

Listen Up and Take Action

I'm not gonna take this abuse much longer, <laugh>. I do. I'm the Rony Dangerfield of the point. <laugh>.

Uh, yeah, you hear that. I mean, it's, it's storm. So, I'd like each and every one of you to kind of just give you a shug in the yourself, a shug shrugging the shoulder as you braved the rain. And so, uh, those that are here, of course, those that are online, uh, good evening, welcome, uh, to our midweek recharge, as I like to call it. Uh, glad you're here, glad you're there. And, uh, I pray that God will work in your life tonight with this particular message. It's a practical one, so it's one you can easily put into practice if you are not already. And as I said, Sunday, Branson, Vicky, were out of town. Uh, so I'm covering, uh, for this Wednesday night. They were overdue for a relaxing trip to Georgia. I mean, they were supposed to go, what? Into March, twice in April, I think.

And just all that, all the setbacks with, with, with the health and everything. So yeah, they'll be back this weekend. Uh, I've already talked to 'em. They're doing good. Uh, the weather's really good. I mean, he was sitting on his porch with his, uh, what'd he says? Uh, flannel shirt cuz it was 60 degrees. I said, yeah, it's pushing 90 here, bro. So, uh, and they are, he is getting rest. I can, I can assure you of that. Uh, now I will, uh, I got, uh, Todd covering for me back there for Discipleship 102, week three. I was so excited to, uh, hear that he could do that. And so, I'll be back, uh, finishing that next week. But then, um, I'll be back with you on Wednesday, starting June 14th with a brand-new series called Calm in the Chaos. Right? We need that one.

Uh, so matter, no matter what's going on with you, our prayers that you're doing well and always drawing closer and closer to God. I, for one, can't imagine going through life without Jesus. So, oh my gosh. I'm like, you don't even want to think about it, right? You're just like, I'm so glad that he's with me walking next to me and protecting and driving me. I can't imagine what it would feel like to not have Jesus, uh, around me. And, and so the, the nonbeliever, that's how they feel. So tonight, the message is titled Listen Up and Take Action. And so, uh, we're gonna be covering James chapter one verses 19 through 27. I did the James series back in 2020, right? And I did it recorded when we were going through Covid, and I could not find where I did these verses. So, um, for whatever reason I didn't.

And so, we're gonna, that's what we're gonna do is tonight's fill-in message for Branson. Um, anyway, I've retooled it, but it's one of those that it's a good idea to refresh, uh, with this one every once in a while, uh, because it's about being a, a hearer and also a doer, not just a hearer. Uh, I heard this, I heard a quote once that I loved, I'm not sure of the actual author, but here it goes. True belief causes Christians to live out their faith according to God's word. We don't passively hear the word. Rather, action should always, uh, follow genuine heart change. I love that. True belief causes Christians to live out faith according to what you read in God's word. And we don't just passively hear it, we're actively doing something about it. I thought that was great. So, is your heart changed and in tune with the word of God?

Prayerfully you answered, yes. But if you, if you are, and I want you to be, I mean, why, why shouldn't we be honest with ourselves? If you're honest with yourself and you know, you know what? I don't know if I can honestly answer that question. Yes. Well, in a way, good, because that's what we're gonna

dig into tonight. And so be honest that you can actually allow a real change in, uh, and even if you think your heart is changed and you're in tune with the word of God, need tonight's message two <laugh>. Absolutely. Yeah. We're clay constantly being molded. So yes, we need it all the time. I thought it'd be a good refresher anyway. Um, many scholars and theologians have called the Book of James a reflection or a commentary on Jesus's sermon on the mountain. Did you know that you're gonna find very, you can look back to Matthew five.

You're gonna see a lot of similarities and wording, almost the, uh, and it means James used similar language in describing life that reflects true faith in Jesus Christ. And I personally, and you guys know this, um, I see the book of James as a practical guide that gets right to the point. It's a, it's a quick five chapters. You can do it in 15 minutes longer if you wanna take it in and soak it in, reading it just from cover to cover. It takes you 15 minutes. But it's practical. And more importantly, it's in line with Jesus's teachings. That's what we want. Uh, we wouldn't want it, um, any other way in this letter. Like I said, in five short, five short chapters covered so much. And this is the message of Christianity right here. When left to ourselves, when left to our own devices, if you will, we can't and don't please God.

