

**Faith that Works**  
**“Practicing God’s Word”**  
**James 1:19-27**

**Introduction** - What are the marks of spiritual maturity or a faith that works?

- Joyful in trials.
- Triumphant in temptation.
- Practicing God’s Word.

*“The spiritually mature person has a right relationship with the Bible, the Word of God!”*

If you think you are spiritual yet you are not practicing God’s word, you are deceiving yourself,” vv. 22 & 26. Illus. - Jesus said the same thing, Matt. 7:22-23, wise and foolish man! We want to be wise and build our lives on “Practicing God’s Word.”

In our text, three responsibilities we have toward God’s Word.

**I. Hear the Word**, vv. 19-20.

The word of God demands our attention.

**1. Be swift to hear**, vs. 19.

It’s a readiness or eagerness to listen to God’s word. Sadly today we are not good at listening.

Why?

- Our modern visual media. (So preaching today.)
- We don’t read.
- We are too busy.

So slow down, limit your exposure to T.V., games, movies.

Ask yourself, “*Are you ready and eager to hear God’s word?*”

**Illus.** - The young boy Samuel, “*Speak Lord...*”

Poem: “*Speak Lord, in the stillness while I wait on thee; Hushed my heart to listen in expectancy,*” E. May Grimes.

## 2. Slow to speak, vs. 19.

Our problem is that we are “*slow to listen*” and “*quick to speak*.”  
Proverbs 10:19, “*He that refraineth his lips is wise.*” The stoic philosopher  
“Zeno” said, “*We have two ears and one mouth, therefore we should listen twice  
as much as we speak.*”

## 3. Slow to wrath, vs. 19.

James knew that an angry spirit is not a teachable spirit. If we are angry we are  
not listening. It keeps us from listening to God.

Proverbs 14:29, “*He that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly.*”

Ask yourself, ***Am I:***

- Quick to listen?
- Slow to speak?
- Slow to become angry?

James gives us the reason for these two commands, vs. 20.

1. James assumes that believers are obligated to promote righteousness of  
God.
2. James implies that the man of wrath does not practice the righteousness  
of God.

God’s word demands our attention!

## II. Receive the Word, vs. 21.

### 1. Our duty to receive the Word.

When we hear the Word, it is our duty to receive it. Receive means “*a  
welcoming or appropriating reception.*”

**Illus.** - Use of the *Bereans*, Acts 17:11, “*Who received the Word with all readiness  
of mind and searched the scriptures daily....*”

It’s also used of the Thessalonians, who, when they heard the gospel, “*received*”  
or “*welcomed,*” not as the word of men, but as the Word of God. I Thess. 2:13.

**Note** - It’s the *engrafted word* or the *implanted word*.

**Illus.-** It's like *seed* planted in our hearts, it brings forth fruit! Let God's word be planted in your heart!

Jesus' parable of *The Sower and the Seed*.

1. Hard heart, path.
2. Shallow heart, rocks.
3. Crowded heart, weeds.
4. Fruitful heart.

Ask yourself, *how's the soil of your heart?*

## **2. The condition to receiving the Word.**

We must, "*Lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness,*" vs. 21. "*That is, if we are to receive the Word, we must put out of our lives everything the Word condemns.*"

We must get the weeds out! N.I.V. "*Get rid of all moral filth and evil that is so prevalent.*"

## **3. The "manner" in which we receive the Word.**

"*With meekness,*" vs. 21. "*We are to be teachable.*" It is an inwrought grace of the soul. We accept God's word without disputing or resisting.

## **4. The reason to receive the Word, vs. 21. "*Which is able to save your souls.*"**

The Word of God welcomed and rooted in the Christian's heart is used by the Holy Spirit to bring the blessing of holiness, spiritual growth and Christ-like character.

All the blessings that accompany salvation. It will save your souls or life.

**Illus.-** It's a blessed way to live. Single, married, young or old.

## **IV. Obey the Word, vv. 22-27.**

These verses are in a sense the heart of the book of James.

### **1. The command, vs. 22.**

True hearing and true receiving must result in obedience. If you hear, but don't *do*, you are self-deceived. Hearing is not to be an end in itself. Remember Jesus, *Foolish Builder*, Matt. 7.

### **2. An illustration, vv. 23-25.**

Three ministries of the Word of God as a mirror:

A. Examination, vv. 23-25.

B. Restoration, Ex. 38:8, Moses used the looking glass of the women to make the laver, filled with water. Jesus said, "*Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken to you,*" John 15:3.

C. Transformation, II Cor. 3:18, "*But we all with open face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory even by the Spirit of the Lord.*"

### **3. The application, vv. 26-27.**

Do you think you are religious? Three tests! Ways to practice God's Word!

1. Speech, vs. 26

Note, bridleth, a lot of galloping tongues.

2. Service, vs. 27a, social concern.

3. Separation, vs. 27b, Holy conduct.

**The Word of God demands:**

**1. Our Attention- Hear the Word**

**2. Our Reception- Receive the Word**

**3. Our Application- Obey the Word**