



A Systematic Expository Study on the General Epistle of JAMES

Study 7: PROFITING FROM THE WORD **James 1:19-27**

The previous verse (James 1:18) speaks on the ministry and effect of "the Word of Truth" and the following verses teach us on how to benefit from the Word. We are to "be swift to hear", to "receive with meekness the engrafted word". We must be "doers of the Word, and not hearers only". Looking "into the perfect law", none should be "a forgetful hearer". What is our benefit or profit as we allow the Word to do its work in us? We are brought into new life with the Word of Truth (verse 18). The engrafted, implanted Word "is able to save your souls" (verse 21). The man who believes and lives by the Word "shall be blessed in his deed" (verse 25). A proper study of God's Word is eternally profitable.

How we listen to, react to and obey the Word is an index or a test of the genuineness of our salvation experience. For the Word to work with power and produce new life in us, there must be willingness to receive it with submission. The believer who truly delights in God's Word, will pattern his life according to the Word. And his "profiting will appear to all" (1 Timothy 4:15). "Take heed therefore how ye hear" (Luke 8:18), and "take heed what ye hear" (Mark 4:24). Don't let anything block your ears or harden your heart against the Word of God. Hear and be so transformed to be saved now and be so steadfast to be finally saved. Be teachable, be obedient and let the Word work effectually in you (1 Thessalonians 2:13).

PROPER RECEPTION AND SUBMISSION TO THE WORD

James 1:19-21; Acts 10:33; 17:11; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; Proverbs 27:7; 17:27; 16:32; 1 Peter 2:1,2; Mark 4:16-20, 2 Timothy 3:15-17.

Be swift, be slow! Be quick, be slow! There are things in which it is good to be quick and there are things in which it is well to be slow. Our text teaches us: "be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath". There are four different kinds of learners: **1.** Quick to hear, and quick to forget; his gain is cancelled by his loss. **2.** Slow to hear and slow to forget; his loss is cancelled by his gain. **3.** Slow to hear and quick to forget; he learns and knows nothing. **4.** Quick to hear and slow to forget; his profit and progress will be pleasing to God.

"Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath". God created us with two ears but only one mouth, that we may hear more and speak less. Those who are slow to speak and slow to wrath will not fall. Many of us would do well to listen more and to speak less. We may be tempted to be angry with our teacher, parent or preacher, but we do well to listen attentively, meditate on the Word and refrain from anger, wrath and debate.

To get the best from what we hear, we must put off "all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness". We must be stripped of all vice and filthiness. James bids us get rid of all defilement as a man strips off soiled garments. The original word used for "filthiness" is a derivative of 'wax in the ear'. When wax gathers in the ear, it can make a man deaf. Filthiness, defilement, vice, sin can make a man deaf to God. Get rid of everything which would stop your ears to the true Word of God. The teachable spirit receives the whole Word with meekness.

PROMPT REFLECTION AND OBEDIENCE TO THE WORD

James 1:22-25; Matthew 7:24-27; Romans 2:13; Joshua 1:8; Psalm 119:9-11,15,16,48,59,60,93, 97,104,112; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Luke 11:28; Revelation 22:14.

The Word of God is the focal point of our new life in Christ. Hearing the Word is not enough, it is important to turn what is heard into action. The man who hears but does not live by what he has heard is like one who looks in a mirror, and then goes away and forgets what to correct, and so does nothing about it. He remains just as he was, all his

hearing has gone for nothing. Many people are like that. They substitute the hearing for the doing. They do not put the Word to practice. It is foolish to have bread in our hands and yet to die of hunger. If that is the typical pattern of your life, you may continue in religion and self-deception and be forever lost.

James calls the Word of God "the perfect law of liberty" (James 1:25). It is perfect because it cannot be improved upon, it cannot be made better. And it is complete; there is nothing to add, neither can we take anything away from it. It is the law of liberty because it reveals how we can have true liberty through Jesus Christ, our Saviour, Lord and Liberator. Having God's grace to live a life well-pleasing unto God, to be obedient unto Him, is true freedom and liberty indeed. The Word liberates - liberates perfectly - it is "the perfect law of liberty".

PURE RELIGION AND SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD

James 1:26,27; Galatians 6:3; Psalms 34:12-15; 141:3,4; Colossians 4:6; Galatians 6:2,9,10; 1 John 3:17-19; 2:15-17; James 4:4; Romans 12:2.

"Pure and undefiled religion" in the text refers to pure worship. Real worship does not lie in magnificent music or in a carefully ordered service but in the purity of one's own personal life and practical love and service to the poor, orphans, widows and the needy. It is good to endeavour to offer the noblest and the most splendid worship within God's house but all such worship is empty and vain unless we love God by loving our fellow-men and keep ourselves from the ways of the world. There are many who have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof. Such people who are self-deluded, deceived, tread a very dangerous path. Like the foolish virgins they are associated with the wise virgins and still will miss the kingdom.

Regeneration is a profound miracle that changes a person's heart, will, desires, life style, tongue. He who thinks he is converted but has an uncontrolled tongue is self-deceived. True Christianity is manifested by how we love people, how we keep ourselves pure, keep our tongues under control and keep ourselves undefiled by the world. Those who live by the world's philosophy are friends of the world and are enemies of God.

*If you are blessed by these bible study outlines, we'd like to hear from you.
You can email the pastor@deeperlife-liverpool.org.uk with your comments.*