

LIVING FAITH – The Book of JAMES Part 2

Practice Makes Perfect

Opening PREMISE

- * If you'll not only LOOK at the Word, read it, learn it, but actually get on & DO it, God will BLESS you tremendously (v25).
- * However, if you LOOK & don't DO, you're just FOOLING yourself (v22).

Can you recall a time when obeying God brought clarity or freedom that knowledge alone never did?
How do we 'fool ourselves'?

THE GAP / MISSING LINK

- * What for you is missing link between where you ARE & where you'd LIKE TO BE?
- * James' MSG: You TALK a great game, but you have to WALK the TALK.
- * Is there a GAP between what we know we OUGHT to do & what we ACTUALLY do IN PRACTICE?

If you're honest, where is there currently a gap between what you know you ought to do and what you actually do?
What do you think are the most common causes of that 'gap'?

4 VERBS / ACTIONS from James 1:25

James 1:25 → ... *whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom and continues in it – not forgetting what they have heard but doing it – they will be blessed in what they do.*

1. LOOK INTENTLY

- * You can GLANCE in the MIRROR of God's WORD & it won't IMPACT you at all.
- * Has it gone DEEP ENOUGH to really make a difference?
- * Have to get DEEP into the WORD so it can get DEEP into YOU (John 8:32, James 1:21).

What's the difference between glancing at Scripture & looking intently?
What helps the Word move from your head into your heart?
Are there practices that help you slow down enough to let Scripture truly speak?

2. CONTINUE IN IT

- * Missing characteristic for many Christians is CONSISTENCY.
- * More often than not, we KNOW what we OUGHT to DO we just don't do it OFTEN ENOUGH to get the results we want.
- * Consistency is knowing what OUGHT to be done & KEEPING on doing THE LITTLE THINGS over & over again (1 Thess 5:16-18).

What causes inconsistency & what are the inevitable results?
What 'small things' done consistently have helped you grow spiritually?

3. NOT FORGETTING

- * When push comes to shove, what do you DO in the HEAT of the MOMENT?

REMEMBERING TIPS

- a) What is not PRACTISED is soon FORGOTTEN.
- b) What is PERSONALISED becomes MEMORISED.
- c) What is REVISITED is REMEMBERED.

What happens in the heat of the moment to pull you away from God's Word & back into old, potentially destructive habits?
Which of the remembering tips stood out most to you & why?
What is one practical way you could build remembrance of God's Word into your week?

4. BLESSED IN THE DOING

- * The blessing isn't so much in the KNOWING, but in the DOING.
- * Christianity must be ACTIVE & not PASSIVE (Luke 6:46, John 14:23, Matt 7:24).
- * The missing link is, you probably KNOW a lot more than you actually DO.

How can disobedience counteract promise to keep us from blessing?
How does Jesus' question in Luke 6:46 ("Why do you call me 'Lord' and not do what I say?") challenge modern Christianity?

Personal Application & Prayer

Is there one specific thing God has already shown you to do that you've been delaying?
What is the radical step of obedience that could open up for you greater degrees of freedom & fruitfulness?