But God has made a way for us to bring him pleasure and to be accepted by God. And that's through what Jesus Christ has done for all of us. That's it. That's the message of Christianity in a neat little paragraph. Um, and I know I use this letter a lot, James, but it's, uh, it's the fact that it's a practical one, uh, to living is the reason that I use it so much. Um, but the hearing and the doing part becomes a weekly, daily message for all of us. We come to church, we hear a message, but do we do the message? You know, we can come every Sunday, we can come every Wednesday, we can attend every event that has a devotion or anything and we can hear it and go, eh, that was great. And if you're not putting in into practice, you're what tonight's gonna be described as, you're a hero. Only meaning you're deceiving yourselves. You ever been the type of person that goes, I'm okay. You're okay. Trisha and I went to that a long time. I I cuz I always want, as a protector, I just wanna always make sure she's good. So I'll go, you, okay? And she'll go, I'm okay. And I'll walk away going great, she's okay. But she might not really be okay. You know what I mean? But, but, but the hearing is what I need. So, um, deceiving myself. So, a hero only we have got to be, uh, practical and we've got to be doing the message of God. Um, and so if we're not doing the message, the rest of our week takes over. We don't put any in action. So, James tells us to be hearers really good listeners, you know, uh, I know in service on Sunday, we can't say, can you repeat that?

You know, but in, in bible studies you can. Um, it's a really good listener. And then he else is gonna tell us to be doers of the word. And that's people of action in the name of Jesus. That's in its simplest form, a doer is people of action in the name of Jesus. So tonight, I've divided the message into just two parts, two points, hearing the word and doing the word. And this is the pic. This is the heart of James' letter hearing and doing faith expressed in our works, we hear a message, and we go, I got it. I understand it, I'm gonna put it into application. I am going to use it in my circles. I'm going to put it in action when I go to school or work, or at the grocery store, at the, um, restaurant, wherever you may be. Cuz the funny thing about Sundays is like a lot of people go out to eat right after, right?

You go out to eat or you go buy your food at Publi. So, either way, you're interacting with people. So, you've heard a message with the opportunity to put it into action. And so, if you ask yourself, man, I've, I haven't really climbed that spiritual ladder, I just, I can't get past just the same level that I know. I would argue that maybe you're not putting into action, you know, you're hearing it, you're hearing it, but you're not doing anything more with it. So that's why it's so important to return to the book of James,

be a hearer of the word, but not only here, be a doer. Cuz if you don't, you're deceiving yourself. Um, so yeah, in order to live the Christian life, the way God designed, we must be people that are hearers of the word that we're hearing the word. So, let's, uh, look at James one 19 through 21. Know this, my beloved brothers and sisters let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger. I was telling Jim that I have notes in my, uh, pages all the way through that says, slow down, not just in, slow to speak. I know I'm a fast talker. So, I tell myself, slow down, look left, look right, that kind of thing. Uh, be quick to hear, slow to speak. Slow to anger for the anger of men does not produce the righteousness of God.

Therefore, put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. So, when you're studying the Bible, when you've got, you're doing a devotion, you get something going on, you're studying the Bible, it's always important to not only understand what God's word says, but to also to consider your heart and the way you're hearing the truth. Meaning is the truth being really received. Is it taking root and is it bearing fruit in your life? You know, uh, trees, what, what I saw a news report. They were talking about the redwoods over in California. Those, um, don't, I don't think those are the ones that go quite as deep, but what they do is they join with one another, and they hold faster. Those things are taller and they're stronger because they're united. It's almost like they're all holding hands and they're taking root.

And so that's what we need to do, is just to realize how deep is the word going when you hear it here, but are you immediately dismissing, not dismissing in a way like, I heard it, I don't wanna do anything with it. Not like that. Like you heard it and you just somehow find yourself back in your routine again. You know what? That, you know how that is. I mean, it's so easy. You go, man, that was so good. I wanna put that into action. Then the baby starts crying or something, you know, or, or your kid says they hate your guts, or something like that. Or, or I don't, you know, slamming doors all over the place or whatever. But something always will get in the way. But so the intention may be there, but we have to work past those distractions to be doers of the word.

Let it fruit so that you can bear fruit in your life. And bearing fruit is simply, people notice something different about you. What's, what's go, what's going on here? You know, it's, it's Jesus. That's what's going on here. So, hearing the truth where it truly takes root will transform your life, not a transformer, but it will change you in a manner that will, people will notice. So, the, um, the truth when it takes root will do that the growth differs, uh, with everyone. But true believers in Jesus will produce fruit. That, I mean, that, that's a fact. If you're a true, you're letting it take root. And you're not just being only, but you're being a doer of the world. You're practicing and you're acting it out. There will be fruit. You will produce fruit. And I had a student one time, I I had kid you not, we had a student one time, I read, I think same verses, and I said, it'll produce fruit in your lives.

