

James 1:19-21

Introduction:

1. In his letter James addressed a number of important issues relating to Christianity.
2. (1:2-18) James wrote at length about "facing temptations," including trials of our faith as well as enticements to commit sin.
3. James continued in vs.19-27 by writing about "hearing and doing the Word."
4. In dealing with this subject, James first directed some important instructions to God's children in vs.19-21.
 - a. James addressed these comments to "*my beloved brethren*" [Christians].
 - b. These matters apply to "*every man*" -- [all Christians are to follow these instructions].
 - c. Vs.19 & 21 begin with "*wherefore*" [these instructions are based on information presented earlier].
 - 1) (vs.17) God is the giver of every good and perfect gift.
 - 2) (vs.18a) One of these gifts is mentioned -- God allows people to become His children.
 - 3) (vs.18b) God wants His children to be "*a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.*"
5. In order to be a kind of firstfruits of God's creatures we must practice the instructions given in vs.19-21.

Discussion:

- I. (vs.19-20) TO BE A KIND OF FIRSTFRUITS OF GOD'S CREATURES WE MUST BE SWIFT TO HEAR, SLOW TO SPEAK, AND SLOW TO WRATH
 - A. We are to be:
 1. "*swift to hear*"
 - a. With 2 ears and 1 mouth we should do more listening than speaking.
 - b. While this may be true, James dealt with how quickly we hear and speak.
 - c. The real test for being "swift to hear" is during the time of temptation.
 - d. God wants His children to always be "swift to hear."
 2. "*slow to speak*"
 - a. Rather than be swift to speak, we are to be swift to hear and slow to speak.
 - b. (1:26) James showed that having a controlled tongue is essential.
 - c. The real test for being "slow to speak" is during the time of temptation.
 - d. God wants His children to always be "slow to speak" (Proverbs 10:19; 21:23; 29:20).
 3. "*slow to wrath*"
 - a. Wrath: uncontrolled anger
 - b. The real test for being "slow to wrath" is during the time of temptation.
 - c. God wants His children to always be "slow to wrath" (Proverbs 14:29; 15:18; 16:32; 30:33; Ecclesiastes 7:9; Ephesians 4:26-27, 31).
 - B. (vs.20) We are to be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath because our wrath does not work God's righteousness.
- II. (vs.21) TO BE A KIND OF FIRSTFRUITS OF GOD'S CREATURES WE MUST ...
 - A. lay apart certain things, including:
 1. all "*filthiness*" [wickedness -- that which contaminates]
 2. all "*superfluity of naughtiness*" [abundance of wickedness -- any wickedness held over from the time prior to conversion] (Romans 6:11-16; Colossians 3:5-10).
 - B. receive the engrafted word.
 1. The engrafted word is able to save our souls, and we must receive it with meekness.
 2. Before we can receive it with meekness and allow it to produce fruit in our lives, we must lay apart all wickedness (1 Peter 2:1-3; Hebrews 12:1).