

Sermon Notes: Being a Doer

James 1:22-27

Text: James 1:22–27 (NKJV) — *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 observing his natural face in a mirror; 24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. 25 But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. 26 If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless. 27 Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.*

Review: *See back*

Take Away:

- I. The Sin of Hypocrisy** (*References: Romans 8:7-8, 5-6; Mark 7:20-23; Matthew 22:21; Hebrews 6:4-8; 1 John 2:19; 2 Timothy 4:10*)
- II. The Light of the Law of Liberty** (*References: Ezekiel 36:24-27; James 1:4, 17; Colossians 1:26-28*)
- III. True Religion** (*References: Luke 6:45; Philippians 2:14; Ephesians 4:29; Matthew 12:36-37; Acts 6:1-4; John 13:34-35; Psalm 68:5-6; Galatians 4:4-7*)

Review of James 1:19-21:

1. Last time, James exhorted us to let patience have its perfecting work. Patience isn't passive, but active in the Christian. It is connected to the strength of meekness. For it is the double minded man who, when he faces trials, flies off the handle in anger. King Saul is a particularly clear picture of this kind of person. He refuses to humble himself and trust the Lord. He panics over worldly trials rather than looking to the One who holds all things in His hands. Most importantly, it becomes evident that Saul does not believe that he will receive anything good from the Lord. Throughout the story of his life we see that the treasure of his heart is not God Himself, but the idol of his own power. Since David threatens that power, Saul spends a good portion of his life fuming in unrighteous wrath. James exhorts us to put such sinful wrath to death in our lives.
2. But James doesn't leave us hanging. He is a good pastor and shows the proper footing to make sure we don't fall. Namely, in order to not fall into unrighteous wrath when trials come, we should be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath. Our first temptation when hardship comes is to speak when we should really hear. It requires the strength of meekness to keep our mouths closed. Such discipline should calm our spirit such that we choose our words carefully. We should think not just of ourselves, but more importantly the people around us. If we discipline our ears and our mouths, then we will be slow to wrath. We will not fall into the sinful ditch on the side of the road.
3. Lastly, we saw how meekness is the key spiritual virtue that needs to be at work in the Christian. Meekness is not a synonym for being a pushover, but rather a word that describes load bearing faith. Most recently in the minds of James' church would be the example of Stephen, who under great pressure refused to recant his confession in Christ. The greatest example of course is that of Christ Himself who faced the hardest trial the world has ever seen but showed the greatest strength the world has ever seen in His meekness. When the heat was turned up, Christ did not break.

Questions for the Table:

1. How is the character of Edmund in *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe* like James' hearer but not a doer? (*Optional—read chapter 5 and discuss*)
2. Why does Jesus tie love and obedience together in John 14:15? How did Jesus display obedience?
3. Discuss how Paul in Romans 8:12-17 mirrors many of the same themes we have seen from James in the first chapter of his epistle.
4. Why do hard things reveal a person's true character? Share a story of how this was true in your life and what you learned from it.
5. Children—how is practicing to *obey right away, all the way, cheerfully everyday* to your parents preparing you for your life as an adult?