And someone said, bless their heart, they weren't being taught in their home. And they said, you mean like having fruit on the table? And I said, no. I said, that means that when, when people see Jesus has changed your life, they'll see a difference and you'll act differently, and you'll speak differently, and you'll live differently. And they will want to know what that is because they don't have it and they want it. And so that's bearing fruit. Then you talk to someone, the next thing you know, a conversation develops. And then after that, you're talking to 'em about the Lord. And after that, they receive the Lord that's bearing fruit. And we want to constantly be produced as a fruit. Uh, Matthew 13, nine says, he who has ears, pretty sure that's everybody in the room, let them hear. And that doesn't mean I heard you Branson's pretty loud. It's hard not to hear him. That's not what it means. It means hear it and go, I understand what God's word is telling me to do, how it's telling me to, how it's telling me to not to live. How not to live. But I hear it. He who has ears let him.

I told you before that I, I grew up, I mean, I, I grew up, uh, in a Christian household. Uh, my grandfather was a pastor, but that didn't and never will save me. You understand? Correct. I I was blessed to have a

good home. I understand that a lot of people were not blessed with that. I was, but that's not what saved me. It was understanding that I needed to have the word of God take root in my life personally. And my belief in Jesus would produce fruit. So, in 1979, the word, if you will, took root in my life, I heard it. And my life was personally transformed by the saving power and blood of Jesus Christ. So since then, the way I strive to live for God, uh, to be a doer every day I have breath is the actual doing of the word.

So, when you got saved, that's when it took root. And ever since then, you're trying to be a doer of the word, a producer of the word, a taking action. Um, so however, the person who just hears the word and has a lifestyle that is characteristically against, uh, doing what he hears he or she hears has not truly received the gospel. If, uh, again, if you're, you know, you come to church and you hear it, and, uh, your ha you know, you know right away you have no desire to put any of that in action. Because I'm not gonna change. I'll go, I'll, I'll, I'll take, I'll accept the invitation. I'll come to your church, I'll come to this point church, but I have no desire to change anything. That's someone that's just heard what you said. It's never taken root. And so, uh, they haven't truly received the gospel.

You know how we hear sometimes so many testimonies where someone says, uh, they'll get up there, they'll be in baptized or something. They said, well, I, I grew up in church. Uh, and then I went my own life and realized I'd never really heard the gospel. And so that, uh, had one particular pastor that I read about, and I said, how can you be in church your entire life and never hear the gospel? Now, it could be churches that aren't teaching the truth, I understand that. But it could be you're just hearing, and you have no, uh, concept of, of receiving it and, and actually putting it into practice. So, you want to be, uh, I know I'm talking to my family tonight, but hey, we have to constantly put this into practice, um, to be hearers and doers. Not hearers only. We'll get to the other verses in a minute.

Um, so you have, you have to, what was heard, whether it's last week or any Sunday or any Wednesday, you have to put in an application. So, believers are to respond positively to scripture, to God's word. And, and, and with a, with an eagerness, pursue every opportunity to know God's word and his will better. So, okay, let's say you're someone, uh, you've been saved 40, 50 years and you're doing well. You know, you're climbing that ladder and you constantly want to crave what, uh, what God has for you. You don't ever stop, right, Linda, you don't ever get there and go, okay, I've, I've received all I need to receive. Every day you wake up with breath and you go, okay, I want to know him more. Oh, right. I wanna know him better. Something new for me today. I wanna know him better. And so that's, you want to pursue it with every fiber of your being.

So that is why you have to pick up your Bible and read it. You if, if you've been to our, um, the Bible app, uh, the point of the app, you know, and you have that picture where it says, read me in dust. I love that because it's really, it's true. It, there's so many bibles and so many households just collecting dust. And all you gotta do is pick it up. But you have to read your Bible. Uh, if you have questions when you're reading it, what do I say? Write 'em down. Write down your questions. Pray out your questions. Um, measure your spiritual growth with journals. If you're in church, you're surrounded by people that can help and disciple. Many people have gone through a lot of stuff, I mean, bad stuff. And they've come out of it, uh, in the name of Jesus, and they can help and have help.

So, you're surrounded by people that want to help. So, I don't, I, I really don't know. It's so hard to fathom why people stay away from church. Talk to somebody that, um, called and needed food. So, a bag was prepared for them. And while they were, uh, uh, Trish and Billy were out there getting the the bag, I talked to the person. I said, so do you, do you live around here? Are you looking for a church? I said, this isn't something we, we do it once a month with our, and I explained heart of the point. I said, if you're involved in a church, I mean, you, you come and you want more out of it. I'm not saying that there's a bag of food waiting for you every time, but there's people that'll surround you. And she immediately said, no, I, I'm, I'm, I move around a lot, you know, so I know I was dismissed right away.

