

James 1:22-25

Introduction:

1. In his letter James addressed a number of important issues relating to Christianity.
 - a. (1:2-18) He wrote at length about "facing temptations."
 - b. (1:19-27) He wrote about "hearing and doing the Word."
2. This lesson is a study of the message presented in 1:22-25.
3. To understand this message we must keep in mind the information presented earlier.
 - a. (vs.18) God wants His children to be "*a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.*"
 - b. To accomplish this we must follow the instructions given in vs.19-21, including "receiving the engrafted Word with meekness."
4. By contrasting 2 kinds of hearers in vs.22-25, James explained what is involved in receiving God's Word this way.
 - a. One kind of hearer obeys God's Word.
 - b. The other kind of hearer does not obey.

Discussion:

- I. (vs.22a) WE ARE TO BE DOERS OF THE WORD
 - A. A doer of the Word is described in vs.25a.
 1. He "*looks* [gazes carefully] *into*" the perfect law of liberty.
 - a. The "*perfect law of liberty*" is the law of Christ, the New Testament (Hebrews 9:15).
 - 1) It is perfect in that it provides "liberty" [complete removal of sin -- Hebrews 8:6-12].
 - 2) The Law of Moses could not do this (Hebrews 10:1-4).
 2. He "*continues* [abides] *in*" the perfect law of liberty.
 3. He is not a "*forgetful hearer*" -- he does not forget what he learns from the Lord's law.
 4. He is a "*doer of the work*" found in the Lord's law.
 - B. The kind of hearer described in vs.25a will "*be blessed in his deed*" (vs.25b).
- II. (vs.22b) WE ARE NOT TO BE HEARERS ONLY
 - A. One who only hears God's Word without doing what it says is described in vs.23-24.
 1. He is like a person who:
 - a. looks at his face in a mirror
 - b. sees himself as he is [he becomes aware of improvements that need to be made]
 - c. goes on his way
 - d. forgets the image he saw.
 2. James actually described a person who:
 - a. looks into God's Word [the mirror of the soul]
 - b. sees himself as God sees him [he becomes aware of sins that need to be corrected]
 - c. goes on his way
 - d. forgets his faults that God's Word has revealed.
 - B. A person who hears the Lord's Word without doing what it says deceives himself.
 1. He might convince himself that he is a righteous person.
 2. However, he has not fooled God -- he has only fooled himself.
 - C. By contrasting these 2 kinds of hearers, James explained and illustrated what it means to receive the engrafted word with meekness.
- III. JESUS STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF HEARING HIS WORD PROPERLY
 - A. Jesus contrasted the same 2 kinds of hearers in Matthew 7:24-27.
 - B. He wants us to examine the way we hear His Word (Luke 8:18).
 - C. He issued a strong warning against rejecting His Word (John 12:48).
 - D. Those who continue in His Word will be blessed (John 8:31-32).