

Passage: James 1:19-27

Title: The Test of Response to the Word

Summary: Seems like we are moving into a new thought, but it really flows and applies to trials and temptations, our response to the Word, will determine our response to every trial and temptation. The test of the response to the Word, will determine how much, or how little we become like Jesus Christ. In this study we will look at three points that will help us see how we are “doing” regarding the Word of God, for verse 22 says for us to “be doers” of the word and not hearers only, deceiving ourselves:

- The Word as a Garden – 1:19-21
- The Word as a Mirror – 1:22-25
- The Word Reflected – 1:26-27

James 1:19–27 (NKJV) ¹⁹ So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; ²⁰ for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. ²¹ Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of 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 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.

Written by James / Didn't believe – to Leader / Hindsight / Everyday Living

The Book of James was written by none other than Jesus' brother James. James was a leader in the church, a pillar in the church (Acts 21). James didn't believe that Jesus was God when He walked this earth (John 7:5); but after the resurrection Jesus appears to him (1 Cor 15:4-7), and everything changed. James is going to write us this letter, he will talk about everyday practical stuff. He will talk about trials in life, our works, our tongue, prayer, and other things; as he writes these things, no doubt he will be remembering how Jesus handled them, reflecting back on watching situations, and watching his oldest brother. He will reflect on Jesus' life of love, and a life of sinlessness, in a world that can be so hateful at times, and so full of sin. James will write these things based on hindsight, based on first hand witnessing of how his older brother lived life, everyday. James watched Jesus handle everyday life, and that is what this book is about; it is about living everyday life as a Follower of God, in a fallen world.

Jesus Rubbed Off / Nature Illustrations / Favorite Teacher - Sermon on Mount

We can see how much Jesus rubbed off on James, for James style resembles his brother so much. Like Jesus used nature as illustrations for His teaching points, so does James some 30 times. He uses nature analogies such as the sea, flowers, sun, fire, horses and ships to name a few). It is obvious who James favorite teacher was, because this epistle covers every topic that Jesus covered in the Sermon on the Mount. There is amazing parallelisms between the two; James does not actually quote the Lord's words, but he obviously had internalized Jesus' teachings and reproduced them with spiritual depth. Jesus covered about 30 topics in the Sermon on the Mount, and we will see that James touches on every one of them in this epistle. The Book of James is Sermon on the Mount 2. The Book is also very quick and concise, moving from thought-to-thought quickly. So the Book of James is the New Testament Version of the Old Testament Proverbs. It resembles Proverbs because it is very poetic the way it flows its thoughts using illustrations and analogies.

So We can Examine Self / How am I Doing

Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount so that we might examine ourselves and ask the question, “so how am I doing in each of these areas?” James writes to the church, to us, and as we read, we have to ask ourselves, “so how am I doing in these areas?” This book is practical and

applicable for us living in the year 2022, and the ultimate goal of this epistle is giving to us in verse 4 of chapter 1, to bring us into maturity, perfect and lacking nothing.

As in school, we take tests to see how much of a handle and mastery we have on a subject, we will do the same in this book.

3 Key Verses

Here are three key verses to get us going:

James 2:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ *But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?*

James 1:22 (NKJV) ²² *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

James 1:4–5 (NKJV) ⁴ *But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.* ⁵ *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*

The Outline of the Book of James:

Chapter 1

- Introduction (1:1)
- The Test of Perseverance and Suffering (1:2-12)
- The Test of Blame in Temptation (1:12-18)
- The Test of Response to the Word (1:19-27)

Chapter 2

- The Test of Partiality (2:1-9)
- The Test of the Law (2:10-13)
- The Test of Faith and Works (2:14-26)

Chapter 3

- The Test of the Tongue (3:1-12)
- The Test of Wisdom Applied (3:13-18)

Chapter 4

- The Test of the World's Influence (4:1-12)
- The Test of Dependence (4:13-17)

Chapter 5

- The Test of Endurance (5:1-11)
- The Test of Prayerfulness (5:12-20)

Flow From Trials / Response Determines How Much Like Christ / Man of the Word

Seems like we are moving into a new thought, but it really flows and applies to trials and temptations, our response to the Word, will determine our response to every trial and temptation. The test of the response to the Word, will determine how much, or how little we become like Jesus Christ. At work year and years ago, one of my bosses always jokes and called me a man of the cloth. I always correct him (with a smile) and say I am not a man of the cloth, I am a man of the Word, big difference. The Word is what makes me a man of God, for it is what conforms me into the image of Jesus Christ.