And that's okay. We still, we still provide provided and that's great. But I had to say something, you know what I mean? Is to explain that you want more of this. And I don't mean just a bag of food. I mean spiritual growth. Come on. Right? That's what we all have to do. Not just once you're in here, we're like, oh yeah, we already know what we're doing. No, don't. A lot of us, me, we don't know what we're doing. We need God every single day. But yeah, measure your spiritual growth with journals. Write stuff down.

So, let's, let's break down the couple of verses there that we just read. So, let's talk about quick to hear, quick to hear. That is concentrating your attention on someone and really listening to them giving eye contact. So, I'm, I'm, I'm talking, I'm gonna give you eye contact and we're talking, and you say something and I'm listening. I'm not off going, you know, like that. Or when's lunch? What time's the game? I'm listening to you. Okay? So, you're paying attention and you're really listening to them, not elsewhere as we can do. We have the, we have, we're, we're we're habitual bad habit people. Um, this is also a way of preparing our hearts to be ready for God, for to speak to us and others around us. So just sometimes, uh, listen, quick to hear. Not to you hear. So, I've already made my mind, you know, I've already judged you.

No quick to hear. Listen, be quick to listen rather than make up your mind and, and, and speak without, uh, thinking it through. Did we do that? Yeah. Act or speak without thinking <laugh>. Yes. Yes, we do. All right. The next slow to speak. Slow to speak. Control your tongues. Yeah. Ash, don't we all wanna run out and hide? Now we know we all have a problem with that. Whether it's we, we, we can't help but saying something about somebody else or we can't help but just, man, I gotta tell somebody. Or just flat out cussing them out, you know, control or, or just criticizing someone, uh, when, when they don't even deserve it. But control your tongues. We, we, we talk about pandemics with covid and whatever is not, not being able controlling the tongue. Is that not a pandemic that's been around since mankind?

But we don't talk about that pandemic. So, oh man, wear a mask. Cover your mouth, sneeze. Go away. No, controlling your tongue is a pandemic. And not not being able to control our tongues, is it? And it's always been around. Uh, so are you on? Do you <laugh>, do you speak with your eyes? I know a lot of us do. Yeah, I know I do. I know I do. I mean, you could read me sometimes and be like, you heard my daughter say, I mean the acoustics now are so much better. We got these pan sound panels. That's why when there no, only one person be, you can hear someone go. So, on Sunday, watch out. If you say, gosh, good grief, you're gonna be heard <laugh>. So yeah. Do you speak with your eyes? Eyes can roll a certain way that says everything right?

Okay, enough said. But we must control our tongues, I guess our eyes too. Um, so how well does your speech reflect the truth of who you are in Christ? Ooh. Right, everyday Pastor. Yeah. Yeah. <laugh> every day. Oh my gosh, yes. So, think about, write it down in your notes if you need to. How well does your speech, how well does your speech reflect the truth of who you are in Jesus? Cuz remembers, we can, uh, we can be wearing our shirts, be still and know that I'm God, uh, God's crazy about you and all the others that we have. Walk by faith down by sight. And then just go, you got my order wrong. I want my money back. You blankety blank, whatever. And the person's reading your shirt going, I don't understand. You're supposed to be set apart and different, right? You see how easy that house of cards can come right down. Be very careful with your tongue. Slow to anger You. Anybody got that problem? <laugh>? I didn't think so.

Containing or controlling your anger in this context in James, the word anger from the Greek means to have a deep internal resentment and rejection. Right? Like I heard you were angry with me. Oh, that doesn't even spell it. I have a deep internal resentment and rejection of you. Right? No <laugh>. We don't think of it that way, but yeah, be slow to anger because so many people, I mean, I, I mentioned it,

think of the prodigal son. The father could have said, what in blazes have you been doing? Yeah, don't even think about getting my favor. Get oversleep in the barn. Right, right. No, he didn't. And he's like, praise God, get on back here, hug it out. And so, but, but the reason I tell you that is he could have responded. That story could have been about someone responding in anger and sending someone further away from the father, right.

