

SERMON TITLE: Hearing & Doing

DATE: October 23, 2022

SCRIPTURE: James 1:22-27

PASTOR: Jason Malone

SERIES SUMMARY

In Scripture, we find the life of faith is often a difficult journey. But true faith in Jesus will show itself in tough times and display the reality of Jesus to a watching world. In the same way, we're called to give voice to our words and action to what we believe. This is how our faith can make a transformative difference in our lives and the lives of others. On this side of eternity, a faith not applied is worthless and will make no difference. The book of James regularly asks us to put our faith into action so others can witness the reality of Jesus in our lives. As we turn towards Christ, our faith journey will be purposeful, fruitful, and sustain us through any difficulty we face.

SERMON SCREENSHOTS & KEY POINTS

- James 1:17-18

The Word gives us a capacity to hear.

- Ephesians 2:1-9
- 1 Peter 1:3-6
- James 1:21

The Word is implanted in us.

"You seek to kill me because my Word finds no place in you (John 8:37)."

- James 1:22-25

Truly hearing the Word leads us to do the Word.

True freedom isn't doing what you want, when you want, how you want. True freedom is being and doing what you were created to be and do.

- James 1:26-27

COMMUNITY GROUP QUESTIONS

- Read James 1:17-27
- One of the implicit warnings that James offers is that those who are merely hearers and not also doers deceive themselves. In short, James is speaking about the contrast between show and substance, between mere verbal articulation of belief versus a genuine belief that shapes the whole of our lives. How is this self-deception dangerous, especially in the cultural Christianity which serves as the norm for so many?
- Read 1 John 2:1-6. John, there, also speaks of the need to emulate Christ in the activity of our lives, not simply in the words that we speak. If someone were to ask the question; "Don't these passages (James 1:22-25 and 1 John 2:1-6) seem to be advocating for a works- based faith in which salvation is earned" how would you respond? Where else might you take them in Scripture to challenge that notion?
- The image of the individuals who look in the mirror emphasizes the importance of remembering (and doing) the word. Read Psalm 1 and consider how David's statement that the man who meditates on the law of the Lord will be blessed corresponds to James' commendation of one who looks into the perfect law and perseveres as a doer and not simply a hearer. What are some specific ways the Lord is currently inviting you to become a doer, rather than only a hearer, of the word?

- What might James mean when he states that a refusal to “bridle” one’s tongue reveals that their “religion is worthless?” What role does self-deception play in this discrepancy that James describes between the faith we proclaim versus the reality of our actions?
- Read Isaiah 1:10-17. What does this text say about the Lord’s posture toward those who are destitute? In contrast, what is the Lord’s posture toward those who go through the motions of religiosity but neglect to care for the destitute?
- Consider James 1:27 in light of what you just read in Isaiah 1. How might James’s exhortation to care for the orphans and widows translate into your everyday life? Who has God placed in your circle of accountability so that you might offer them sacrificial, intentional care?

The following resources have been a great help to us in preparing messages for this sermon series: *The Letter of James (NICNT)*, by Scot McKnight; *James (ZECNT)*, by Craig Blomberg; Mariam J. Kovalishyn; *The Epistle of James*, by Peter Lange & J.J. Van Oosterzee; *The Letter of James*, by Douglas Moo. Also, I (Charlie) have benefited from the teachings of Tim Keller, Tim Mackie and the Bible Project, and others whom I will credit during my messages. I have adapted and borrowed insights and illustrations from these men and incorporated them into the messages in this series.