

**CrossWay Church – July 23, 2023**  
**God's Word; Our Response – Sermon Outline**  
**James 1:19-27**

**Introduction (v. 1-18)**

The author, James (the Just), was also the brother of Jesus Christ. He is writing this letter to Christians with a Jewish background (my beloved brethren) who are dispersed. This is a very practical book written with a pastor's shepherding desire to see holiness among the people. James is most concerned for how a mature Christian should act.

- Verses 2-12 help the Christian to find a lasting joy in the face of trials
- Verses 13-18 are there to show us implications of trials and temptations
  - God does not tempt us (we are tempted by our own evil desires), but God will test us.
  - Our hope is in the Word of Truth (Gospel; Christ) (verse 18).

Verses 19-27, then, are written IN LIGHT OF verse 18; in light of the Word of Truth.

**1. The Readiness of Hearing (v. 19-20)**

Three exhortations are given in these first two verses. Mature Christians are to be:

- a. Quick to Hear.
- b. Slow to Speak.
- c. Slow to Anger.

Notice that earlier in the chapter James has been "speech" focused (verses 5, 6, 9, 13). He is concerned with what comes from the mouth. Therefore, a Christian should be wise - notice the references to Proverbs (10:19; 13:3; 17:27-28) - about what he says.

Anger, proceeding from hasty speech does not demonstrate a righteous life.

**2. The Reality of Meekness (v. 21)**

In light of verses 19-20 we are then to put away evil and filth (Rom 8:12-13; 12:2) and to receive the Word of Truth (verse 18; Christ) with meekness.

- Meekness is NOT weakness; Christ was meek (Mt 11:29).
- Meekness centers on God's holiness (Jn 12:28).
- Meekness puts God first, and oneself last (Lk 22:42).
- Meekness does not defend itself, yet will always defend God and the message of the Gospel because it seeks God's glory (Jn 6:38).
- Meekness is power under control (Mt 26:52-54).

Verse 21, "which is able to save you souls" (Word of Truth; Gospel; Christ), is an allusion to the fullness of salvation (past, present, and future).

**3. The Response of Doing (v. 22-25)**

Now, in verses 22-27, and really for the remainder of the entire epistle, James is going to argue that to receive the Word, to accept the Word, is really to "do" it (Lk 8:21).

Note verse 22: We deceive ourselves (deception of our faith) if we do not "do". Remember(!) - James is NOT talking about HOW one is saved, but what the TRUE mature Christian life will look like outwardly. This cannot be stressed enough. The mature Christian is NOT a "hearer only", but will also be "doer of the Word".

Parable-like analogy in verses 23-24 is an illustration...this is good (and humorous)!

Perfect Law of Liberty (verse 25). James switches terms here ("Word of Truth" to "Law of Liberty") to make a further "point of contact" with his audience (of Jewish heritage). The term "law" would have immediately brought the Mosaic Law to the mind of James' audience. (Perfect) Law of Liberty, however, points to the law as interpreted through Christ. That is, IN LIGHT OF the Word of Truth (verse 18).

**4. True Religion's Right Reaction (v. 26-27)**

In this closing section, James offers three ways that help summarize what he has already said and what he will continue to say and exhort in the rest of the epistle.

- a. Bridling the Tongue (verse 26).
- b. Bringing Help to Those in Need (verse 27).
- c. Being Wary of the World (verse 27).

This is not a legalistic list of "do's" and "don'ts". Rather, because of what Christ has done for us, we should be ready to work for Him. *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not as a result of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."* (Ephesians 2:8-10)

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