Further away from God. So yes, slow to anger. So, I don't know about you, but my anger has never resolved anything. Anyway. I got, I mean, can you tell me differently today? You know what, there was this one time, no, my angers never resolved anything. I was, uh, I don't know if I told you this story. Uh, back in our home in, in Hillsborough, I was fixing a toilet one day. Uh, well let's just say the whole day cuz it didn't go well, and it wasn't going my way. And my anger started to, to build. I mean, it really start, you think, oh, I can't imagine, imagine it. My anger started to really get away. And so all of my family members said, you know, you need to just, I mean, I got honey, just walk away for a bit. Then I got Dad, just leave it alone.

Just walk away from it right now. And why don't you come back to it later? Well, I didn't walk away from it. I got even angrier, and I broke something. I, I even, uh, started bleeding on my hand. So, but then I walked away. So, I guess the bleeding and I broke something. It just that, that, that made it where I walked away and, and I rested. And what's funny is I came back to it like an hour or two later, got it fixed immediately. <laugh>. So, my anger is not helping. And the fact that I'm like, no, no, no, we're gonna get it done Now. That didn't help a thing. I was becoming more frustrated. And the more frustrated you get, the more clouded you get. And so, yeah, so your anger, my anger, will cause delays. Your anger, my anger will push people away. Your anger, my anger won't solve a darn thing.

So, mankind's anger, which says in the verse, the anger of man will never lead you to a path that's closer to God. You're like, no, I'm so angry, man. Him and I are gonna be like this. No, you're gonna be more like this. It doesn't lead you closer to God, never will to the righteousness of God. It leads you further away from him and it takes you off the path of life. I don't have Psalm 1611 for us, but you know it. He's been known to you the path of life. And that's the one we like to get off of. So, it takes you off of that. The phrase put away from, uh, uh, put away from verse 21, stresses the importance of getting rid of cleansing yourself of sin prior to receiving God's word. That doesn't mean waiting until you get cleaned up and then get into God's word.

I mean, we know that it is repeated often, but it's also a good reminder because sometimes that's the way we think without thinking we're thinking that way. You understand? Yeah. Uh, no. It means if you keep sin while also trying to read his word, you won't hear clearly what he's trying to tell you. So you can be reading it. Yeah. Got my Bible open and I'm watching that show and I'm thinking those thoughts. I'm not gonna hear what he's telling me clearly. Right? Yeah. Have you heard Miss Linda? No wonder they're not getting it. Yes, exactly. And we have a nation, a planet full of people that aren't getting it. It's right there. Be hearers of the word. But not only that, because you'll deceive yourself, be doers. And we're gonna get into the rest of those verses in a minute. Uh, James one 15 says, we talk about just we're not hearing clearly from God and our sin will grow.

James one 15 says, then desire, when it has conceived your desire, sinful desire, conceived, gives birth to sin. And then that sin, when it's fully grown, brings forth death. Sin cannot bring forth life. And so, I love that cuz it's, if we got a sinful desire, it's gonna start, it's gonna brew. It gives birth to sin, bouncing baby sin, and then sin when it's fully grown. Nice young man here brings forth death because it, the desire started on the wrong path. Uh, we've covered this before, but when you see filthiness and wickedness mentioned here as it verses 21, you'll know it's referring to evil, desire or intent. And so, we must turn from that desire, turn from not stop doing right. Repent, turn from. So, one of the fruits of our

new lives in Christ, a desire is a desire for truth and righteousness. God's truth and his righteousness are life giving.

So, in the middle of trials, temptations and the pressures of life, our opinions argument, our self-righteous, uh, efforts will never accomplish godly change. Not for ourselves, not for anyone. So, if you don't have a usual routine for prioritizing time and prayer, um, and scripture like having a quiet time today, tonight is the perfect time to start. Then here's the thing, the longer you wait to do it is the harder you will even do it. So yes, think about that devotions and quiet times, uh, away and along with God, uh, we've mentioned over and over. And we'll keep mentioning it over and over until Jesus comes back or we pass and go be with him. Um, so it's vital to your survival as a Christian, uh, in this world to constantly be in communication with God. Constantly not, I talked to him on Sunday. I mean, gosh, what else do you want?

No, I'm talking constant communication. Because when you leave here, I mean, I've seen it, I use my older church as an example, but I saw it so many times where you would, um, you're like, you know, hands up praising God and walking out and yelling at your spouse and shoving the kids into the backseat and saying, don't you say a word. And I mean, you see how quickly it just, that's a hero. Only it's not someone that says, you know what, uh, I should not be treating you like that. That's being a doer. That's going, I just heard something that convicted me. So, yeah. Um, that's how you grow spiritually. I've never heard anyone say, I don't want to grow spiritually, I just don't. No, you don't hear that. But however, not living life with a devotion or not having quiet time with God to communicate to him is a way of saying you don't even without saying it, hearing in a way that matters, where God's word is taking root and bearing fruit will result, will result in righteous activity.

