

Title: Don't just read it, do it! **Text:** James 1:22-27

Intro: *Right after we moved into our new house in upstate New York, I noticed these indentations all over the yard. Initially, I thought some rodent was burrowing into the lawn.*

The next day I walked in the back yard to inspect the holes, but they weren't holes... these were tracks.

Every morning I would see new tracks, fresh tracks. I knew some big critters were hiding nearby, but I had never seen them. They had to be nocturnal.

And then one night I met them. A family of deer were migrating back and forth across my yard.

But understand, I saw the deer tracks, long before I saw the deer.

Before I saw the tracks in my yard, I would have never believed a family of deer used my yard as a crosswalk.

But the tracks were definite proof!

Deer leave tracks. I could tell you a unicorn lives in my backyard... Or Bigfoot wanders around my back yard... Or a herd of wild buffalo cross our back yard from time to time...

But with no tracks would you believe me?

Real animals leave tracks. Imaginary animals don't.

And the same is true with faith! Real faith – legit faith - solid gold faith – genuine saving faith – leaves behind tracks.

It doesn't just exist in a person's imagination.

It's not just a product of ***self-deception***, or ***wishful thinking... you can see its tracks!***

This is the theme of the book of James... faith leaves evidence! In fact, faith leaves behind multiple evidences...

- Faith shows up in how we ***handle trials***, and ***money***, and ***temptation***.

- Faith effects how you ***talk and what you say.***
- Faith effects how you treat people less fortunate than you. ***Orphans and widows***
- Faith loves the Bible, it ***hears the Word of God***, it ***receives the Word*** and most importantly it ***seeks to do the Word***, it ***practices the Word***, ***preforms the Word.***
- ***Real faith shows up in real life!***

And if your faith doesn't leave tracks... there is an obvious explanation that you need to seriously consider... perhaps your faith is a unicorn faith.

It's a nice sentiment - it's wishful thinking – it's ***a series of assumptions*** you've held on to in hopes that they're true... ***but the faith you claim to have just doesn't exist!***

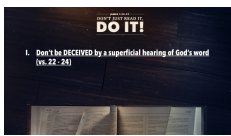
It's a figment of your imagination. It's pretend faith.

The book of James was written to expose a unicorn faith. If your faith is real, you'll see tracks all over your life!

The Word of God is at the core of our faith. 3. do (v. 22; this is the theme of James)

I want you to be encouraged to read and study and apply your bibles...I desire to see you blessed in life! In everything you do!

What we do with the word of God is the greatest proof of your genuine faith



1. ***Don't be DECEIVED by a superficial hearing of God's word:*** v.22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, ***deceiving yourselves.***

What is James saying? If you are just a hearer “only” of God’s word, ***no matter how regular often, you are only*** ***deceiving yourselves***

The word translated "deceiving" carries the idea of false reasoning. It is an accounting term.

ILL>. You balance your check book at the end of the month. You think you have 1100.00 above your bills. So you go out and purchase some things that you need. You write 4 checks, 88.00 120.00 250.00 and 54.00 you bring your purchases home and are happy...a few days latter you start getting letters from your bank that your

checking account is over drawn. You say what!...get upset and redo...you find an error...you only have 110.00 not 1100....you deceiving yourselves

That's the deception in James 1:22 is the idea that only hearing God's word is *accumulate blessings from God. That I am going to grow spiritually.*

James warns this person is deceiving themselves. **They will not be benefited!**

Illustrations of self-deception

ILL>. Just *reading a menu* doesn't give you nutritional value.

ILL>. Just *reading a prescription* in a bottle doesn't heal you.

ILL>. Just *hearing or even reading the bible alone* will not help you grow spiritually, unless you act on it. *will not bless you.*

How easy it is to deceive ourselves in this issue!

ILL>. *So easy to hear this and respond with yes,* I know people like that...they hear but don't do...yes I know people like that...

(that's OK for godly people – sharing Gods word with others, but they live it too!)

Matthew 26:22 And they were exceedingly sorrowful, and each of them began to say to Him, "Lord, is it I?"

God wants us to ask "Lord, is it I?"

ILL>. We can be like the *priest and Levite in the Parable of the Good Samaritan*

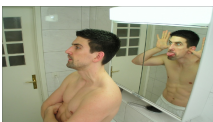
The priest and Levite (Religious Bible Teachers) who probably justified their disregard of the injured man, "hearers only" *were rationalizing their failure to obey what they heard.* Luke 10:30

ILL>. **Judas Iscariot** heard all of Jesus sermons ---*Jesus said he was a devil!*

People whose mind is 1000 miles away it will not profit them “like the bird of the air. Mk4

Next: James uses a metaphor of a person looking at a mirror to describe the person who only hears the word and does not apply what they see.

