

THE LIFE GOD DESIRES

James 1:19—27

Introduction:

- i. According to v.20 the life God desires for his people is a righteous life. Don't you wish you could say that you had always lived a righteous life—as a Christian? A righteous life is one built on the Word of God.
- ii. In our text for today—James 1:19—27 there is an emphasis placed on the Word of God. Listen for that emphasis as I read. **James 1:19—27** Did you catch the emphasis? How many times was the word of God mentioned? v. 21, 22, 23,25
- iii. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus concluded his message with a story familiar to all—house built on the rock and the house built on the sand. Many individuals miss the point of this little story. What do you think is the point?
- iv. If you are going to have a life that God desires—a righteous life—you will have a life built on the word of God and a life that is obedient to the word of God. This righteous life that James is writing about is one that has multiple characteristics. Word of God speak to me this morning!!
- v. Transition—the righteous life is one where a person is . . .

I. SLOW TO ANGER

A. He Doesn't Blow His Stack

1. 1. We all have met people who wear their feelings on their sleeves. It takes very little to “set them off”. I hope you aren't one of those kinds of people. It's not becoming to the righteous life God desires.
2. The writer of Proverbs warns, “Do not make friends with a hot tempered man, do not associate with one easily angered, or you may learn his ways and get yourself ensnared. (22:24,25)
3. I was listening to a Christian radio station the other day and the subject was how you respond when someone cuts in front of you. The called in answers were good but one I never heard was to simply do or say nothing. To just ignore it. To just be bigger than the person who did it to you.
4. How many times a day do you think Jesus just ignored the rude things people said or did to him? He never blew his stack in uncontrolled anger. He had righteous indignation in the temple—but was never out of control.
5. A person who is slow to anger is also a person who is quick to listen. He is a person who is ready to hear—ready to listen—story of Samuel as a young child—speak Lord for your servant is listening
6. A person who is slow to become angry is also a person who is slow to speak. This is difficult for some—some are always talking and never listening—they have opinions about everything—they don't believe they can learn from anyone—they forget Zeno's practical advice that “We have 2 ears, but only one mouth, that we may hear more and speak less.”
7. When it comes to the way James would have us listen and hear God's word he does not want us to react negatively: Jonah said “take my life—better for me to die than live—I am angry enuf to die” Moses spoke in haste once and it cost him

dearly.

8. When we aren't quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to become angry our anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires. God doesn't give us his word to make us angry, but to help us live a righteous life.

9. Trans.--the righteous life is also one where you get sin out of your house **(21)** whether we like it or not—sin can still affect a Christians life. James is writing to Christians about this slow process of conforming our will to the likeness of Christ—sanctification--we . . .

II. STRIVE TO ELEMIMATE

A. Moral Filth and Evil

1. James is talking about sin in our lives and how it might affect us. Sin can act as “wax” in our ears which makes it very difficult to hear what people are saying—my father-in-law. Sin in our lives makes it very difficult to hear God's word.
2. Sin in our lives can also pervert our judgement and blind our minds. We may find ourselves saying about some sin, “Oh, thats not so bad!!” The righteous life that God desires is one, where, as it says about God in the Bible—his eyes are to pure to look on evil. Are we excusing any sin(s) in our lives?
3. We need to be like David who said—thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against God.
4. The righteous life God desires is one that . . .

III. HUMBLY RECEIVES GOD'S WORD

A. It's Not Always Easy to Accept God's Word In Humility/Meekness

1. We are to have the attitude of little children who are “eager to hear”. Jolene and our grandchildren—they always want grandma to tell them a story.
2. It's not always easy to accept God's word as God's word—1 Thess 2:13—we can't take it lightly. Most likely none of us like to have the word of God rebuke or correct our lives, but we should receive it in meekness and not in rebellion—God you aren't allowed to tell me what to do.
3. More like Samuel—speak Lord for your servant is listening.
4. These five or six things James mentions help us be better prepared to receive God's word so that we can have the righteous life that he desires. James also warns us not to be Pretenders when it comes to hearing the word of God. **Vs 22—25**
5. The righteous life God desires helps to remove hypocrisy from our lives.

IV. PRETENDING TO HEAR THE WORD

A. Easy To Confuse Hearing With Doing

1. We can play psychological games with ourselves. We may say—I want to know more of God's word—where knowledge becomes the end game.
2. We may say I want to **feel** more—we may say we got nothing from the service if our emotions weren't stirred—I didn't cry enough—I didn't laugh enough—preacher--you failed to step on my toes this morning. People do prefer the sentimental—and they say, “oh that was a great message” but even before they get home from church the sentiment and the emotion are gone.

3. It's not enough to remember what we hear, repeat what we hear, give testimony to what we heard, nor simply to commend it . . . if we are no better than we were. We may hear of the love of Christ one day but on the next do we say—like Paul—his love compels me?
4. We may hear of the blessing of glory, but we don't seem to eager to lay up our treasures in heaven. We may hear of the coming judgement, but does it make us any more truthful and honest!

B. It's Easy To Be A Forgetful Hearer

1. God's Word acts as a mirror for us. We look in a mirror to see what we need to do with our face, hair, appearance, blemishes—and then let's say we get called away by our children or a phone call or some other distraction—and we forget to take care of what needs to be taken care of. We saw what needed attention, but we forget to do anything about it.
2. So it is said James with the man who looks—sees a need—and doesn't take care of it right away—he forgets—until he looks in the mirror again. When our children were little sometimes they would say, okay I hear you—but fail to do what they were told. They heard but they failed to obey.
3. God isn't interested in those who pretend to hear the word. Pretending to hear—is not the righteous life God desires for us. Rather than being pretenders he would have us

V. PRACTICE HIS WORD (vs 25—27)

A. The Doer Will Be Blessed

1. Trust and Obey—we will be happy--the wise and foolish man—Psalm 1. Someone has said that “that which is heard in the holy place must be lived[out] in the market place.” The man—any man or woman—children included—who is obedient to what he or she reads in God's word will be blessed.

B. The Doer Will Be Free

1. The word of God is described as the “perfect law that gives freedom”. When we obey the word we are set free from sin, death, guilt and shame. We are freed from the bondage all those things bring.

C. The Doer Will Be Accepted By God (26, 27)

1. The doer will keep a tight reign on his tongue. It's incredible to me the # of Christians who use the phrase OMG. June and I were talking last Sunday about the balancing act we all are involved in when it comes to gossip and what is really the truth.
2. The doer will care for the fatherless and widows in their distress—this is never ending—it is always relevant in every culture and time.
3. The doer will do his best to be pure—to not be stained by worldly ways—to not be taken in by the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life.
4. This is not the sum total of the righteous life God desires. There is more, but for now this is enough. We would do well to work on these aspects of the life God desires for us. The obedient life is the blessed life!!