What you believe directs the way you live. So, let's go ahead and move on to number two. Uh, part two, doing the word James 1 22 through 27 says, but doers of the word and not hearers only why you're deceiving yourself. So, Bible's now telling us to be both be doers and he, and not just hearers only, but they want you to hear it, but then be a doer of it. Because if you don't, you're deceiving yourself. Verse 23, for if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, like a lot of people on the planet, he is like a person, a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror, for he looks at himself and goes away at once, forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres being no hearer who forgets, but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

If anyone thinks he is religious, I'm gonna explain all this in a minute. Um, if anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue, but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this, to visit orphans and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself, unstained from the world. All right here and doing pretty simple, right? James is pretty straightforward here. Hearing the word of God is foundational, but that alone is not enough. Uh, a person could attend church year-round, hear every sermon, take notes every time, and even read their way through a Bible in the year plan, and still not be biblically engaged in a word, in a way that God desires. Right? It, it can go even deeper if we're not careful. We also have to make sure we're, that we're even living the life, uh, the Christian life in the first place.

You guys know who Vadi Bkm is? Uh, he's a pastor, uh, African American. Looks like my friend Oscar who passed away in January, except he's got like this gray goatee going. He's heard what he says here he is court to saying hell will filled with people who didn't drink, didn't cuss and may have even been baptized. Why will hell be filled with those people? Because not one of those things makes you become a Christian. Amen. Those are all acts, uh, good things, but none of them make you a Christian, makes you a Christian as you believe in Jesus Christ, the blood was shed for you. Ask for forgiveness. Believe in him that he, uh, lived, died, and rose again. It's not based on what you did and didn't know. It's not a list of dos and don'ts. Remember back in the day, I mean, I, I did as a teenager.

Here's what you need to do, Brian. Or here's what not. I want you to not go see raid at our movies. I want you to not drink, don't have sex before marriage. Don't do this and you'll be right as reign. No, no. Well let, let's just break it down the way I would wanna break it down. Uh, let's just start with rated at our movies. The none of you would be allowed to see the passion of the Christ. So, where's the caveat? Oh, I, I'm in except movies about our Lord, obviously. I mean, see our movies, they're about, no, you can't do that. So, it's not an it's not about a list do's and don'ts. It's living by the word of God. I get this a lot. I hear, and I do, I hear this a lot. People come up here or, and in, uh, private, they'll say, I hear what you're saying pastor, but I'm not doing that and I'm not sure I want to, my answer to someone like that is, you are blocking God.

Right? You are blocking, you're not allowing him to work. And so that's like saying, I know I'm supposed to love my neighbor, but I don't Right? And I don't plan to <laugh>. What do you think you're blocking God, we're talking, we're not talking about my words. We're talking about God's words. Love your neighbor as yourself. Good grief. So yeah. Uh, hear the word of God. Live it out. Do it. Be like Nike. Just do it. Also, look what James says about a hero. Only they are deceiving themselves. You know, you, you're deceiving yourself. The faires were a good example of this. They were very scripture oriented, but not transformed by the power of God. So, we can be very, I read my Bible, what are you talking about? But you're not being transformed by the word of God. They leaned heavy on traditions rather than correctly applying.

Scripture said forever. Tradition will kill a person. We can have good traditions. That's not what I'm talking about. I'm talking about by living by that rather than by the word of God. The Christian life is one of active obedience. When you hear God's word respond in obedience, like, I heard you God. All right, talk to you later. Right? <laugh> respond in obedience. Or I hear God that that's, that's pretty hard. <laugh>. That's pretty hard. So, I love ya, but I'm not gonna do that. Right? Are you that that's not responding in obedience. What James is opposing is any hearing of the word that does not lead to doing. And this is firmly in line with Jesus's teaching. Look at Luke 1128. But he said, blessed rather those who hear the word of God and what keep it. What does keep mean in this context? Act on it.

Be a doer. People think they have a relationship with God simply because they attend church. Go to Bible studies or even just read the Bible. But if their listing is not accompanied by obedience, then they're missing the point about God missing the entire point. You can say, great sermon, I loved it. We want more of that. But if you're not biblically applying it, I, I mean you just, you just heard something that sounded good to your ears. And that's actually the problem in a lot of churches. All they want is some something that will tickle their ears. The Bible tells us that. Verse 25, the point of James' mirror illustration. I've always loved, I I've, I've dug into this so many times cause I I love this. You might just, I don't get that look in the mirror and forget what's that mean? I'm gonna explain, um, James, is that a person can have a false impression of themselves spiritually, right?