Self-Deception / Written For Growth

The emphasis in this section is on the dangers of self-deception, deceiving our own selves:

(James 1:22 NKJV) *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

This passage will have strong words for us, in some cases stinging words, but remember the whole purpose of James writing to us is so that we may grow and mature in our Christian walk. As for myself, I can never go back to this message enough, for I need to be reminded of this daily.

Deceived Salvation

James will say don't deceive yourself, examine the Word, and let the Word examine you. Many people can deceive themselves into thinking they are saved when they really are not.

Matthew 7:22–27 (NKJV) ²² *Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?'* ²³ *And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who*

practice lawlessness!’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.”

Deceived Believers / Spiritual Reality – Right Relationship w/the Word

But there are true believers that are fooling themselves concerning their Christian walk. They think they are spiritual when they are not. God spoke against these types of people in Revelation 3:17, the church of the Laodiceans. We all can be this type of person, and must guard against it:

Revelation 3:14–22 (NKJV)¹⁴ “And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God:¹⁵ “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot.¹⁶ So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.¹⁷ Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—¹⁸ I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, *that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed*; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.¹⁹ As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.²¹ To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.²² “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’ ”

This church (of Laodicea), which can be any of us on any given day or season in our walk can say the same, I’m doing fine, my walk is great, I’m in need of nothing, but the Lord says you are deceiving yourself. It is a mark of maturity when a person faces himself honestly, knows himself, and admits his needs. Spiritual reality results from the proper relationship to God through His Word. God’s Word is truth (John 17:17), and if we are rightly related to God’s truth, we cannot deceive ourselves, nor be hypocritical. **John 17:17 (NKJV)**¹⁷ *Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.*

Outline

The Test of Response to the Word (1:19-27)

- The Word as a Garden – 1:19-21
- The Word as a Mirror – 1:22-25
- The Word Reflected – 1:26-27

Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)¹² *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)¹⁶ *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need*

Verse 18

(James 1:18 NKJV) **Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.**

Like Seed

Verse 18, "Of his own will, he brought us forth." That word there is a conception, a birthing; something is being birthed. And the means of the birthing is by the word of truth. God's word speaks to us, is scattered to us as a seed to bring forth, as we read the next part, a kind of first fruits of his creatures, his creation. Takes us back to Genesis as we read that every seed produced its kind, the seed of its kind, and there's a place that like seed produces like fruit. The apple seed will never produce a fig tree. It can only produce an apple tree. And an orange seed, an orange tree. Like seed always produces like fruit. And so we have us, and the word and the seed that God speaks to us is meant to produce the likeness of him. We are not the fruit, we are not the Christ, but we are the Christlike as we are the offspring of what is produced in likeness of him before all of creation.

Genesis 1:11–12 (NKJV) ¹¹ Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth"; and it was so. ¹² And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

So, how we respond to trials and temptations reveal the seed that is being planted, the seed that is germinating from what has been planted. And therefore, as we read and study today, we'll see the calling and we'll see the testing. What seed is being planted, the seed of the fruit and the spirit or the seed of the fruit of the flesh.

Ole Camel Knees

And what I love about what we're reading is, I know it was steeped in prayer, as James was known as Ole-Camel Knees, because it was said of him that his knees were calloused because he spent so much time on his knees praying. Therefore, I know that this word we read is highly anointed. Yes, inspired, but highly anointed by prayer.

The Word as a Garden – 1:19-21

(James 1:19 NKJV) So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;

(James 1:20 NKJV) for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

(James 1:21 NKJV) Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:

Matthew 5:21–22 (NKJV) ²¹ "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' ²² But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire.

Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:

Matthew 6:14–15 (NKJV) ¹⁴ "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Garden / Weeds Overrun when Left to Self / Start Pulling Weeds

Verse 21 the implanted word - James saw the human heart as a garden, and if it were left to itself weeds would overrun it. So he says here to prepare the soil to receive the "implanted" word. He is urging us to "lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness", in other words, start pulling weeds, prepare the soil so the seed of the Word can grow and not be choked out (Remember Jesus' teaching on the soil and the seed in Mark chapter 4).

