

Welcoming the Word

James 1:19-21

Introduction: 75% of Americans identify themselves as “Christian”, but what does a real Christian look like, and what separates the real from the fake? James makes it very clear that Christian practice must be consistent with Christian belief.

Review & Context: The book of James gives us a series of descriptions, or tests of true believers (Christians).

- Vs. 2-12 describe the Christian’s *right response to trials*.
- Vs. 13-18 describe the Christian’s *right response to temptation*.
- Vs. 19-27 describe the Christian’s *right response to the Word of God*.

Main Truth: A genuine Christian should have a right response to the Word of God.

1. You must have a right reaction to the Word of God

- A. You must be quick to hear God’s Word – vs. 19a
 - a. This is a description of an eager and attentive spirit.
- B. You must be slow to speak about God’s Word – vs. 19b
 - a. This is a carefulness and caution about misrepresenting the Word of God to people.
 - b. This is restraining your tongue from a hasty, ill-considered, shallow, and immature reaction to the Word of God.
- C. You must be slow to become angry with God’s Word – vs. 19c-20.
 - a. This is a willingness to allow God to confront us with His Word and expose our wrong (mirror).

2. You must have a right reception of the Word of God

- A. Cast away rampant sin – vs. 21a
 - a. Our appetite for sin ruins our appetite for the Word and reception of the Word.
- B. Cultivate receptive soil – vs. 21b
 - a. Humility and teachability are vital to rightly receiving the implanted Word of God.

Conclusion: From birth to death, the Word of God must have a central place in the life of a Christian. A genuine Christian will hunger for God’s word and rightly respond to it.

Questions for Thought and Discussion

1. Was there a truth from this week’s message that stuck out to you?
2. God says in James chapter 1 that it matters how a person responds to trials, to temptation, and to the Word of God. Why is this so? What do our responses indicate (reveal)?
3. What is it about the Word of God that makes it so central to the life of a Christian?
4. Is it possible to grow (mature) in your Christian life without regular intake of the Word of God? Discuss why or why not.
5. What are some reasons that we neglect, forget, or reject God’s Word? In other words, how does God’s Word come to have such a small place in our life if it is so important?
6. Discuss James’ three-fold statement about right reactions to God’s Word in vs. 19. Which of these is difficult to obey? Why?
7. Why doesn’t our anger ever achieve God’s righteous purposes?
8. Consider the similarity between James 1:21 and 1 Peter 2:1-2. How does my allowance for sin, or appetite for sin ruin my reception of God’s Word and benefit from it?
9. Why must the sin in our lives be put aside (thrown off) instead put in the closet and tolerated?
10. Why is humility vital to our receiving and benefiting from God’s Word?
11. Discuss the kinds of attitudes that we may have (and not even realize) that extinguish our love and appetite for God’s Word. How can we fix these attitudes?
12. If I am not benefiting from God’s Word when it is given, whose fault is it?

Thoughts for prayer:

- Pray that we would be a church that warmly welcomes the Word of God with an eager and humble spirit.