False impression of spouse spiritually. I made it to every Sunday. I am the first one to volunteer for everything. Uh, but look, the implication is that a brief look in the mirror is not enough to give someone a clear, accurate picture of themselves. And in the same way, it's like a person who treats God, God's word by giving a brief glance at it, but not seeking to understand the word by living it out. Here's an example. So, you get up in the morning, you look in the mirror, you're like, first glance, you're like, uh, yeah, that's good. And move on. And then you come back to, and you go, where'd that mole come from? <laugh>, right? It's like looking at the Bible and going, yep, got it. John three forgot. Okay, got it. And then looking at again later and going, oh my boy, have I messed up?

Right? Looking at it again. So, we can look at it, we can look at the mirror and go, yep, that's as good as it's gonna, that that's with me. That's as good as it's gonna get. The hair's just gonna go. Um, then I look back and, oh, maybe I can do this. You know, it's the se it's that second glance, you know? So, and then I

I know you wanna know, because when I read it, I always wanna know if anyone thinks he is religious. Well, I don't, I've never liked the word religion. So there, there's the, there's the Bible, God's word use, if anyone thinks he's religious, is referring to, if anyone thinks he has genuine faith, James words this way, because there were rituals, routines, and forms that were not being followed. Sincerely, it's, it's not religion. It's having genuine faith.

I actually want you to write that in your notes. It's not religion, it's having genuine faith. It's not pretending to have faith; it's living it out in word thought and action. But that's what most of our nation is getting, is pretending to have faith. Oh, I love, I love Jesus and have no intention of even knowing what that means. So yes, don't pretend to have faith. It's not religion, it's genuine faith. So, when you see that in James, I even write in my Bible and I, I encourage you to do the same. Write the underline it and point an error, however you can squeeze it in there, but genuine faith. So, when you go back to it, when a person is religious, it's not, they got the right clothes on, they got the right walk, they talk good. I mean, they don't say, um, like me all the time.

They got the perfect speech. They don't talk too fast. They gotta, they don't have to write slowdown in their notes, you know, they're just, they got it, but they don't cuz they don't have gen. Genuine faith, genuine faith. This is, this is me telling you my genuine faith, what you see is what you get. I can't pretend to be anything else if I, when I step outta the line, I think I have wires that go <laugh> because I so desire to live out the Bible. Nothing else. Nothing else. So yes, genuine faith. And so, okay, lost my, there we go. So being a doer has two components, two components, putting away all filthiness. We read that in the first part. And then seeking pure religion, which I told you in this context means genuine faith. So, uh, two components, putting away filthiness, rampant wickedness, whatever is there that's trying to get to you. And then seeking genuine faith, reading you the word of God. So sometimes the word religion does get many ben outta shape. They're like, uh, are you, what are you saying? I I'm not religious? Or are you a religious person? I hate that when I'm asking, are you a religious person? I'm like, can we sit down? I've got like paragraphs to talk to you about. I can't answer in a yes or no question. I'm

Actually, replace that word with

Relationships. Absolutely. Well, that's genuine faith right there. Relationship. Um, the, yeah. So, uh, Jesus James was talking about a life devoted to pleasing God. So, the next time someone says, hey, uh, are you a religious person? Said, well, I can tell you that I I am devoted to pleasing Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior. Is that what you meant? No. Kind of thing. And the word in the verses we read, bridal means control. Or in this context, keep a tight reign on watch out. Uh, purity of heart is often revealed by controlled and proper speech.

So, James ta James ta, if you keep reading, and I encourage the, that you do, we're Christians anyway, right? Keep reading because in James chapter three is, is my favorite. I mean, he just destroys us with talking about the tongue. I mean, it's awesome. I mean, I love how he, I I have it look it up lately, but I know there's a reference to snakes and dolphins and we, I mean, we can teach dolphins to go get the fish or go get the ball and bring it back, but we can't control our tongues. I mean, it's really, it's really something. Um, so yeah, he tackles that big time in chapter three. But that's, that's for another refresher measures message when I feel like we need it. Uh, in verse 27, James picked two things that defines spotless or genuine religious faith, which is measured by compassionate love, and that is looking after widows and orphans.

