

"True Faith and the Word of God"**Part 2****James 1:19-27**

Introduction: This morning we came back to our study in the book of James. Now it feels like it has been months since we were in this study but it has only been 3 weeks. So we need a short review to bring our minds up to speed on this study.

James is writing to Jewish believers who had been scattered abroad because of persecution. These people would have made up the early church which we read about in the book of Acts. Now the book of James gives to us some really good studies on practical living but there is much more here.

James was concerned about the people he was writing to. He was concerned about their faith. James knew there was a difference in "religion" and "salvation". The people he was writing to had been influenced by the religious teaching of the scribes and the Pharisees. Not only that James was very familiar with the Sermon on the Mount and it was in the conclusion of that Sermon that Jesus Himself warned his listeners about "religion".

Matthew 7:13-14

¹³ *Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and **many** there be which go in thereat:*

¹⁴ *Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and **few** there be that find it.*

The "MANY" are the "RELIGIOUS". The "FEW" are the "SAVED".

Jesus exposes the same thought again a couple of verses later.

Matthew 7:21-23

²¹ *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*

²² ***Many** will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?*

²³ And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Now listen to this, in the book of James we can see at least 15 parallels with the Sermon on the Mount which means that James understood what Jesus was talking about. Many people look at the book of James and they miss something very important. James is taking his readers through a series of tests in which they are able to try their faith to be sure it is real faith.

James knew that true faith would produce good works and therefore in this letter James is showing us how true faith responds in different situations.

Now I want you to get this, James was so big on works that Martin Luther actually said this was an "epistle of straw". Luther understood that we are saved by grace through faith but he missed what James was saying and that was, when our faith is real it will produce good works.

James 2:17-19

¹⁷ Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

¹⁸ Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

¹⁹ Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

Verse 19 points right to the "religious" person who claims to have faith but produces no works but will argue that they believe in God.

Illustration of piano player in Hershey Medical Center.

Today we are coming back to James 1:19-27 where we stopped the last time.

I. True Faith and the Word of God

Now before we step into these verses again I need to give you some information that will help you with these verses. The context within these verses is the Word of God.

Notice James 1:18, 21, 22, 23, 25

All of these verses are pointing to the Word of God.

So what we find in this section is a test of our faith in reference to the Word of God. In other words James is telling us here how True faith responds to the Word of God.

A. Surrender

Notice James 1:19

Here in this verse James points to 3 responses which the True believer should have toward the Word of God.

1. Swift to hear.

The last time we were together we looked at this point in the overall picture of what James has said so far. That is that we will face trials and we will face temptations therefore we need the Word in the midst of the trials and in the midst of temptation in order to have victory.

It is the Word that brings strength, comfort and encouragement in the midst of trials. It is the Word of God that we are to lean on in the midst of temptation.

Ephesians 6:12-17

¹² For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

¹³ Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

¹⁴ Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

¹⁵ And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

¹⁶ Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Today I want us to look at this in a different way. I want us to see this as a test for our faith.

James tells us that we are to be swift to hear the Word of God and the idea here is that a True believer will desire to hear the Word of God. A true believer will long to hear and walk in obedience to God's Word.

Job 23:12

¹² Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.

Psalm 1:1-2

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

² But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

Psalm 119:14-16

¹⁴ I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches.

¹⁵ I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways.

¹⁶ I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.

Psalm 119:35

³⁵ Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight.

Romans 7:22

²² For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

From these verses we can see that a true believer will delight in God's Word. There should be a desire within you that makes you want to learn the Bible. There should be a desire within you to sit under the teaching of the Bible.

Now I also need to say that this is something which we need to work on all the time.

Illustration: If you feed a boy hundreds of M & M's before his dinner he will not eat that which is good because he has loaded up on junk food. The very same thing can happen in the believer's life. If we fill up on the "junk food" of this world then we will lose our appetite for the Word of God. So we must be very careful and we must cultivate our

appetite for the Word of God. But the bottom line is that when we are saved we will desire the Word and when you allow something to steal away your appetite it will make you miserable.

2 Peter 2:6-8

⁶ *And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;*

⁷ *And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:*

⁸ *(For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds:)*

The word "vexed" means "**to vex with grievous pains (of body or mind), to torment**".

Notice James 1:19

2. Slow to speak.

James is not talking about someone who talks a lot here. He is not talking about someone who is opinionated and outspoken.

Remember that the context is the Word of God. James is telling his readers that they are not to rush to be a teacher of God's Word.

There was a problem with these people who James wrote when it came to speaking.

James 1:26

²⁶ *If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.*

James 3:1

My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.

Here James tells them to stop trying to be teachers. James then spends the remaining part of chapter 3 speaking about the tongue. Therefore there was a problem with many people desiring to be an instructor in the Word of God.

James point here in verse 19 is be swift to hear and just as swift as you are to hear be that slow to speak in the sense of teaching.

Application:

This is something that really needs to be proclaimed in our day. It is NOT that many desire to stand behind the pulpit but today it seems that all who have a computer desire to post online.

Let me remind you that if you want to teach the Word then you will be held to a higher level of accountability.

James 3:1

My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.

Hebrews 13:17

¹⁷ Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

If you are going to be a teacher then you better be sure you are accurate.

Notice James 1:19

3. Slow to wrath.

The idea which James has here is that when we hear the Word and the Holy Spirit convicts us of something which we need to change then we better make the change. We are not to get angry with what we hear.

The idea here is we are not to have an inward resentment toward the Truth which has been spoken to us.

Application: We are to surrender to the Word when the Holy Spirit uses it to convict us of sin in our lives. Now I know that there are many believers who will suppress the Truth when they are convicted. I want to show you a picture of what can happen when you do this.

Genesis 31:3

³ *And the LORD said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee.*

God called Jacob to go back home to the land of Canaan. There was a problem however and that was Esau. Jacob feared him because of what Jacob had done.

Genesis 32:3-7

³ *And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom.*

⁴ *And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now:*

⁵ *And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight.*

⁶ *And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him.*

⁷ *Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed: and he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands;*

Jacob was going back to the Promised Land. God had called him to walk by faith but Jacob was afraid to do as God had said. He had his own plan.

Genesis 32:24-25

²⁴ *And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.*

²⁵ *And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.*

Jacob wrestled with God that night and God had to dislocate his hip to get him to walk in obedience. Is God calling you to make a change and walk by faith? Have you surrendered or are you trying to do it your way? Are you wrestling with God? Know this, you need to surrender before God touches you in a way that will make you surrender.

Genesis 32:31

³¹ *And as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh.*