

**RECEIVING THE WORD OF GOD WITH MEEKNESS**

**INTRO:** It would be easy to take God's Word before us as merely ideas re. our conversations with others, our behavior in society. This would be wrong, merely moralizing a text. It would be taking the text and making it say what we want to say re. anger. Rather the text must be taken in its context, which we see in vs.18 and 21ff: The Word of God. We must receive it and obey it. Here: how we receive it.

**I. THE TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD**

- A. The astounding truth of vs. 18.
  - 1. The Spirit teaches us that we are born again with the Word of Truth.
  - 2. God of his own will determined to make us (who by nature are dead in sin) alive in Christ.
  - 3. The purpose in this: that we are the ones in whom the whole creation is consecrated to God's glory.
  - 4. This means that we must receive that Word which alone is able to save us.
- B. That Word is the Word which God spoke.
  - 1. It is the Word by whom and for whom all things were made.
  - 2. It is Christ, the Word that became flesh and dwelt among us.
  - 3. The engrafted Word is the Word God spoke in his Son Jesus Christ.
  - 4. By the miracle of infallible inspiration, that Word of God in Jesus Christ is inscripturated. It is the Bible!
- C. That Word is **"engrafted"**.
  - 1. The idea is that the Word is implanted, rooted in us by the wonder of regeneration.
  - 2. Christ by the Spirit enters our hearts and gives us new, heavenly, resurrected life.
  - 3. Christ nourishes and strengthens that life and brings it to fruition by means of the pure preaching of the Word.
  - 4. The implanted Word sinks its roots ever more deeply into the good ground of the believer's heart (Matt.13).
  - 5. So we not only have new life, but growth in wisdom and holiness, and maturity.
  - 6. Therefore there is the continued need for that Word: preaching, instruction from Elders, Bible study and devotions.

**II. THE COMMAND REGARDING RECEIVING IT**

- A. Set before us is a command.
  - 1. The word **'wherefore'** connects vs. 19-21 to the foregoing. But this verse can also be read, "Knowing this..."
  - 2. We must first know that we are to receive this Word. This is an absolute imperative!
  - 3. James is not saying "I wish that you would receive the Word", leaving it up to us to decide if we want to.
  - 4. There is no choice. This is our calling, we who have been begotten to new life.
- B. The command is **"to receive the Word"**.
  - 1. This is more than simple acceptance of the gospel: "Nice sermon Pastor..."
  - 2. This is more than agreeing with what was said.
  - 3. The idea is that of appropriating the Word preached, taking it and applying it and making it our own.
  - 4. We hear the voice of the Good Shepherd, know him and follow him, embracing the Christ who is preached.
- C. It is a command **how** we are to receive that Word: with meekness!
  - 1. What follows in our text are several imperatives: dealing not with generalities for good living, but receiving the Word.
  - 2. "Let every man..." Those who are children of God, none is too wise, none too high to be taught, none too old.
  - 3. "Be swift to hear, slow to speak." Swift means:
    - a. Do this without reluctance. We may wish ourselves at times to be deaf. Do not make all kinds of excuses.
    - b. Do this with diligence: Do not delay. Do not give the Devil the advantage of a debate. Did God really say?
    - c. Full of eager longing and earnestness to hear Christ's voice.
    - d. Therefore without speaking. It is hard to hear when his voice when speaking, esp. when done in rebellion.
  - 4. "Slow to wrath." Wrath refers to anger against what God is saying to us. It is hatred and rebellion.
    - a. Be slow to that anger: Be inactive to that anger, do not let that wrath be in us. Don't speak out against that Word
    - b. It belongs to our sinful nature when Christ points out our sin and sinful nature we do not want to hear it.
    - c. The flesh is so very strong in us, and our inclination is to speak out against the Word rather than receive it.
    - d. Many ways that we do this.
  - 5. "Lay aside all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness: indifference to the Word is a grave, rotten sin!
    - a. We must get rid of and fight this superabundance of sin. It is a monster in us.
    - b. 'Naughtiness' is a word that means malice: having to do with our relationships together as the body of Christ.
    - c. We cannot receive the Word preached if we are fighting and wounding one another as members of Christ.

**III. THE REASON AND PROMISE ATTACHED.**

- A. The reason for receiving the Word with gladness.
  - 1. The Word is able to save your souls.
  - 2. It is powerful, effective the only means.
  - 3. Christ, crucified and raised again comes in his Word through the preaching and the sacraments, admonitions
  - 4. O the urgency to those born again to continue to embrace that Word with meekness.
- B. The wonderful promise. The Word saves!
  - 1. The Word comforts us in our sorrows.
  - 2. The Word instructs and builds us up, causing us to mature as God's children.
  - 3. The Word admonishes us when we walk in sin, calling us to repent and return from our foolishness.
  - 4. The Word encourages us when downcast, assures us of forgiveness of our sins, and strengthens in faith.
  - 5. The Word preserves us in our wonderful salvation, powerful to save! Receive the Word with meekness!