

Tonight, we continue our walk through the book of James...

So far, we've seen – a lot of practicality in James and tonight we are going to see a lot more...

Last week we saw how God *allows* trials and temptations to come into the believer's life... even though they hurt, they drive us closer to the Lord and completion in Christ... through our trials we are being molded!

Tonight, we continue working through James and we are going to answer this one big question... what does a *true believer... follower of Christ...* look like?

**Read: James 1:19-27**

**Main Focus (idea) – *The true follower of Christ is a doer of the Word.***

\* James begins speaking to his *brothers and sisters in Christ...* he sets up this entire section saying LISTEN... this is something you need to know!! He is fixing to go into what an authentic Christian looks like! As this section begins, we've got to remember (18) from last week... that he brought us forth by the word... that we should be first fruits... results of the Word...

The three things James connects tonight are: *God's Word, action and the follower of Christ*

### **1. A true follower fights sin and gives oneself to the Word (19-21)**

**\*A true follower fights sin...**

James begins by saying that we are to *be somethings and put away somethings...* (19) *be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger* and (21) *put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness*

James is calling Christians to things that are helpful their time in the Word and in general! To be...

*quick to hear...* listening intently... so we can gain wisdom

*slow to speak...* listening before we speak... so we can speak wisely

*slow to anger...* controlling our reactions... so we can react wisely

These are all applicable to us as we desire to give ourselves to the Word... doing these things drives our hearts to humility, submission to God rather than what we think or want!

\*This also is for Christians to do with others!

But specifically, James' call sets up for what he is going to say in v21...

**\*A true follower *Receives the Word*... (21b)**

Instead of rushing to anger... to conclusions... to words first... James encourages instead to *receive with meekness the implanted word...*

The implanted word is the gospel... that which gives life and is able to save our souls... or is saving your souls... the gospel drives us to *reliance on God... to trust in the Scriptures and to a life of putting sin off!*

Now he is speaking to Christians who already know the truths of the Scriptures... what he's saying is that we have to submit to it... putting off the old man and on the new man... this is not a one-time deal but a *daily* thing... the believer has to humbly walk in the Word!

It's hard to give ourselves to the Scriptures if we do opposite of what God has called us to... *slow to hear, quick to speak, and quick to anger...*

Thing is, if we ignore James' call, we cut ourselves off from the Word... we need clear, open hearts to continually learn from the Word...!

James mentions putting sin off because it clouds our vision and makes it difficult to grow in the Word...

Now, James isn't saying that we have to be clean to approach the Lord... yes, it is *come as you are* but as a Christian, sin can hinder our time in the Word – so... **fight sin and give yourself to the Word!**

For Christians this is also a call to wise speech...

We spoil our own hearts and make it difficult to receive the Word if our hearts are not in the right place... but also, if we are not wise in our speech... we kill our opportunity to share with others.... *Where is your heart???*

## 2. A true follower acts on the Word (22-25)

One of the most important truths we can learn as a Christian is that we are not only to be hearers of the Word but we are to be *doers of the Word*... we are to be *actionable*... our faith ought to be working... we'll see all through James... that the faith that works in us drives us to do! We are to be obedient!

James calls us to not only take the Word *in* but let it come *out* as well!

### **The illustration...**

James gives us illustration to explain what he means...

He is painting a comparison between the one who reads seeks the Scriptures but then forgets what he has read... or doesn't apply it to his life... and the one that follows through with the Word in his life... (23-25)

He says that it is like a man who looks at the mirror... studies himself and as he turns around forget what he looked like...

Meaning... as we look into the mirror of Scriptures, we are to make the changes it calls us to... we are to be changed by the Scriptures... instead of the silliness of reading the scriptures and then forgetting them...

James calls the Scriptures, *the perfect law, the law of liberty*... he is speaking about the whole of the Word... all that is the Scriptures!

\*for those of you that went on Refuel trips... this is kind of *Text and Framework*... many times we read, and we default to what we think... and are unchanged... But if we are aiming to *Stay on the Line*... we have to make the changes we see...

### **The Call: look and live!**

James pushes the *true follower of Christ* to look into the Scriptures and live them out!! – **look and live!**

Even tonight... it's easy to act on these calls... *be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger... put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness, receive the Word... These are all commands!*

We look at the mirror of Scripture and judge and measure ourselves against them... are we doing what the Scriptures are calling us to???

*Are you a hearer only or are you a doer?*

James says that the one who is a *doer will be blessed*... being a doer is obedience to God...

Now this doesn't mean that they will get everything they want... but rather they can find great peace in the fact that they are being obedient to the Father... they can know that they truly are following Christ and it pleases the Father...

## 3. 3 examples of hearing and doing (26-27)

James continues in this section with examples of what hearing and doing look like...

You can see the flow in the passage...

*Receive with meekness the Word... do the Word... now here is an example of following the Word...!*

Here he shows us what it really looks like to be a doer of the Word, not just a hearer...

### **Doers show self-control!**

James is saying if one thinks they are religious... a true Christian... they should have self-control... specifically over their words!

Our words are a direct representation of our heart... with every word we speak we show our true heart!

We also show our knowledge and care for the Word...

The way we speak is important and it proves who we are... we are to use our words for love... we are to have self-control... we are to prove that Christ truly lives in us... we are to be doers of the Word!

He just told us to be wise in our speech!

This is something that is difficult to do... but if we are truly people of the Word we have to follow even when its difficult... *school... home... when we're wrong... a doer is obedient at all time!*

### ***Doers care for others!***

Many times we hear the word religion is bad... well the word isn't actually bad... the Bible uses it... saying (27) that religion can be pure and undefiled before God... meaning there is a good and right way to be religious and James tell us its in two ways – the first is caring for others...

Specifically, James says the genuine Christian should *visit orphans and widows in their affliction...* *Orphans* are those who have no home and *widows* are those who have lost their husbands... these are some of the most vulnerable people... they have no one to care for them and many time are forgotten!

Here and many other places in the Scriptures we find that God cares greatly for those who are afflicted, those who suffer!

James is saying we should too... true religion... true Christianity finds its home in a life that *loves...* a life that cares for those who cannot care for themselves... Scripture drives us to this, and a *doer does as it says*

### ***Doers pursue holiness!***

Lastly... James says that the true Christian keeps oneself unstained from the world...

This is the pursuit of holiness... it is using the Word as a mirror... it is us striving to be like Jesus... to look like him...

This world is full of filthiness that we can be corrupt by... the call from James is to flee those things and to pursue righteousness... we saw it at the beginning of the passage... we put off because it doesn't result in the righteousness of God and here we see that the doer does it! He keeps himself unstained from the world! He fights sin... he pursues holiness... he follows the Word!

All in all, James is saying the genuine Christian is one that lives by the Word... seek it and are molded by it...

***All of this is an example of Jesus... Jesus fought sin... he knew the word... and he did the word...***

### **Application:**

***Trust in Jesus***... before you can be a doer of the word... you have to trust in the Word... Jesus... as we talk about a genuine Christian... maybe you realize that you're not really walking the walk you should be or even that you aren't trusting in Christ... tonight, the call is to trust in Christ... before we can be a doer we have to be a truster...

***Be a doer of the Word***... the second thing James is calling us to is to put the Scripture into action... this is big... we cannot sit here tonight and forget everything... we are to be changed by the Scriptures and live it out! Be like Jesus... in a sense one application is to just be like Jesus... fight sin... know the Word and do it... all out of obedience to the Father!