Meekness / Don't Argue the Word / Just Cultivates Weeds

Verse 21 - and receive with meekness the implanted word - What does it mean to receive the Word with meekness, it means not to argue with the Word. The word was used in reference to the bringing and taming of a wild horse. Too many believers will read the word, hear a sermon from the word, and then say I really don't believe that. Meekness is the opposite of wrath. If we do not receive the implanted Word, then we are deceiving ourselves. Christians who like to argue various "points of view" may be only fooling themselves. They think their discussions are promoting spiritual growth, when in reality they may

only be cultivating weeds. We recognize that these are weeds and they have to go, they must be rooted out.

Obey these Instructions

If the seed of the Word is to be planted in our hearts, then we must obey the instructions James gives us here to 1.) Swift to hear 2.) Slow to Speak 3.) Slow to Wrath. Anything contrary to these three, then we need to pull some weeds:

Swift to Hear / Rarely Regret

Swift to Hear - You know, I rarely regret the things, "I didn't say". But how many times I regret the things I did say. I find that I am rarely drawn into an argument for listening, but once my tongue engages, in I go. [\(Proverbs 23:19 NKJV\)](#) Hear, my son, and be wise; And guide your heart in the way.

Slow to Speak / 2 Ears – 1 Mouth

Slow to Speak - Two ears, and one mouth, by design. Read Proverbs, and you will see all the wisdom given on this matter. [\(Proverbs 17:27 NKJV\)](#) He who has knowledge spares his words, And a man of understanding is of a calm spirit.

Slow to Wrath / Do – Say Stupid things / God will Defend You

Slow to Wrath – Wrath, to bring a judgment, decision of guilt, reaction to an offense. Temper is something we all struggle with. It causes us to say or do something stupid. People can and do lay all kinds of charges and accusations against us, but if we remain silent, walk away, we give them nothing for their cause. React with wrath and we prove them right, we justified their attack - they say see, I told you that's how they were, and they go tell everyone how you blew up, and lost it. [\(Proverbs 14:29 NKJV\)](#) He who is slow to wrath has great understanding, But he who is impulsive exalts folly.

Wrath often comes because we feel we have to defend a charge laid against us; some of the greatest advice one of the Pastors at Bible College gave me was: "**You take care of your character, and God will take care of your reputation**". Once you start defending yourself, then you have a lifetime career doing it, and guess what, then you waste all that time defending yourself when you could have been using that time to be God's Firstfruit of His Creation.

Read a Proverb a Day

I challenge you, and encourage you to read a chapter of Proverbs everyday as we go through this book. You will be amazed how often that Proverb for the day will be the Word that will help you hold your tongue on a matter, and then keep it from igniting into wrath.

Verse 20 - for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. – Wrath is the opposite of righteousness. Wrath tears down, and righteousness builds up. There really is no in-between area, we are either building up or tearing down. Christian, are we building up, or tearing down. In our homes, at our church, in all the areas of our lives? [\(Proverbs 14:1 NKJV\)](#) The wise woman builds her house, But the foolish pulls it down with her hands.

[\(Luke 11:23 NKJV\)](#) "He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters.

This What Saw Brother Do

We have all kinds of perspectives as we read through the Bible. We have extensive listings of being and not being, doing right and the likes. Think of some of the books that we've read, like Romans and Ephesians. But I like it here, as I read James in that he's just really, in many ways, summarizing for us... This is what I saw my brother. I can reflect on it in hindsight now, and I can see how he was so guarded with his tongue. He was so swift to hear. You would think if anybody would be the volume of words, it

would be Jesus. And yet, I think what James is telling us, my brother was very swift to hear. He was a listener. And that really connects with people when you stop to listen to them, rather than just speaking at them or to them. When people are heard, it makes all the difference.

You'll know who really cares and who's really interested by how long they listen. And there's a big difference between hearing and listening. We can hear all kinds of words, but are we really listening to what the person's heart is saying? And then this place with the tongue. How it wounds and bruises. And he'll talk more about the tongue. But I think chapter one here is just this beautiful introduction into some beautiful doctrine, into some beautiful real faith showing up in real life, and real faith in real life. Guards the tongue and uses it to lift up, rather than to tear down.

