reading the Bible in a whole new light!
- b. You’ll slowly become a “doer” and not just a “hearer.” The “word” will make effectual change in your lives and others will notice
- c. Even if people disagree or don’t believe what you believe, they are grateful for your presence because you’re making a difference by being a “doer” in the world around you (serving, loving, caring, healing, mending, forgiving)