

James 1:19-27

REVIEW – HOW TO HAVE WISDOM ...

- JOY because of TRIALS...
 - When we FALL into various TRIALS - TEMPTATIONS...
 - KNOWING - that the testing of our faith produces patience!
- WISDOM for TRIALS...
 - There are TWO very different kinds of WISDOM – from ABOVE and from BELOW...
 - We MUST ask the Lord for WISDOM from ABOVE – and He WILL give it freely to us...
 - But we NEED to ask in faith [trust] – doubting NOTHING...
 - Those who doubt are double minded will not get ANYTHING from the Lord!
- REWARD from TRIALS...
 - OH HOW HAPPY – is the man who endures TEMPTATIONS...
 - When we go through trials / temptations [same word] we WILL learn to endure [abide]...
 - When we endure - we WILL receive a crown of life – speaking of our salvation!
 - Temptations DO NOT come from God...
 - God cannot be tempted by evil – and he does not tempt anyone with evil...
 - We are tempted by our own desires - and we are deceived...
 - DO NOT - be deceived my beloved brethren – IMPERATIVE!
 - Every good perfect God comes down from the Father of Lights!
 - Who brought us forth by the Word of Truth – that we might bear fruit!

ANSWER IN TRIALS... [3 POINTS]

- 1ST – LISTEN TO THE WORD... vs. 19-21
 - 1st – Slow to SPEAK... vs. 19
 - Since we LACK wisdom from ABOVE...
 - And we are in constant danger of falling into TEMPTATION...
 - So then my beloved brethren...
 - Let [imperative] every man be swift to hear - slow to speak - slow to wrath!
 - We used to say – sticks and stones...
 - It turns out names are far more devastating than stones...
 - If you get hit by a stone – the wound will heal rather quickly – not so much with words...
 - There are things people said to me when I was a child that I STILL remember!
 - They leave scars that NEVER go away – words are POWERFUL!
 - Words are WEAPONS...
 - When we are not happy - we can use cutting words designed to cause maximum damage...
 - You have heard the old saying - if you have nothing good to say - say nothing...
 - Because we will have to answer one day for every idle word - **Matthew 12:36**
 - **Ecclesiastes 3:7** – “There is a time to keep silence, and a time to speak...”
 - It has been well said that God wisely designed us with TWO ears and ONE mouth...
 - Because we should be listening at least TWICE as much as we are talking!
 - The problem is that often open our MOUTHS – when we should be opening our EARS!
 - Do not throw out words carelessly - it ends up costing us dearly...
 - Better to think first about what we are going to say - the consequence of our words...
 - It is easy to say something - it is almost impossible to take our words back!
 - **Ephesians 4:29** – “Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth...”

- o 2nd – Slow to WRATH... vs. 20
 - The wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God...
 - James gives us a hint on what happens if we ARE NOT slow to speak...
 - There will be WRATH – because words do SO MUCH damage...
 - And those wounds that we inflict on others – when our words PROVOKE anger...
 - Those DO NOT lead to the righteousness of God – just the opposite...
 - They take us down a path of BITTERNESS – which SEPARATES us from God!
 - Wrath - leads to bitterness...
 - Jesus said if we are ANGRY with someone is equivalent to murder - **Matthew 5:21-22**
 - Therefore if we are ANGRY with someone - deal with it before the sunsets...
 - Talk to the person we are upset with - before our ANGRY turns to BITTERNESS...
 - BITTERNESS which becomes HATRED - HATRED that will begin to control our life!
 - I have unfortunately too often let the SUN GO DOWN on an argument...
 - Now while I can sleep like a baby when that happens – my wife has suffered...
 - Time DOES NOT make it easier to deal with hurts – in contrast it lets them fester!
 - If we try and ignore a problem - we give an opportunity to satan...
 - Satan would love to cause division in our families – in church - bitterness and hate...
 - Do not let satan rob us of the forgiveness and joy Jesus has provided...
 - If we are upset with someone because of something they said – talk about it today!
 - **II Corinthians 2:11** - “lest Satan should take advantage of us...”
- o 3rd – Receive the Word... vs. 21
 - Therefore - lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness...
 - Do not miss INEVITABLE result of WRATH...
 - All filthiness [only here NT] - to make DIRTY...
 - Overflowing wickedness – super abundant evil!
 - [Instead] Receive with meekness the implanted word...
 - Notice that we are given a solution to filthiness / wickedness...
 - SET ASIDE these things – by RECEIVING [imperative]...
 - What MUST we RECEIVE - the engrafted [written on our hearts] Word!
 - **Hebrews 12:1** – “Lay aside [same word] every weight - the sin which so easily ensnares us - let us run with endurance the race that is set before us. Looking to Jesus...”
 - Which is able to save your souls...
 - SOUL [ψυχή] – speaking of our MIND / EMOTIONS...
 - ABLE [δύναμαι] – we can almost speak into English – dynamite / power...
 - The implication is the Word has the POWER to change our MIND / HEART!
 - Change our heart to allow us to let go of ANGER/ BITTERNESS – and FORGIVE!
 - The COMMAND to forgive...
 - How often do we have to forgive others - 70x7 – **Matthew 18:22**
 - With a little quick math we can figure out that is 490 times...
 - But Jesus was not giving us a number – He was giving us a Bible reference...
 - 70x7 is a very special number only used once in the Bible!
 - **Daniel 9:24** – “A period of seventy sets of seven [70x7] has been decreed... to bring an end to sin, to atone for guilt, to bring in everlasting righteousness...”
 - How often are we to forgive someone when they hurt us – EVERY time!
 - What if they keep committing the same sin – then we keep forgiving...
 - Is there ever any reason when we do not to forgive – not even one!
 - The REASON we forgive...

