

SCRIPTURE READING

*“What good is it, my brothers, if someone **says he has faith** but does not have works? Can that faith save him?” (James 2:14)*

FIVE SMOOTH STONES

“Hearing and Obeying: Common Sense Faith”

(James 1:13-26)

*“What good is it, my brothers, if someone **says he has faith** but does not have works? Can that faith save him?” (James 2:14)*

“If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and filled,’ without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? 17 So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.”

“You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!” (James 2:19)

Let’s notice how we get there ...

❖ **The Nature of God and His Involvement in the Struggles of Man** (vs. 13)

“Let no one say when he is tempted, ‘I am being tempted by God,’ for God cannot be tempted with evil, and He Himself tempts no one.”

- God is Not a Tempter
- Satan is a Provoker

❖ The Nature of Man and His Involvement in the Sins of the Flesh (vs. 14-16)

- Deadly Desires

"But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. 15 Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death. 16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers."

- Developing Desire

"Fret not yourself because of evildoers; be not envious of wrongdoers! 2 For they will soon fade like the grass and wither like the green herb. 3 Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness. 4 Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. 5 Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act. 6 He will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday. 7 Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way, over the man who carries out evil devices!" (Psalms 37:1-7)

- Focus Not on the Unrighteous (verse 1)
- Trust in the Lord and Do Good (verse 3)
- Dwell in Righteous Places (verse 3)
- Befriend Faithfulness (verse 3)
- Delight in the Lord (verse 4)
- Commit Your Ways (verse 5)
- Be Still and Wait Patiently (verse 7)

❖ The Gifts of God and His Purpose in the Victory of His Chosen (vs. 17-19)

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. 18 Of his own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures. 19 Know this, my beloved brothers:”

❖ The Expectation of Man and His Faith in the Word of God (vs. 19-27)

“Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; 20 for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. 21 Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. 22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. 24 For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. 25 But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing. 26 If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. 27 Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.”

- Hear the Word (v. 19)

“Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.”

- Be Quick to Listen

- Limit Exposure to the Media
 - Spend Time Reading God's Word
 - Ask God to Help Your Focus
 - Develop a Love for Preaching and Teaching the Word
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- Slow to Speak
 - Slow to become Angry
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- Accept the Word (v. 21)

"Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls."

- Immorality

The other barrier to accepting the Word is:

- Pride

- Do the Word (v. 22)

- Hearer (verses 22-24)

"But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like."

▸ Doer (verse 25)

"But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing."

James says that the doer of the word does two things:

- First of all he continues to look into the Mirror
- Secondly He makes the Necessary Changes