

Practice the Word

James 1:22-25

- 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 makes them grow and gets God's blessing. It's not the hearing but the doing that brings the blessing. Too many people mark their bibles but their bibles never mark them.
 - In the previous paragraph James compared the Word to seed, but in the paragraph he compares it to a mirror. There are 2 other references in the Bible to God's Word as a mirror, and when you put all three together, you discover 3 functions of the Word of God as a mirror.
1. Examination – (James:23-25) This the main reason for owning a mirror is to be able to see yourself and make yourself look as clean and neat as possible.
- As we look into the mirror of God's Word, we see ourselves as we really are. James talks about mistakes we make as we look into God's mirror. First, they merely glance at themselves. They do not carefully study themselves as they read the Word.
 - The second mistake is that they forget what they see, which makes sense if you are glancing at yourself.
 - Let's look at how the biblical Saints responded to the true knowledge of their own hearts. Isaiah cried, "Woe is me! For I am undone." Peter cried,

“Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.” Job was the most righteous man on earth and he said, “I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”

- Mistake number 3: They fail to obey what the Word tells them to do. We think that hearing is the same as doing but it’s not. We Christians enjoy substituting reading for doing, or even talking for doing.
 - If we are going to use God’s mirror rightly, then we must gaze into it carefully and with serious intent. No quick glance will do! So the emphasis in James is on the practice of the Word. James 1:25 “He will be blessed in what he does.”
 - The reason why James calls the Word of God “the perfect law of liberty” is because, when we obey it, God sets us free.
 - So examination is the first function of God’s mirror. The Second function is...
2. **Restoration (Exodus 37:8)** “They made the bronze basin and its bronze stand from the mirrors of the women who served at the entrance of the tent of meetings.”
- Back then glass had not been invented yet so they used polished bronze or metal for mirrors. Moses took those mirrors and made them into washing basins. This basin stood between the brazen altar of sacrifice and the holy place. The basin was filled with water and the priests would wash their hands and feet before they went in to the holy place to minister.

- Water for washing is a picture of the Word of God in its cleansing power. John 15:3 “You are already clean because of the word I have spoken over you.”
- The mirror of the Word not only examines us and reveals our sins, but it cleanses us as well!! It’s the blood of Christ that cleanses our guilt, but the water of the Word helps to wash away the defilement.
 - The third function of the mirror of the Word is: **Transformation (2 Corinthians 3:18)** “And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”
- The word changed in the Greek gives us our English word metamorphosis. A change on the outside that comes from the inside. Romans 12:2 “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”
- So our first responsibility is to receive the Word. Then, we must practice the Word; otherwise we deceive ourselves. The third responsibility is:

3. Share the Word (1:26-27)

- The word religion translates this way, “the outward practice, the service of a god.” Pure religion has nothing to do with ceremonies, temple, or special days. Pure religion means practicing God’s Word and sharing it with others, through speech, service, and separation from the world.

- So in closing, our responsibility towards God's Word is, Receiving the Word, practicing the Word, and sharing the Word. Allow the Word to work in and through your life!!