

Living by the Book—Applying the Book: How Does It Change My Life? (James 1:22-25)

- In this series we are endeavoring to answer four key questions:
 - 1) **Why study the Book for yourself?** 2 Tim 3:15-17 gave us four reasons (it's a saving, supernatural, success-shaping, sufficient book)
 - 2) **What do I see when I observe the Scriptures?** We identified two things to observe: 1: Observe your heart properly, then 2: Observe the Scriptures perceptively (read & re-read the Bible, record your observations, make a research list for study)
 - 3) **What does it mean when I interpret the Scriptures?** Ask God for understanding, bow to the rules of interpretation, consult the original languages, draw on cross-references, evaluate your findings with study resources.
 - 4) **How does it change my life when I apply the Scriptures?**
 - One of the dangers of Bible Study is thinking that gaining knowledge automatically equates to personal growth. Bible knowledge is essential, but information without application leads to self-glorification (1 Cor. 8:1) & spiritual nullification (1 Cor. 13:2)
 - James calls us to do **two things** with God's Word:
 - #1: **Accept His Word properly** (v. 19-21) by receiving *"the word implanted which is able to save your soul"*. He suggests three ways to do this:
 - ≈ Control your approach to it (v. 19-20): Be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger
 - ≈ Clean up your act (v. 21a: *"therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness"*)
 - ≈ Comply with your attitude (v. 21b: *"in humility..."*): we come to God with a compliant heart.
 - #2: **Apply His Word personally** (v. 22-25): This is our focus today and James lays down the key response (*"but prove yourselves doers of the word and not merely hearers who delude themselves."*). James uses a vivid illustration of a "mirror" to teach us two key lessons about the high value of application
- ❶ **Avoid the casual glance mentality** (v. 23-24)
- Forgetfulness can have some painful consequences like embarrassment, disappointment, frustration and James mentions self-delusion (*"who deludes themselves"*)
 - A casual concentration on the mirror of God's word will inevitably lead to a failure to understand who God is, who we are and how we are supposed to live.
- ❷ **Adopt the careful gaze mentality** (v. 25)
- Paying attention to the detail of God's Word demands concentration and focus which is what James calls for (*"but one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty..."*)
 - We learn three things about God's Word in v. 25:
 - It's *"perfect"*: It embodies the full, final, and unblemished truth of God for our lives
 - It's the *"law"*: It demands that we listen and obey its flawless truth (Mk 7:8)

- It's about "*liberty*": It frees us to joyfully pursue and honor God's wise and best will for our lives.
- How can we work to A.P.P.L.Y. God's Word?

Ask God for a responsive heart (Ps. 119:33-34, 145)

Pursue the blessing of obedience (Luke 11:28; James 1:25; Matt. 7:24-27; Psalm 119:2a; John 13:17; Psalm 1:1-3)

Purpose to look for specific applications

- ≈ Applications like examples to follow; sins to avoid; promises to claim; prayers to offer; conditions to meet; warnings to heed; errors to elude; attitudes to display; truths to believe; principles to affirm; commands to obey)
- ≈ What environments of life need to be addressed? You personal life, home life, church life, testimony life

Lean on God's applicational resources (John 15:4-5; Gal. 3:3; Heb. 10:24)

Yearn to be God's obedience servant (Luke 17:7-10)