

James 1:19-27
Become a Good Hearer & Doer of God's Word

Introduction: The ability to respond rightly to trials and resist temptation in a Godward way is found in our habitual reaction to God's Word. (J. Ron Blue)

1) I need to prepare appropriately to listen well to God's Word—1:19-21

- Two commands: let every person be, receive
- a) ¹⁹ **Know** (understand) **this** (some MSS "so then"), *my beloved brothers*:
 - i) This is something important to grasp and embrace.
- b) **What must I do in preparation to listen?—1:19** let every person be ...
 - This applies to sermons, court verdicts, FB posts, and headline news.
 - i) Correct my hesitant obedience: *quick* [tacu,j] (prompt) *to hear* [avkou,w],
(1) Why am I reluctant or sluggish to obey?
 - ii) Correct my sinful speech: *slow* [bradu,j] *to speak* [lale,w], (Prov. 10:19)
(1) Not every sermon needs to lead to controversy.
 - iii) Correct my sinful mood: *slow* [bradu,j] *to anger* [ovrgh,]; (Prov. 16:32)
(1) Settled anger predisposes me to reject what I hear.
- c) **Why are these three things important?—1:20**
 - i) ²⁰ *for the anger* [ovrgh,] *of man does not produce* [evrga,zomai] *the righteousness* [dikaiosuh] *of God*.
 - ii) A short-tempered response to the teaching of God's Word is sinful. We might be tempted or encouraged by our culture to feel some satisfaction in getting anger. It is a lie.
- d) **How can we respond rightly to God's Word?—1:21** ²¹ *Therefore*
 - i) Pursue holiness **negatively**: (having) *put away* [aor. mid. ptc avpoti,qhmi]
(1) Avoid getting spiritually dirty: *all filthiness* [ruparia]
(a) "Don't get your clean clothes dirty!" mothers tell their children.
(2) Avoid spiritually harmful residue: *and rampant wickedness* [perissei,a kaki,a]
 - ii) Pursue holiness **positively**:
(1) Embrace the Word with selfless courtesy toward others: *and* **receive** [de,comai] *with meekness* [prau,thj] *the implanted* [e;mfutoj] *word*,
(a) *which is able to save* [sw,zw] *your souls* [yuch,]. (rescue your life)

2) I need to determine to be actively obedient to what I hear—1:22-25

- a) What?—1:22
 - i) Positively: ²² *But* **be** (become) **doers** [poihth,j] *of the word*,
 - ii) Negatively: *and not hearers* [avkroath,j] *only*,
(1) *deceiving* [paralogi,zomai] (play a trick on) *yourselves*.
- b) Why?—1:23-25
 - i) Potential situation of **disobedience of unbelief**—1:23-24 ²³ *For if* [3rd class, hypothetical] *anyone is a hearer* [avkroath,j] *of the word and not a doer* [poihth,j],

- (1) Distortion: *he is like a man who looks intently [katanoe,w] at his natural face in a mirror.*
 - (a) We do this to get an accurate self-appraisal and to identify areas that need attention. (FSB)
 - (b) Simply looking in the mirror is not the right goal.
 - (2) Inattentiveness: ²⁴ *For he looks [katanoe,w] at himself and goes away and at once forgets (willful disregard, not intellectual) what he was like.*
 - (3) The Word does not weigh heavy on him/her.
- ii) Potential situation of **obedience of belief**—1:25 ²⁵ *But ...*
- (1) Submission: *the one who looks into [paraku,ptw] the perfect law (from a perfect God), the law of liberty,*
 - (a) God's Word possesses God's authority.
 - (2) Persistence: *and perseveres [parame,nw],*
 - (a) *being no hearer [avkroath,j] who forgets*
 - (b) *but a doer [poihth,j] who acts,*
 - (3) Beatitude: *he will be blessed in his doing.*

3) I need to embrace the type of religion that pleases God—1:26-27

- Because God knows everything and judges everything.
- a) Negative: a religion that is **displeasing** to God—1:26
- i) The possibility of a wrong assumption: ²⁶ *If [1st class; assume, imagine] anyone thinks/assumes [pres. act. ind. doke,w] he is religious [pres. act. inf. qrh/skoj]*
 - (1) Sinful habits of speech: *and does not bridle [pres. act. ptc. calinagwge,w] his tongue*
 - (2) *but deceives [pres. act. ptc. avpata,w] his heart,*
 - ii) The verdict: *this person's religion [qrhskai,a] is worthless [ma,taioj].*
- b) Positive: a religion that is **pleasing** to God—1:27
- i) The verdict: ²⁷ *Religion [qrhskai,a] that is pure [kaqaro,j] and undefiled [avmi,antoj] before [para,] God the Father is this:*
 - ii) The explanation:
 - These are not the only things that please God.
 - (1) Selfless compassion for the vulnerable: *to visit [pres. mid. inf. evpiske,ptomai] orphans [ovrfano,j] and widows [ch,ra] in their affliction [qli,yij],*
 - (2) Purity of separation: *and to keep [pres. act. inf. thre,w] oneself unstained [a;spiloj] from [avpo,] the world [ko,smoj] (its worldview, values, etc.).*

4) Things I need to remember:

- a) God, grant me the grace to authentically prepare to listen submissively to Your Word, the grace to actively obey it, and the grace to embrace a lifestyle that is pleasing to You. Amen.

