

## 1 DNA 7 Listen and do (Value)

Listening to God often like Noah means that we have to do something in response. Much of the Old Testament includes people who didn't hear from God. Or if they did they couldn't or would not act on it. If God speaks to our life then things will change – so long as we hear and obey. We can all hear what God has spoken – it is in writing in black and white. We can't go wrong it is all written in the word of God.

*James 1:22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. 23 Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror 24 and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. 25 But 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*

**Listen and do is our theme.** This title presents two problems – two personal challenges to the preacher – I once said that we won't get any meaningful encounter with Jesus just through our action – it's who we are not what we do. The other problem we have in this passage is that there is no clear context. James doesn't do context. By the time we get to verse 22 James has talked about joy, praying, humility and a host of other topics – very difficult to grab hold of an overarching context to the passage. But thankfully by the time we get to 22 he has already slipped in other references – three references - three points.

James 1:16 – Every good gift is from above. Be doers of the word – hearer and not a doer forgets what he is like.

### 1.1 God saves us by his word –

- **Bought us forth.** God saves us by his word. When God speaks things happen. Just as when he first spoke life into being its God who brings about new life and new birth. *1 Peter 1:23 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. 24 For, "All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, 25 but the word of the Lord endures forever.*
- **Without the word of God you would still be like withering grass** or dead in your trespasses and sins. But God has spoken into your life and something amazing has happened. We want to see new life in WCC we want to see more people come into the church. When we see new life it will be because of God's word taken root. Reminded in sharing our hope we can do in confidence because our confidence is in the message and not in our own strength.
- **Hebrews 4:12 NIV For the word of God is alive and active** and can bring about new life. Gods word alone that speaks life into being. He saves us by his word.

### 1.2 God sanctifies us by his word

- **2 Timothy 3:16** *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for instruction, for conviction, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work.* We want to follow Jesus we want to imitate, be more like him, our vision statements emphasis growing together and displaying fruit of spirit as a community These things will happen as we receive with meekness the implanted word. As God speaks things happen. Not only does he save us by his word he also shows us what we are like.

### 1.3 God shows us by his word what we are like

- James talks about doers of the word and not hearers only. Like looking in the mirror – and then goes away and at once forgets. Looks into perfect law and perseveres and acts he will be blessed. Reading bible like looking in mirror – mirror shows who we are.
- Mirror allows us to see what others see. Can be disconcerted. The word goes much further it is Gods revelation – not just mere human observation of opinion – it is the insight into what God is like. **The word is showing Gods perspective about me, other people, our church, our nation, our world.** Gods perspective is on the whole of the history of the universe – it's not just superficial. His word is sharper than any two edged sword. Discerns the thoughts and intentions of the heart. Penetrating.
- **When we look at the word it's letting the word read us** – as we read and listen to the word God shows us things about ourselves. Maybe things we would not want to see – but we see who God is and what he is like but also see things about ourselves through Gods eyes. Might be minor but may need major challenge. We have already seen that we are saved by His word – it's His word that shows me that in Gods perspective I am a lost sinner and I need the saving work of Jesus. I am sanctified in Gods perspective I am clothed in the righteousness of God – seeing through His perspective means that we are saved and sanctified through his word.

### 1.4 Doing

- Keith Milne once preached that “We won't get anything meaningful out of relationship with Jesus by doing”. What was meant by this ? – **does our relationship depend upon our action** or not ? James has said that we are saved and sanctified by his word not by our actions- but in John 14 **23** Jesus replied, “**Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. 24**Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me We will do what God says because we loved him 1 John 4 why we love him – because he first loved us. We do what he says because of what he says and we love him because he loves us – He does not love us just through what we are doing – we are not doing in order to earn his love – but our doing is an expected response to His love.
- One last point – **doing what the Bible says is not a question of seeking out obscure rules and obligations** – what head coverings should women wear – finding commandments to follow and impose as a burden, neither is it searching for life choices - what job should I do what car should I have - using the word to guide us. We need to lift our eyes higher than that – through the bible we are seeing who He is. We are seeing His sinless perfection. What a rebellious creation looks like. We are seeing his priority to bring everything to his glory. The challenge of James is that we will see all of this yet then walk away and forget about it. Will we let the word of God affect our priorities and purpose ?
- **If the word doesn't impact our priorities and purposes then James says we are deceiving ourselves** – we are saying that our view of thing is more important than His. But if it does change our priorities and purpose then James says the one who looks – perseveres – the doer who acts h will be blessed in his doing. Law of liberty not a hardship – doing out of a response to love is a blessing. God want to bless us as his reveals His perspective to us and we line up with that.