

“Labor Day”

Mount of Olives | September 6, 2026 | James 1:19-25

Pastor Jim Reynen

Prayer of the Day:

Lord Jesus, on this Communion Sunday, we pause to reflect on how far short we have fallen in imitating You. Help this communion service to be especially pivotal in turning our devotion to You into obedient actions that fulfill Your purpose in our lives. In Your precious name we pray. Amen.

Scripture Reading:

James 1:19-25

You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing.

Message Notes:

James 1:22

But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves.

James 1:23-24

For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like.

Ephesians 2:8-9

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—not the result of works, so that no one may boast.

Ephesians 2:10

For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

Study Questions – Read James 1:19-25

ICEBREAKER – Getting started:

1. What is something you know you should do, but knowing it and actually doing it are two very different things? (*Examples: exercise, eat healthier, clean the garage, return a phone call, etc.*)
2. Have you ever received really good advice, agreed completely with it, and then done absolutely nothing about it? Describe the situation. What was the advice? What happened?
3. What is one skill or activity you became better at only after you stopped reading or talking about it and actually started doing it?

Based on James 1:19-25, answer the following questions:

OBSERVATION – What does the text say?

1. As you read **James 1:19-25**, what comes to mind? What stands out? What is interesting to you and why?
2. In one sentence, how would you summarize this text?
3. What lesson or message do you think the author is trying to convey?

INTERPRETATION – What does the text mean?

1. James 1:19 tells us to be “quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.” Why do you think James puts listening before speaking and anger?
 2. According to verse 20, why is human anger often a problem when it comes to living out God’s righteousness?
 3. In verses 21–22, James moves from receiving the Word to doing the Word. What does verse 21 suggest should happen in our hearts before we can effectively live out God’s Word?
 4. James says, “Do not merely listen to the word.” Why might listening to God’s Word without responding to it actually be dangerous?
 5. James says that merely hearing the Word can cause us to “deceive yourselves.” What does he mean?
 6. What is the difference between knowing what God’s Word says and living according to what God’s Word says? Why is that distinction so important?
 7. In verses 23–24, James compares the person who hears but doesn’t do the Word to someone who looks at their face in a mirror and then walks away without doing anything about what they see. Why is a mirror such a powerful illustration?
 8. What does the mirror illustration teach us about the purpose of Scripture? Is Scripture primarily meant to give us information, or is it also meant to reveal something about us?
 9. Verse 25 describes the person who looks intently into “the perfect law that gives freedom” and continues in it. How can obedience to God’s Word actually lead to freedom rather than restriction?
 10. If James 1:22 is the central message of this passage, what do you think James wants his readers to do differently after hearing the Word?
- In other words: What would it look like for this passage to move from our ears, to our hearts, to our hands?

APPLICATION – How can you apply the text?

1. What is something God has already shown you through His Word that you know you need to put into practice? What would taking one concrete step of obedience look like this week?
2. Are there areas where you may be “hearing” God’s Word regularly but not actually doing what it says? What might be keeping you from moving from hearing to doing?
3. What does your spiritual “mirror” show you right now? Is there an attitude, habit, relationship, priority, or behavior that God’s Word is revealing that needs your attention?
4. What is one teaching of Jesus or one biblical command that you find easy to agree with but difficult to practice? What would obedience look like in a real-life situation this week?
5. What is one specific thing you will DO differently because of what you have heard today? “This week, because God’s Word says _____, I will _____.”