And then we see the heart of Jesus. One of my favorite passages, of course. When Jesus looked at them, he saw them as sheep without a shepherd and he had compassion on them. Then Jesus ministered to him. He taught them. He fed them. He listened to them. Just beautiful pictures. What a beautiful passage of scripture that we've studied here today. And I'm blessed by it, and warmed by it, and looking forward to more of it, and I know you are too.

Mark 6:34 (NKJV) ³⁴ And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things.

How We Respond to Trials – By Word

In all the trials and temptations in life, we are not to react outwardly in the flesh, but receive inwardly the "implanted" word. This implanted word brings forth eternal life, and then brings to work the fruit of God in our lives.

The Word as a Mirror – 1:22-25

(James 1:22 NKJV) But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

(James 1:23 NKJV) 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;

(James 1:24 NKJV) for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.

(James 1:25 NKJV) 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.

Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:

Matthew 7:24–27 (NKJV) 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."

Garden to Mirror / 3 Ministries of the Word

In the previous paragraph James compared the Word to seed in a garden; but here in this paragraph he compares it to a mirror. There are two other references in the Bible to God's Word as a mirror, and when we put all three together you discover the three ministries of the Word of God as a mirror:

- Examination
- Restoration
- Transformation

James 1:23 (NKJV) 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;

1 Corinthians 13:12 (NKJV) ¹² For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

2 Corinthians 3:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Not Just Hearing / Doing brings the Blessing / Being Marked / Don't be Deceived

Bible highlighters and memorizers, verse 22 should be engrained in all of us. It is not enough to hear the Word; we must do it. Many people have the mistaken idea that hearing a good sermon or Bible Study is what makes them grow and get God's blessings. It is not the hearing but the doing that brings the blessing. Too many Christians mark their Bibles, but their Bibles never mark them.. If you think you are spiritual because you hear the Word, then you are only kidding yourself, deceiving yourself, for it is hearing and doing.

Not a statement I want to state, but some of the meanest people I have ever met in my walk with the Lord as the most "bible knowing" people. They quote scripture, but they have no heart of the scripture.

Examination / Mirror shows What needs Fixed / The Real us

1.) Examination - This is the main purpose of owning a mirror, to be able to see yourself and make yourself look as clean and neat as possible. After working on the car, I wash up and check the mirror to make sure I got all the dirt off my face. Or maybe you use the mirror to make sure that the make-up goes on in the right places. We look at the mirror to make sure the hair is in the right place. We don't rub the mirror on us to clean the dirt or fix the hair, the mirror is just there to show us what needs to be fixed. As we look into the mirror of God's Word, we see ourselves as we really are.

(Hebrews 4:12 NKJV) For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

(Hebrews 4:13 NKJV) And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

(Psalms 139:23 NKJV) Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties;

(Psalms 139:24 NKJV) And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.

Now James mentions some mistakes people make as they look into God's mirror of the Word.

We Glance / Routine / Xray

Verse 24 -for he observes himself, goes away. A person merely glance at themselves. They do not carefully study themselves as they read the Word. Many sincere believers read a chapter of the Bible each day, but it is only a routine, and they fail to profit from it. A cursory reading of the Bible will never reveal our deepest needs. It is the difference between a candid photo and an X-ray.

We Forget / Can't go Unchanged / John 1:1

Verse 24 - and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. They immediately forget what they see. If they/ I / we were looking deeply enough into their hearts, what they would see would be unforgettable. You can't look at the Word and go away unchanged. For: *(John 1:1 NKJV) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* The Word is God and every time we look at the Word, we are having a personal encounter with God Himself, that is why this Book is living and powerful.

John 1:1 (NKJV) ¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

We see people in the Bible that when they encountered Jesus Christ, they knew it (Isaiah, Job, and Peter):

(Isaiah 6:5 NKJV) So I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD of hosts."

(Job 42:5 NKJV) "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You.

(Job 42:6 NKJV) Therefore I abhor myself, And repent in dust and ashes."

(Luke 5:8 NKJV) When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"

Jesus Revolution

There is a movie coming out called The Jesus Revolution, and it was the last probably truly great move of the spirit here in America. I personally did not witness it. I only hear about it and now will see the movie about it. But like all revivals, the biggest mark of them all is conviction of the Holy Spirit, conviction of sin and all of them, a great move and desire in people's heart to read the word and then to live it and apply it in their lives. To read the word.