²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, (performer of the word) he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; (Mirror =metaphor for the bible) ²⁴ for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.



Mirrors show us what we really look like. “the way he really looks,” You check your hair, mustache makeup...see if its right.

The word of God will serve as a mirror to show you the truth about yourself.

But only works if you apply it to your life.

A person who only listens to sermons and doesn't apply them is like a person who looks in a mirror see a smudge of dirt, or a bugger in their nose and walks away never cleaning his face, or blowing their nose, of fixing their smudged mascara.

The bible shows us what we are and if we are looking right!

What we are supposed to look like as Gods people...

So what is the solution? Look deeply into Gods word:



II. Look DEEPLY into God's word: v.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.

vs. 25 contrasts the man in the mirror, the hearer only)

v.25 But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty (Another metaphor for the bible, like...
18 “word of truth” 21 “implanted word” 23 “a mirror” 25 “the perfect law of liberty”

John 8:31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

That is “the perfect law of liberty” that sets us free!

v.25 But he who looks into “looks intently into” (The word is *parakypsas*) means “to stoop down,” “or peer in,” in order to have a close look.

ILL>. The word looks into Is the same word that was used to denote the way Peter, John, and Mary stooped down to look into the empty tomb on Resurrection morning in John 20.

John 20:5 And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there; yet he did not go in.

To look into something means to Means to look beyond and beneath the surface... not just a glance, and then and forget what you saw. **not like the man in the mirror,** but when you look into something you go further, you inspect it, 3 dimension

You get right inside you look at, three dimension.

ILL>, *Your car is acting up...I'll look at it for you, I hope you do...he stands 5 feet away and looks at your car... **no** you want him to open the hood and put it on a ramp and look into it Mechanic looking at you car!*

ILL>, *A doctor – You tell the doctor you have chest pain...He says OK, I'll look into it and sends you home!*

You want him to look closely look inside my body, not just a superficial look

*We live in an impatient world, with all **the Facebook and tweet world**, quick to speak and slow to listen...we live in a society that's in a hurry!*

The Big Point- *do we look into the Word of God? Do we really allow the word of God into our heart spiritual blood stream?*

Quote: *Judas read the menu of the bread of life **but** never ate of the bread of life?*

25b. continues in it, (**Remains in it-to remain beside**) and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

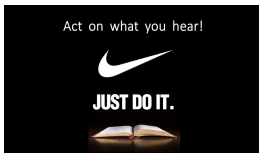
continues *remains in the presence of the perfect, freeing law*, thereby not forgetting what they hear, but rather acting on it.

James tells us this one (**The one who remains**) will be blessed in what he does.

ILL>, Like 3-d glasses, a magic eye picture –

ILL>, continues in it be patient in training your eyes, it takes hidden delights we need to get inside the bible but more importantly the bible needs to get inside of us.

Psalm 119:18 Open my eyes, that I may see Wondrous things from Your law. **The word Wondrous** (Extra ordinary – The super natural) Psa. 1:1



Conclusion: *stories of 2 rich men...rich young ruler and Zaccheaus*

#1. Rich young ruler: Mark 10:17-27

- a. Rich young ruler had a desire to see Jesus
- b. Rich young ruler did something to see Jesus

C. Rich young went away sad-he refused to do what Jesus said.

#2. **Zacchaeus:** Luke 19:1-10

a. Zacchaeus had a desire to see Jesus

b. Zacchaeus did something to see Jesus...climbed up the sycamore tree

c. Zacchaeus obeyed Jesus...that makes the difference between being saved and being deceived.

Real faith leaves tracks

Alter call:

Matthew 7:24 "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, **and does them**, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: ²⁵ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. ²⁶ But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: ²⁷ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

Jesus contrast between hearing only and doing... Jesus is saying many people are deceived in their relationship with the Lord...they say "Lord Lord" they were deceived...just hearing, even consenting the word of God, doesn't save us.

James saying receive and do... ^{25a.} whoever hears these sayings of Mine, **and does them**,

^{25b.} and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock **The house stands it is built on the word of God, Jesus is the cornerstone**

The most important question in life...what should I do with the Words of the bible?

Matthew 7:13 "Enter by the narrow gate; **(Jesus)** for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. ¹⁴ Because narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it. **(Doers of the Word)** ¹⁵ "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves."