

Take Note: You Can't Survive Without the Word!

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[0:00] James 1, we'll begin reading in verse 18 and read through the end of the chapter. He chose to give us birth through the word of truth that we might be a kind of first fruits of all he created.

My dear brothers, take note of this. Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry. For man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires. Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent, and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror, and after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.

But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it, he will be blessed in what he does.

[1:05] If anyone considers himself religious, and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself, and his religion is worthless. Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless as this, to look after orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

Shall we turn to James chapter 1? Take note of this. That's what James is saying to us this morning. Don't miss this.

He's grabbing our attention because we begin a new section of chapter 1, and it fills the rest of the chapter, verses 18 to the end of the chapter as we're read for us.

And it's all about the word of God. And you cannot miss this. You need this book, James is saying. Take note of this. How important this book is to you.

And what a right way to receive it is. Now up to this point, James has been showing us that God's pathway to holiness is through trials.

[2:14] That that is his purpose. That's why he has you. Every one of you with all kinds of trials in your life. And sometimes you say, you know, I'd be a holier Christian if it just wasn't for this person in my life.

This problem. And you're exactly wrong. God has sent you that person and problem to make you more holy. That is his purpose. That is the pathway to holiness through trials that test our faith, develop our perseverance and perfect us in holiness.

So the first half has dealt with trials, and now he turns our attention to the word of God itself and how much we need the word of God. The word of God as well is part of this pathway to holiness. Just as we saw last week from verse 18, that it is through the word of truth that God gave you birth. So it is through this same word of truth that God will make you holy, that he will sanctify you. In trials, we're made to feel our need for what? Our need for wisdom. I need wisdom, Lord. And so we're supposed to pray for it.

[3:27] But now James is saying, take note of this. If you want wisdom, there's one place for it to be found. You must come to God's word. If you would be made wise and be strengthened and know how to maneuver your way through your trials and temptations in a way that you become more holy rather than fall into sin.

So there's a relationship between trials and the word of God, as James is building his case for holiness and our pursuit of it. But don't miss this, he's saying.

You cannot survive without this word. You cannot live a holy life without the Holy Bible. The Lord Jesus himself said as he prayed to his father, Father, sanctify them, make them holy by the truth.

Your word is truth. So we come to the topic of the word of God. And James tells us how to make a right use of it.

Note it well, he says. Three points this morning. One next week. First, be eager to hear it. Secondly, remove all hindrances to it.

[4:40] And thirdly, humbly accept it. Next week, be doers of it. First of all, James says, be eager to hear it. Verse 19. Everyone should be quick to listen.

Now, if we found this phrase sitting by itself along the roadside, we may consider its application in a general sense, whether you're talking, whether your parents are talking to you, your teachers, your coaches, your boss, your friends, your enemies, your neighbors, that it's generally a good idea to be quick to listen and slow to speak.

There are many Proverbs encouraging us along those lines. In fact, the rabbis had a saying, men have two ears, but one tongue, that they should hear more than they speak.

The ears are always open, ever ready to receive instruction, but the tongue is surrounded with a double row of teeth to hedge it in and to keep it within its proper bounds. So be quick to listen and slow to speak.

But we're not going to apply it in a general sense this morning because we don't find this phrase sitting by itself along the roadside. We find it in a field full of verses that talk about the word of God.

[5:57] The verse preceding. He chose to give us birth through the word of truth. And the verses following are talking about humbly accepting the word planted in you, which can save your soul.

What word is that? It's the word of God. And don't just be a hearer of it, but be a doer of it. What word is that? It's the word of God.

So when in verse 19, James says, everyone should be quick to listen. He's talking not about listening to the weatherman or to the news person, but to the word of God.

And so we're going to allow the context to inform us in our interpretation and application of this verse. We are to be ready and eager. Eager.

We sometimes say eager beavers. We're to be eager to take in God's word. Quick to buy up all the opportunities that we have to receive the word of God.

