

James 1:19-27 19 Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. 20 Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires. 21 So get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the word God has planted in your hearts, for it has the power to save your souls.

22 But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. 23 For if you listen to the word and don't obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. 24 You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. 25 But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.

26 If you claim to be religious but don't control your tongue, you are fooling yourself, and your religion is worthless. 27 Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you.

This section of scripture points out a problem that in many ways cripples the effectiveness of the local church. The problem is a divide between confession and deed, theology and action... hearing and doing.

1:19-20

- We often need reminding of what we already should know.
- We must be quick to listen... receive the words spoken to us.
- Matt. 13:14 "You keeping on hearing but will not understand"
- Keeping your mouth shut makes room for thinking, meditating and considering. All of these are key to help us listen and learn.
- We must be slow to become angry. Why is this a problem? When God's word hits a little close to home we respond with defensiveness, aggravation and even anger. 1:20
Human anger does not produce the righteousness^[b] God desires
- It is with humility that we are able to receive God's Word. The idea is embracing God's Word, making it a part of who we are.

1:22-25

- Now that we have received His Word, there is a problem if it does not bear fruit.
- James tells us that it is not enough to listen and do nothing. He says we are to prove ourselves doers of the Word and not just merely hearers. “Real faith produces genuine works”. These good works He has prepared in advance for us to do.
- We are not to audit the school of following Jesus.
- James says there are two types of Church folk: Forgetful Hearers & Effectual Doers

1:26-27

- James gives us practical and positive examples of living out faith. Those who live out their faith in Jesus, give attention to the needs of the least of these.
- We are given a challenging but helpful contrast of that which is worthless and genuine.