For us today, does it take a revival? Only takes the word of God to breathe upon us conviction. Did I do what God called me to do in accordance with His word? I asked myself, "When was the last time you've been convicted by the Word of God?"

What did I Just Read

We can read the Bible, close the cover, and forget what we just read. Every time, after you are done reading always ask the question, now what I just read. There is a time after you have read the Word, or heard the Word, to sit quietly and ask the Lord, "what does this mean to me?"

Hearer – Audio / College Credit

(James 1:22 NKJV) But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

So we are called not just to hear the Word, but to do the Word, apply the Word to our hearts and everyday lives. Hearer, is the word audio, and where we get our word "audit." In college you can take classes for credit, which can be applied to get your degree. Or you can audit a class, which is to sit in on the class, listen to everything the teacher says, but you don't have to take the tests, do the papers, and receive a grade. You would audit a class if you thought that sounds interesting, I'd like to know more about that subject, but I don't want the pressures and work that comes with taking it for credit. I just sit in and if it sinks in, great, if not, nothing lost. James says to take this class, the Word, for credit, and not for audit. Do the assignments, and work to pass the class. Don't glance at it, and don't forget it, apply it.

Are you a doer of the Word? What is the gospel according to you this week? If people were reading your life based on you application of the Word, what would have been communicated to them this week.

2 Corinthians 3:2-3 (NKJV) ² You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; ³ clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.

As you will soon see, 5 minutes in the Word won't be enough.

A-S-K

So, how we respond to trials and temptations reveal the seed that is being planted, the seed that is germinating from what has been planted. And therefore, as we read and study today, we'll see the calling and we'll see the testing. What seed is being planted, the seed of the fruit and the spirit or the seed of the fruit of the flesh.

We are told to ask for wisdom. And there's a place in every time that we open the word that we need to ask for the wisdom, not just the knowledge of the word, but the wisdom of the word. How to rightly apply it for the right situation in our marriage, in our relationships, in our parenting, in our singleness, in our trials, and in our temptation and all these things. But being doers of the word and this calling that brings us to looking in the mirror and walking away.

James 1:5 (NKJV) ⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

It's easy to make the word and prayer something of routine and forget that this is supernatural. We can approach the word and prayer in the flesh and just make it the checklist and the duty that we go through, missing that it's supernatural. When we come to prayer, we read in Hebrews 4, it's a calling to boldly come, Matthew 7, that he provides an avenue to connect with him because he wants to hear our hearts. And this is an amazing gift and offering that's put before us.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Matthew 7:7 (NKJV) ⁷ "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

But when I read the word, I need to read the word as in a relationship, not I speak to God in prayer. And then I walk away. And nor do I read the word as God simply speaks to me. God wants to interact with me. He wants to have a conversation with me, why I'm in the Word. And so many times we just read it and we miss the conversation that God wants to have with us. And you may recognize it or not, but we continually open and close all of our Bible studies here most all the time with these five things.

1. We're always asking who is God?
2. What does he think of me?
3. What does he want me to do?
4. What can I boldly ask of him?
5. And what do I need to be on guard of?

And if you recognize what those questions and points are, it's the Lord's prayer.

1. Who is God as we look? He's a father. He's holy. He's the king of the universe.
2. What does he think of me? Well, he's a father who therefore thinks of me as a son. You women as a daughter.
3. What does he want me to do? We read in the Lord's prayer that will be done. Lord, give us the will that you would want in this situation.
4. And what can I boldly ask as he'll say, Give us this day our daily bread, and what do we need to be on guard of?
5. We need to be delivered from the evil one and then delivered from the temptation.

Matthew 6:9-13 (NKJV) ⁹ In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. ¹⁰ Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread. ¹² And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. ¹³ And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

And all these things, you can see how perfectly they wrapped together in this study in the book of James just here in chapter one. But it's continuing on because as we said, the book of James is a mini-Sermon on the Mount and the Lord's prayer and all these callings that he puts upon us, these imperatives, these to do in the Sermon on the Mount, we read them again here in the book of James. The book of James is a New Testament proverb and it's just beautiful. God giving us wisdom. But he says, anyone lacks, ask. And so we need to ask every time we open the word.

