

# Hearing and Doing

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: James 1:18-27

This lesson is the second in a series on the book of James. In this passage, we see the importance of hearing the word of God and receiving it in the right way. We also notice the necessity of obedience and doing what the word of God teaches us to do.

## God's Will for Us (v. 18)

- After discussing trials and temptations, James reminded us that God is the giver of all good things (v. 17) – but this is not just about blessings in this life; it ultimately means saving us for eternity
- According to His will, we were “brought...forth by the word of truth” – born again by the word of God (1 Peter 1:23), through the preaching of the gospel (Romans 1:16)
- They were the “first fruits” – he was writing to the Jews (v. 1); the gospel went to them first (Romans 1:16; cf. Ephesians 1:12); the salvation offered to the Jews was offered to the whole world (Acts 2:38-39; Mark 16:15-16)

## Our Response to His Word (v. 19-21)

- Because we are “brought...forth” (born again) by the word, we must respond to it appropriately (v. 19) – quick to hear or eager to listen (cf. Acts 17:11); slow to speak and not argue/dismiss it or think we know everything (Proverbs 18:2); slow to anger and not lash out when we are cut to the heart (compare Acts 2:37; 7:54-58); anger does not achieve the righteousness of God (v. 20) because we reject the truth
- We need to be willing to make changes in our lives (v. 21) – repentance (cf. Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 17:30)
- We must receive the word which is able to save us – it is the power of God for salvation (Romans 1:16); do this in humility, recognizing that we can be wrong but God's word is always right (Romans 3:4); receive it implanted, in our hearts (Hebrews 8:10) so that it becomes part of us

## Being Doers of the Word (v. 22-25)

- If we accept the word and have it written on our hearts, that will be visible in our lives (cf. Proverbs 4:23)
- We must prove to be “doers of the word” (v. 22) – the Lord expects our obedience (Matthew 28:20; Luke 6:46); if we are hearers only, we are deceiving ourselves (cf. James 2:18-19)
- One who is a hearer and not a doer is like one who looks in a mirror and forgets what he sees (v. 23) – the word of God is the mirror by which we view our lives to see what's

in order and what needs to be changed; yet if the word doesn't change us, it does us no good (v. 24)

- We must be an effectual doer (v. 25) – takes study and a desire to follow what has been revealed; if we do this, we will be blessed since Jesus saves those who obey (Hebrews 5:9)

### **Pure and undefiled Religion (v. 26-27)**

- Finally, James addressed “pure and undefiled religion” – this is about more than just studying the Bible and attending services (though these are important)
- We must control our tongue (v. 26) – begins with our heart (James 3:8-12; cf. Proverbs 4:23)
- We must help those in need (v. 27) – take advantage of opportunities to do good (Galatians 6:10)
- We must remain pure (v. 27) – not conformed to the world, but transformed (Romans 12:2)

### **Conclusion**

- God has given us His word so we can be saved from sin and serve Him according to His will
- It is good to hear the word, but if that is all we do we are only deceiving ourselves
- We must put God's word into practice in our lives – obey Him from the heart