

Testing for Genuine Faith, Part 1
Counseling James
Reading James 1:13-20,
Key Verses: James 1:19-20, misc verses
Key Words: faith, trials, Word, Bible, listening, speaking, anger

I. Introduction

A. James seeks to define faith for us.

1. Trials are a testing of faith
2. God gives wisdom to the non-doubter in a trial
3. Whether rich or poor trials are the great equalizers.
4. Temptations come out of our own sinful desires.
5. God's character is such that He can have no part in temptation.
6. All the gifts God gives are good and based on God's character not the gift itself.

B. True Faith, Saving Faith is Observable; it can be seen by others.

C. The Idea of an Observable Faith is not unusual in Scripture

1. 2 Cor. 13:5
2. 2 Pe. 1:10
3. Matt. 7:43-49
4. 1 Jn 2:3-6
5. 1 Jn 3:10

II. You are to be quick to hear the Word of God (Ja. 1:19)

—The Word of God is central the passage

——We are to be quick to hear (the Word of God)

——We are to be slow to start speaking (the Word of God)

——You are to stop being angry about (the Word of God)

A. So, why do we get to insert “the Word of God”?

B. In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures. Jas 1:18, NASB

C. Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and *all* that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. Jas 1:21, NASB

D. “This you know...”

1. They already know that their salvation was from God and not from themselves.
2. “But” serves as an interruption and lets the reader know that there is much more to the Word of God than merely saving them.
 - a. The Gospel is more than salvation
 - b. The “danger” in a constant barrage of gospel invitation
 - c. Once we are saved do we love to live like we are saved?

E. “Let everyone be...”.

1. James gives a command
2. James will give three qualities that are to characterize our lives.
3. “Everyone” points to the individual
 - a. KEY: The Word of God will never affect you unless you actively cooperate.

F. “Be Quick to Hear”

1. Be quiet and listen to God’s Word
2. “Quick” means “right away, without delay.”
3. The application for us is to take responsibility and look for ways to grow in the Word.
 - a. Sunday service as a priority
 - b. Community Groups as a priority

c. private study of the word or a discipleship relationship with another person (people)

d. radio, pod casts, sermon audio

e. good books

4. "Listening is the art of closing one's mouth and opening one's ears and heart." (Kistemaker, Commentary on James)

5. Listening is loving the neighbor as oneself; his concerns and problems are sufficiently important to be heard. Kistemaker, S. J., & Hendriksen, W. (1953–2001). *Exposition of James and the Epistles of John* (Vol. 14, p. 57). Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.

6. Some more Scripture on listening:

a. Proverbs 22:17 (NASB95) Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, And apply your mind to my knowledge;

b. Jeremiah 7:24 (NASB95) "Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but walked in *their own* counsels *and* in the stubbornness of their evil heart, and went backward and not forward.

III. We are to be slow to start speaking the Word of God.

A. This is the other side of the coin

B. It's a glimpse of what James says in 3:1

1. James 3:1 (NASB95) Let not many *of you* become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment.

C. "Many a man has had to repent of speaking, but never of holding his peace." (proverbial saying)

D. "Speak," means rash, immature, thoughtless talking.

1. THE speak

2. It refers to a specific act of speaking, and the context indicates that the speaking referred is to that of teaching.

a. There are two applications here:

(1) Someone is teaching before they he ought.

(2) Someone is blurting out their opinion regarding the teaching and then living to regret it.

E. This also involves the idea of not reacting too quickly to what is heard.

1. Being reactionary, making shallow, immature statements just to be heard.
2. Scripture gives many admonitions in regards to “mouth restraint.”
 - a. Pro. 13:3 “The one who guards his mouth preserves his life; the one whom opens wide his lips comes to ruin.
 - b. Pro. 10:19 “When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, but he who restrains his lips is wise.
 - c. Pro. 17:27 “ He who restrains his words has knowledge, and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding.”
 - d. Pro. 29:20 “Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

IV. We are to stop being angry about the Word of God

- A. A call to self-restraint
- B. “Anger” means to have a strong and persistent attitude of hostility or resentment.
- C. What is primary here to the intent of the passage is a warning away from having an attitude of anger in the process of teaching.
- D. vs 20...the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God.
 1. Our anger is righteous indignation and therefore justified.
 2. I must speak harshly and quickly and put them in their place!
 3. Equals a trashed or severely damaged relationship
 4. Matt. 5:21-26 -a significant warning to those with an anger problem
 5. “Good anger” versus “bad anger”
 - a. Holy indignation

b. Personal, self-centered anger

6. Man's anger does not achieve (bring about) the righteous life God desires.

Questions for CGs

1. What stood out for you and why?
2. What are the characteristics of a genuine faith in James 1:19-20
3. Reflect: How are you doing with that? What areas need work?