Restoration / Ex 38:8 / For Washing

2.) Restoration: The second ministry of the Word as a mirror, is for restoration. We use it to examine ourselves and correct and adjust, but God also uses it for restoration, for cleansing. In Exodus 38:8 when Moses built the tabernacle, Moses took the metal looking glasses of the woman and from them made the laver. The laver was a huge basin that stood between the brazen altar of sacrifices and the Holy Place (Exodus 30:17-21). The basin was filled with water, and the priest would wash their hands and feet before entering into the Holy Place to minister.

(Exodus 38:8 NKJV) He made the laver of bronze and its base of bronze, from the bronze mirrors of the serving women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.

The Cleansing Power / The Bar of Soap / Reflection of God's Love

Water for washing is a picture of the Word of God in its cleansing power:

(John 15:3 NKJV) "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

(Ephesians 5:26 NKJV) that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,

(Ephesians 5:27 NKJV) that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

1 John 1:9 is the Christians Bar of Soap:

(1 John 1:9 NKJV) If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

The mirror of the Word not only examines us and reveals our sins and failings, but it helps cleanse us as well. As we look into it, the love and grace of God reflects back to us.

Transformation / 2 Cor 3:18 / Definition of 2 Cor 3

3.) Transformation - As the Lord restores us, He wants to change us so that we will grow in grace and not commit that sin again.

(2 Corinthians 3:18 NKJV) *But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

You may explain 2 Corinthians 3:18 in this way: **When the child of God looks into the mirror of the Word of God, he sees the Son of God, and he is transformed by the Spirit of God to share in the glory of God.**

Back to our message last week, Oh Lord in all that I do, in trial or withstanding temptation, bring You glory! Regardless of the price or pain!

1 Corinthians 10:31 (NKJV)³¹ *Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

Metamorphosis / Inside Out

The word "changed/transformed" in the Greek gives us our English word "metamorphosis" which is a change on the outside that comes from the inside. When an ugly worm turns into a beautiful butterfly, that is a metamorphosis. When a believer spends time looking into the Word and seeing Christ, he is transformed; the glory on the inside is revealed on the outside.

(Romans 12:1 NKJV) *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*

(Romans 12:2 NKJV) *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

Transformation Slow Process / All of God You Want

Transformation is a slow process, and of course 5 minutes in the Word isn't going to get us there. As I have said so many times before, you can have all of Jesus Christ you want, but not one drop more.

The Word and Counseling

Some people get so upset with us here, for when they come for counseling the first thing we ask is if they are in the Word, and in prayer with the Word - Jesus Christ. The Word is living and powerful able to divide spirit and soul. Are you depressed, upset, anxiety, marriage problems, in sin, then let the Word have its way with you. We believe, give a person Jesus, and we have given them everything they will need for life; not just this trial or temptation, but the next million trials and temptations that will come their way.

(Jeremiah 33:3 NKJV) *'Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.'*

The Law of Liberty

Verse 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. - Liberty means Freedom. The more we bring our life in line with the word, the freer we are. We don't need the remedies of the world (booze, sex, drugs, etc) to get through the day for I have in all in Jesus. I am totally free when I live according to the Word, but when I live according to the world, then I am in bondage. I wake up everyday alive to Christ, and not dead to the world. I wouldn't trade my freedom in for anything.

(Psalms 119:45 NKJV) *And I will walk at liberty, For I seek Your precepts.*

(John 8:31 NKJV) *Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.*

(John 8:32 NKJV) *"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*

Our first responsibility is to receive the Word, then we must be doers of the Word, and then the Word is reflected from us onto the world around us.

Look – Stoop Down / What Word Saying to Me – Hearing is Only the Beginning

Verse 25, the word look means to continually, constantly, intently stoop down to look and see. There's an action, there's an effort, there's an energy that's put into. There's not a passing glance as a looking in the mirror. Hey, my hair's good, I'm ready to go for the day. But there's a place of looking and examining deep, what is this word speaking to me? What is this word calling me to do? What is this word meaning to me for this moment? And how am I to respond to it? And the thing of the word is there's a response to the word. A hearing is not a response, it is a precursor, a starting. But it then has to come to what is and how do I respond to what I've just been told by the word of God, which is the heart of God, which is the spirit of God.

