

James
Lesson #5, Chapter 1:19-27

Ask the Lord for His grace as you sit and study His Word. We always need His help in coming to the Word.

1. By way of review, explain the flow of thought in verses 1-18.
2. What does he remind them in verse 19?
3. How would being *quick to hear* be an antidote to anger? How do the following verses help put feet to this instruction? See Proverbs 12:15; 18:13; 19:20.
4. Complete this sentence: If I am “quick to hear” then my interactions with others, whether face to face or in my thoughts, will be guided by....

“Wherever wisdom is the goal, hearing will be a first virtue.”

Kurt A. Richardson

5. How would being *slow to speak* also be an aid in overcoming anger? See also Proverbs 17:27; 21:23; James 1:26; 3:1-2.
6. Complete this sentence: If I am “slow to speak” then my interactions with others will be guided by....

¹Kurt A. Richardson, *James, vol. 36, The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1997), 88–89.

7. How would just being *slow to anger* help us in battling the sin of anger? See also Proverbs 16:32; 19:11; Colossians 3:8, 15.

8. Complete this sentence: If I am “slow to anger” then my interactions with others will be guided by....

9. Take note again, who is to obey this command in verse 19?

10. What motivation for this three-fold command is given in verse 20? Explain what that means in your own words.

11. When we desire to live for God’s glory, then verse 20 really is a death knell to our fleshly desires. Why is that?

12. As a result of understanding verse 20, what are we to do in verse 21?

13. The Greek word translated *filthiness* [Strong’s #4507 (NIV *moral filth*)] only occurs here in verse 21, however a similar adjective can be found in James 2:2 and in 1 Peter 3:21. What do you learn about the word and James’ instructions here in verse 21?

14. What are we supposed to do with filthiness and wickedness (verse 21)? Look up the following verses to gain a clearer picture of what our actions might look like: Isaiah 2:20; Romans 13:12-13; Colossians 3:5-8; Hebrews 12:1.

“All Filthiness”—This term often means “a wax build-up in the ear.” It may refer to unholy living which impairs a believer’s hearing of God’s word. However, its primary usage was “dirty,” as in dirty clothing (cf. James 2:2) which would relate to a believer’s lifestyle.²

15. Before moving on to the next question, take some time to examine your life and heart. Are there any areas of filthiness or wickedness you need to lay aside? The verb tense indicates this is an action we continuously do because sin, just like the sea, laps back up on the beach it previously vacated.

“We wonder why a certain church-member is so lax in his devotions and loose in his practices. The reason is that, while his trunk and his branches are over on the *church side* of the wall, his roots run under the wall and dwell in the bad soil on the *other side*.”³ T. L. Cuyler

16. And while we’re putting those things aside we’re told how to do something, what to do, and why we’re to do it. First Thessalonians 2:13 helps explain the concept of receiving the Word. What do you learn?
17. What are some specific ways you can humbly receive God’s Word today? And again, why would you do that (verse 21)? See Psalm 23:3; 147:3; 1 Peter 2:24.

² Robert James Dr. Utley, *Jesus’ Half-Brothers Speak: James and Jude*, vol. Volume 11, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International, 2000), 23.

³ T. L. Cuyler, ed. Josiah H. Gilbert, *Dictionary of Burning Words of Brilliant Writers* (New York: Wilbur B. Ketchum, 1895), 622.

18. Explain the connection in thought between verse 21 and verse 22 when it comes to the Word.
19. After receiving that Word what should we take care to do according to verse 22?
20. What do you learn about a doer compared with a forgetful hearer from verses 22-25?
21. What is the perfect law, the law of liberty? See Romans 8:15; 2 Corinthians 3:15-18; Galatians 5:1.
22. Verses 26-27 provide a test to see if we are actually a doer of the Law of Liberty. What should we check according to those verses?
23. James doesn't hold back in verses 19-27. He is calling us to examine our hearts and lives to see if we truly are the transformed people we say we are. What truths have challenged and encouraged you the most from this lesson?

“But think also, what encouragement there is here for every honest and true-hearted believer. To you also, Jesus says, “I know thy works.” You see no beauty in any action that you do. All seems imperfect, blemished, and defiled. You are often sick at heart of your own short-comings. You often feel that your whole life is one great arrear, and that every day is either a blank or a blot. But know now, that Jesus can see some beauty in every thing that you do from a conscientious desire to please Him. His eye can discern

excellence in the least thing which is a fruit of His own Spirit. He can pick out the grains of gold from amidst the dross of your performances, and sift the wheat from amidst the chaff, in all your doings. Your tears are all put into His bottle. Your endeavours to do good to others, however feeble, are written in His book of remembrance. The least cup of cold water given in His name, shall not lose its reward. He does not forget your work and labour of love, however little the world may regard it.

It is very wonderful; but so it is. Jesus loves to honour the work of His Spirit in His people, and to pass over their frailties. He dwells on the faith of Rahab, but not on her lie. He commends His Apostles for continuing with Him in His temptations, and passes over their ignorance and want of faith. (Luke 22:28.) "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." (Ps. 103:13.) And as a father finds a pleasure in the least acts of his children, of which a stranger knows nothing, so I suppose the Lord finds a pleasure in our poor feeble efforts to serve Him."⁴ J. C. Ryle

⁴ J. C. Ryle, *Holiness: Its Nature, Hindrances, Difficulties and Roots* (London: William Hunt and Company, 1889), 331–332.