Those without parents or spouses were and are a definition of people in need. So, when he, when he, when he asked for caring for widows and orphans, it clearly demonstrates true sacrificial Christian Love. And that is being adore. Our deacon family ministry is being ado. It's looking out for those in need of them or their church family. John 1335 says, but this all people will know that you are my disciples. Okay? So how do I know if you are one of Jesus' disciples? If you have love for one another, well, then,

then, then we want to ask what, well, who's one another, right? Yeah. Yeah. It's, it's like the, it's like the, the whole, uh, who's my neighbor? Is that my, is that my, uh, my sugar? Yeah. <laugh>. If I pass out right here, don't be concerned, just bring me a candy bar. <laugh>. But yeah, we have to love one another simply.

Others will know Jesus if we show love to them, right? Don't go, all right, I got my them, not them, right? Everyone, every human being. So, if you have a right relationship with God, it will be evident and showing you having a right relationship with o others, I mean, it's that, uh, simple and that difficult. So do the word and obey it and not just hear it. You know, blessings will come because what are we doing? If we're just ignoring that verse where it says, be hearers of the word. Don't be hearers only but be doers of the word. If we are, if we're only doing one out of two, why are we here? Why are we here? Put the whole word in there. I I mean, I've heard people, I mean, I've heard people say, I like this part of the Bible. I like that part.

I don't like this part. It's like a Batman's utility belt. I like this. I'm gonna keep that right there. I don't like that. So, you can have that. I, I like that part a lot. I can use that. That's not, that's not, uh, that's not being a true Christian. So do the word and obey it. But more importantly, do the word meaning. Meaning put it into action every day because God's words, God's word tells you to do so. Uh, every day you have the opportunity to hear something from God. Put it in, put into action. Put in action. Remind somebody. If you're with someone tonight or tomorrow, be reminded of James chapter one, 19 through 27. Be uh, hearing the word and doing the words someone will say to you, and I want them to say this, what does that mean? So, you can say, I'm so glad you asked.

This is what it means. But every time you're here, uh, you not only have the opportunity, but you have the obligation as a child of God to put what you receive into practice. Put it into action. So, in closing, take action to the word, be doers of the word. Not just hearers Only because that will deceive you. So, in my language, in in my quirky Brian language, don't be a don't be, be a doobie. Okay? I was gonna say nobody. Okay? All right. <laugh>, don't be a don't be, be a doobie. Pray that God will give you spiritual ears to hear his truth and eyes, to see opportunities to put in action. Because there's, there's a lot of opportunities. You're like, oh man, I talked to one person today and it was so great. We had this conversation. I mean, great, but there's so many opportunities.

I'm afraid I miss most of them. Pray that God gives you spiritual ears to hear his truth and eyes, to see those opportunities to put in action, but also to pray for a humble heart that's eager to respond to people in Christ. Like love be the, it's the what would Jesus do? Do what Jesus would do. We say, I would, I'm not gonna go in there. Jesus would go in there because there's someone sick in there, someone that needs the word of God. Urge it tonight to study scripture intently, intently, not just got it intently. Like, whoa, what does that mean? Um, don't just read the Bible and say, oh, that was awesome. And then leave your life however you think makes most sense to you. No, receive God's word and let it change you. Let it transform you. And also use the tools available to you.

You've been given gifts and even you have been given gifts and talents. Some of you have many and some have one, but use it, uh, right available to you, but then other to physical tools, our website, we told you, you can now get any message transcript. And if you're a studier or whatever, you can highlight certain points and take it, make your own notes, make a devotion out of it. The transcribing the, prayer journal that we've used in, uh, discipleship classes, the notes from Sunday or notes from Wednesday. All of that is available on the website to click and print and use to your advantage as a Christian. Uh, yeah, like I said, even the video sermons or just listen to the audio. Um, and the journal for, for, for prayerful dev prayerful devotions, all of that can help with spiritual growth.

You understand? I mean, it's, it's awesome to be able to be at a church that has those things for you. Let's pray. Our Father, thank you so much for this time. Uh, Lord, help us to be not hearers only, but

active participants in your word. And just I thank you in advance for changing us even just a little bit tonight, Lord, to understand that maybe sometimes we are just hearing it walking away and just forgetting what we heard. We're not giving it that second glance. We're not gonna wait a second what was said this morning or what was said tonight. I want to know that more. I wanna know what that meant. I wanna apply it to my life. Lord, help us to be the Christians that you designed in the first place. And when that happens, we will make a difference. And we thank you in advance for that. I ask you to bless everyone here, bless those that are online, and we thank you for your word. We thank you for your son and the shedding of his blood. It's in Jesus, they, I'm gonna ask. Amen. Amen. All right, so we will see Memorial Day Sunday. Please make sure that you're here. It is going to be awesome. And so, we'll see you at 9:30am.