

Series: James

**Title: An Effective Doer**

Text: James 1:21-25

Time: 10/30/2011 (a.m.)

## **Introduction**

1. James has been building a case by confronting the attitudes and actions of these Jews who have allowed their circumstances to manipulate them into behaving contrary to the faith they have received. James is confronting wrong behavior that is driven by wrong belief.

2. Remember, these are new believers that are immature in their faith and facing heavy persecution.

3. Prosperity can do over time what persecution does quickly which is foster a wrong belief about God that leads to behavior that is contrary to biblical Christianity. Modern believers often attend Sunday School and preaching but it does not affect their daily lives. In a sense this is practical atheism, the irrelevancy of God!

4. In these verses James is going to lay out a very practical challenge for being an effective believer.

### **1. Disposition of Spirit**

1. In verse 21 we are challenged to remove and receive but the term that is critical to both of these actions is "in humility" which means that attitude of spirit that we accept God's dealings with us as good and do not dispute or resist. In other words, we stop resisting the work of God in our life.

2. Before I was saved, I was an enemy of God. The resurrection of Christ established God's victory over sin and the grave, when I surrendered my life to God through Christ; I also surrendered to God's sovereign plan for my life.

3. Humility is the spirit of surrender, the recognition that I am no longer sovereign over my life but I live in submission to the one I surrendered to. It is the attitude of compliance versus one of defiance.

4. The specific removal was that of "putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness." Filthiness (Gr. rhuvaria) in a medical sense, means wax in the ear. It is just possible that it still retains that meaning here; and that James is telling his readers to get rid of everything which would stop their ears to the true word of God. When wax gathers in the ear, it can make a man deaf; and a man's sins can make him deaf to God. (Barclay)

5. "Putting aside" is not just a casual gesture but an actual separation, a call to cease and desist all filthiness and all remaining wickedness, any attitude or behavior that connects you with your former way of living.

6. If I don't remove rightly I cannot receive. God removes in order to replace and restore.

7. Redemption planted the word in my soul. The word of God is not something that is native or natural to my heart, it was planted there by God at the time of redemption. James is challenging us to "receive"; to deliberately and intentionally take that which has been given.

8. When James tells us that the implanted word is "able to save your souls" he is talking about the whole work of salvation from redemption to glorification.

9. The word "able" is translated "dynamic" which means there is not one thing promised by the word of God that is improbable or impossible, the word of God has the inherent ability to accomplish its intended end.

## **2. The Discipline of Obedience**

1. We have been implanted with the word of God and empowered by the Spirit of God so that we can live in obedience to the will of God.

2. Like Jesus, our living is to be a manifestation of the word of God. **John 1:14**<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

3. Obedience to the word of God is proof that we aren't delusional as to our relationship to Christ.

4. The Bible gives us a very clear picture of delusional belief in **Matthew 7:21-23** and **Luke 6:46**. "Lawlessness" means without moral restraint, it is when right and wrong is considered an individual choice. In Luke, the issue is a lack of foundational conviction that creates superficial faith; a faith of appearance without the accountability of biblical obedience.

5. In Christianity, biblical knowledge finds its true value in the believer's obedience to the word of God; it is what separates us from the demons in hell (James 2:19).

## **3. The Delivered Blessing**

1. An effectual doer is one that is "blessed in what he does."

2. One scholar described an effectual doer as marked by persistent performance of what he has learned in being a receptive hearer of God's word. The emphasis is not on certain notable deeds he performs but on his characteristic obedience to God's known will.

3. "Blessed" refers to being favored by God; of being spiritually prosperous and fully content with the presence of God regardless of the circumstances. It is the happiness bestowed on the believer who lives their life in full surrender to the sovereign plan of God.