- With WRATH in our hearts - God does not hear our prayers - **Mark 11:25**
- AND if we are not willing to FORGIVE - God will not forgive us - **Matthew 6:15**
- When we are hurt by others - and REFUSE to FORGIVE - it plants a seed in our heart...
- It can quickly grow into BITTERNESS - we become consumed by the hurt they caused...
- Its roots can grow down deep - poisoning and hardening – SEPARATING us from God...
- The FRUIT in our life makes us BITTER - and eventually brings spiritual DEATH!
- The only solution – RECEIVE the WORD...
 - Jesus can CHANGE our hearts – and allow us to let go of filthiness and wickedness...
 - Forgiveness is not just for the one who did us wrong - it is also for us...
 - He sets us free - we do not dwell on the past - we get to move forward in Jesus!
 - **John 8:36** - “If the Son makes you free - you shall be free indeed.”
- **2ND – OBEY THE WORD... vs. 22-25**
 - o **1st – Doers of the Word... vs. 22**
 - **Be [imperative] doers of the word - and not hearers only...**
 - DOER – [ποιητής] – used THREE times in the next THREE verses – IMPORTANT!
 - It is not enough to just LISTEN to what the Bible says – we need to OBEY!
 - We can read our Bibles – we might even agree with everything it says...
 - But if we do not OBEY the commands – then what benefit did it have!
 - I took a boat ride in India – SIX hundred people in a boat built for TWO hundred!
 - Before it left - they gave safety instructions - what to do if the boat sank – I paid attention!
 - The gist of the instructions was to get out of the boat – and swim for it...
 - But all that information meant nothing – because most of the people could not swim!
 - The Bible is not a textbook we must learn - it is an instruction manual to follow...
 - We can know all words - but if it does not change our actions - it means nothing!
 - **Deceiving yourselves...**
 - DECEIVING – [παραλογίζομαι] – we can speak the word into English – LOGIC...
 - Too many people try to use JUSTIFY the BITTERNESS in their lives with LOGIC...
 - I am the way I am because of what has happened to me – what people did to me...
 - As a RESULT they are DECEIVED – they miss the POWER of Jesus to set them free!
 - I know a lot of people who know about Jesus – but do not DO what He says...
 - Unfortunately for them – it does them no good – knowledge does not save us...
 - We cannot stand before God one day and say – I knew what Jesus wanted me to do!
 - **How to OBEY...**
 - **Ephesians 2:10** – “For we are His workmanship...”
 - WORKMANSHIP - [ποίημα] – same exact word translated as DOER...
 - It is not that we must DO what the Bible says – that would come from us...
 - We come to Jesus – who changes us HEARTS – and He makes us a DOER of the Word!
 - o **2nd – The mirror... vs. 23-24**
 - **If anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer...**
 - He is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror...
 - There are two ways that we can approach the Bible...
 - It can either be an INSTRUCTION manual – or it can be a MIRROR...
 - The person who does not OBEY the INSTRUCTIONS – treats the Bible like a MIRROR!
 - When I get up on the morning – I DO NOT like mirrors...
 - They are TOO honest – they tell me EXACTLY what I look like...
 - But I find the solution to the mirror – is to walk away – then I can forget what I saw!
 - That is exactly what happens to the man who does not OBEY...
 - For he observes himself - goes away - and immediately forgets what kind of man he was...