What is Law of Liberty / Love Produces a Reaction & a Response

What is the law of liberty? It's the complete word of God, Old Testament and New Testament. And many people want to say that there's no law in the New Testament, but there is. It's the royal law that we know of. It's called love. And love reacts and behaves in accordance to the word of God. And hence we continue to build on, be doers of the word, not hearers only. Love produces a reaction. Love produces a response.

[James 2:8 \(NKJV\)](#) ⁸ If you really fulfill *the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself,"* you do well;

Often Limited – Protection Mechanism

And I say this often, but I was reminded of it this week, the responding doers of the word, not just here. Many times, there isn't a doing of the word because there's a protection mechanism that we want to put up that we say, "If I do this, someone will take advantage of me. If I do this, someone's going to hurt me. If I do this, it's going to cost me something." Time, money, resources, reputation, whatever it is. And here's the law of love. And it's a law that cannot and will not be superseded. And it is you can only love to the degree that you're willing to be made vulnerable. And hence, we see the perfect love, the agape love, the unconditional love. Jesus was willing to be made vulnerable all the way to the point of humiliation and death.

So Jesus gives us the greatest example in illustration of the willingness to be made vulnerable so that unconditional love can be sent forth and declared upon all of his love and his intent, the degree in which he was willing to love, to the point to be made vulnerable.

And this is so applicable again. Many times we're afraid to be made vulnerable because we don't want to be hurt or to be harmed. And I get it and I understand it. But then there's this place that we have to recognize then we simply limit ourselves, the great limitation because we won't allow ourselves to be loved. And then by no means saying that someone should be opened up to be continually hurt and harmed with words or even physical actions. But there's definitely a place that God will speak in these trials and temptation that we need to have ears. How far are we willing to be made vulnerable so that we can love like Jesus?

[The Word Reflected – 1:26-27](#)

(James 1:26 NKJV) 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.

As we allow the mirror of the Word to examine us, restore us, and transform us, the Word – Jesus Himself is then reflected from us.

The word translated "religion" means, "the outward practice, the service of a god." In Verse 27 James is saying, In other words, Let your walk match your talk.

Bridle Tongue – Think Religious

He says that any of you think you're religious, also known as spiritual, and yet you cannot bridle your tongue. You deceive yourself. From the mouth precedes the condition of the heart. If you ever wonder what's truly in your heart, just listen to how you speak. Because there's just something that declares and

reveals what's in the heart of man by they speak. And though someone may say something, I know even afterwards I can take it and I can look and I go..... from the mouth precedes the condition of the heart. I know what's in their heart. Maybe not just for me, that I heard it once and say that's the condition of their heart. Because there's always the work of the flesh that is warring against us. But when there's this continual, habitual lifestyle of what comes out of the mouth, it pretty much declares what's the habitual, continual lifestyle that's in the heart.

Matthew 12:34 (NKJV)³⁴ *Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.*

Luke 6:45 (NKJV)⁴⁵ *A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.*

Same True When it is Beauty Blooming Forth / Pray Gracious Speech

But the same is true when out of the mouth speaks words of love, words of compassion, words of encouragement, words of empathy, words of the Lord declaring the heart of the Lord. Something that's just birthed and blooming from the heart because from the mouth precedes the condition of the heart. And someone's heart is Christ like, agape like, royal love, law like. Their words are like manna from heaven. And I pray that we would be gracious in our speech to everybody, whether brother and sister in the body of Christ, or husband and wife, or among the children in the workplace, wherever it may be, just words seasoned with the grace and love of the Lord.

(James 1:27 NKJV) 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.

Doers Visit Orphans and Widows

We live this verse here at Calvary Chapel of Anne Arundel County, we seek to minister in as many places where widows and orphans are. That is what doers of the word do, the visit orphans and widows.

I pray it is a practical mission statement for our own lives as well.

Summation of Religion

Pretty amazing summation when you look at this James, that pure and undefiled religion is this. That you watch your tongue, you put some shoe leather to your faith as you love and serve others, and then you keep yourself unspotted. I think it's pretty easy to self-examine. "How am I doing? How's my tongue? How's my serving?" And, "how's my spot or spotless?"

Outline

The Test of Response to the Word (1:19-27)

- The Word as a Garden – 1:19-21
- The Word as a Mirror – 1:22-25
- The Word Reflected – 1:26-27

Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)¹² *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need*