- When he LOOKS at the Word – he sees his NATURAL face...
- NATURAL [γένεσις] – original – we might say REAL...
- But the moment he puts the Bible down – he always CHOSE [active] to walk away!
- FORGET come from the root word – [λανθάνω] to HIDE – an intentional act!
- That way he gets to go on with living his life HIS way!
- He goes back to the same broken life he had before he read the Bible!
- He is the same kind of man he was [imperfect] before he heard the Word – NO CHANGE!
- When we first come to Jesus - we are not going to understand much of the Bible...
- There is a LOT about the Word of God we will not comprehend...
- But we should not stay that way - as we get into the Word - we should CHANGE...
- When a believer whose been saved for TWENTY years - is still living for this world...
- It is a tragedy - they never became DOERS of the WORD - they never matured in their faith!
- o 3rd – The law of liberty... vs. 25
 - He who looks into the perfect law of liberty...
 - The person who LOOKS into the perfect Law of Liberty...
 - The word LOOK here – is NOT the same word as OBSERVE in verse 24...
 - The word LOOK here means to do more than glance – it means to bow down and inspect!
 - It carries the idea of being VERY interested in the topic we are examining...
 - Recognizing its importance and giving it the proper RESPECT it deserves!
 - Continues in it - and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work...
 - This one will be blessed in what he does!
 - CONTINUES [παραμένω] – to ABIDE in the Word...
 - So often people do NOT want to OBEY the Bible – because they want to be FREE...
 - They do not want to be told what to do – they want to have the CHOICE...
 - But true FREEDOM is not being left to our own devices – that is BONDAGE!
 - FREEDOM comes from the PERFECT [complete] Law of LIBERTY...
 - The word LIBERTY comes from the root word to be FREE BORN...
 - In Rome there were only TWO kinds of people – SLAVES and CITIZENS...
 - Do not miss the point – those who ignore the Bible are SLAVES to sin – **Romans 6:16**
 - But those who continue – ABIDE - in the PERFECT law of LIBERTY...
 - Not forgetting what they HEAR – but are DOERS – they BLESSED...
 - Because they become CITIZENS of the kingdom – FREE from sin!
 - A good example to illustrate this – sheep and goats...
 - If you set a sheep right next to a goat – you might not know which is which...
 - Do not look very different – they do not sound very different – eat the same things...
 - They live side by side – experiencing much the same life...
 - But the final destination of the goats is very different from the sheep!
 - The one who can always tell them apart is their shepherd!
 - **John 10:27** – “My sheep hear My voice - and I know them - and they follow [OBEY] Me.”
 - Both sheep and goats hear Jesus voice – but only the sheep OBEY!
 - Hearing does not make us a Christian – obeying Jesus makes us a sheep!
- 3RD – FULFILL THE WORD... vs. 26-27
 - o 1st – Useless religion... vs. 26
 - If anyone among you thinks he is religious - and does not bridle his tongue...
 - But deceives his own heart - this one's religion is useless!
 - WHAT does being a HEARER and DOER of the Word look like...
 - If anyone THINKS they are RELIGIOUS – by context meaning a HEARER and DOER...
 - But they do not BRIDLE – literally put a BIT in their MOUTH - to control their TONGUE...

- Then they are DECEIVING their own hearts – their RELIGION is USELESS!
 - What comes out of our mouth is in really a reflection of what in our heart...
 - We will talk a LOT more about this when we come to - **James 3**
 - **Luke 6:45** - “For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.”
- o 2nd – Pure religion... vs. 27
- Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this...
 - Pure [true] RELIGION undefiled before God the Father is defined by three ACTIONS...
 - The suggestion is that RELIGION that is in WORD ONLY is defiled and impure...
 - Because it lacks the corresponding ACTIONS that show a CHANGED heart!
 - To visit orphans and widows in their trouble...
 - VISIT [σκοπός] – literally to ALWAYS [present] keep a watchful EYE on the orphans...
 - When there are children who have NO ONE to take care of them – VISIT!
 - And VISIT the widows in their affliction [θλίψις] – tribulation...
 - They have lost their husband – and often have NO ONE to care for them!
 - The common thread between these two ACTIONS – LOVE for others...
 - The number one MARK of someone who is a DOER of the Word – LOVE!
 - **John 13:35** – “All will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”
 - To keep oneself unspotted from the world...
 - UNSPOTTED – to have the STAIN of the world...
 - We are ALWAYS [present] to keep ourselves clean from the FILTH of the world!
 - I can tell you I am a Christian – but what kind of FRUIT comes from my life...
 - It is easy to say we have RELIGION – but the proof is in our actions – LOVE...
 - If we say we are Christians – but still live like the world – where is the CHANGED heart...
 - We are NOT to fool ourselves - if we are not OBEYING – it is not PURE RELIGION!