[6:58] We have the reading of scripture in public like we've done this morning. We have the private reading in your home. We have the public preaching and teaching of the word of God. We have the memorized word.

We have books and CDs and sermon downloads. Are you making the most of these opportunities? Are you eager, quick to listen to God's word?

You spend a lot of time in the car? Plug in someone reading the word of God to you or preaching it to you. Everyone should be quick to listen to God's word.

Why? Because it is God's word. It is God's word. Paul says to the Thessalonians, When you receive the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.

We're to be all ears. When the word of God. Is the topic. Listening with eagerness, because we want to know what God says.

[8:04] God is here. God is speaking in his word. Are you listening? Are you listening? When it's time for family reading of scripture. Are you eager to listen?

When it's time to go to Sunday school. Are you quick to listen? Everyone should be quick to listen. There's Cornelius, the Italian centurion.

And Peter has come to bring him the word of God. And he's gathered his whole family, his relatives and his close friends. And he says to Peter, Now, we're all here in the presence of God to listen to everything the Lord has commanded you to tell us.

And with eager ears, they soaked up every word of God that Peter brought to them. We listen with eagerness because it is the word of God.

But we listen with eagerness because I need this wisdom in the midst of my trials. If I am to have the wherewithal to know how to make my way through these trials and temptations, I need this wisdom.

[9:12] This is where I find guidance. This is where I find strength. This is where I get to know God better. This is where I meet with the lover of my soul, Jesus Christ. His word is the twisting place where he and I meet.

This is where I see him and the wonder of who he is. And of his work, what he's done for me.

It's all here. It's where I find out what pleases the Lord, the one who died for me. It's where I find the great and precious promises by which I can become a partaker of this divine nature and escape from this corruption that is in the world through evil desire.

It's all here. Why wouldn't I be quick to listen? Now, to be quick to listen, then, has to do with our appetite for the word of God.

You see, the new birth of verse 18 gives us an appetite that only God's word can satisfy. The new birth creates that hunger.

[10 : 22] Now, a healthy appetite for food is a good sign of health, isn't it? Moms, it's a good sign when the kids come hungry to the table, ready to devour what you've prepared for them. If they're picking at their food, you say, uh-oh, something's wrong.

It's when we're sick that we lose our appetite and start picking and complaining, hardly eating. Job speaks of his appetite for God's word. In the midst of his trials, I have treasured the words of your mouth, of his mouth, more than my daily bread, more than my necessary food.

You see, he hungers and he thirsts for God's word, even though he's chin-deep in trials. The Bible directs our attention when it speaks of this quickness to listen, this eagerness, this appetite for the word.

It directs us to a newborn baby. 1 Peter 2, verse 2. As newborn babies crave pure spiritual milk that you may grow thereby.

Kids with new babies in your house, would you say that the baby's desire for milk is a mild interest and they'll get around to it if they have time for it at the end of the day?

[11 : 43] Or would you say that the baby has a craving for mother's milk and nothing's right until he gets it? Now, as newborn babies, you crave the spiritual milk of the word that you may grow by it.

When you see that baby crying for milk and nothing satisfies him or her until he or she gets the milk, is that you coming to the word of God?

Opening the Bible because you crave a word from your Lord. My soul is consumed with longing for your word at all times, the psalmist says.

So be careful of spoiling your appetite, filling your belly with a lot of the chaff of this world so that there's little room left to receive this word of God in the love of it.

Spurgeon writes of a sea captain that he heard of who went out after whales. And when he landed and heard the gospel preach, he said to the man of God, Sir, it was of no use your preaching to me.

[12 : 52] For all the while, I was thinking about where I should find a whale. There's no room for anything else in my mind but whales. Now, I know no one here this morning is tempted to think about whales, but what is it you're tempted to think about?

Because when anything sits in the place that Jesus and his word should have when he's speaking to you, it's an idol, and it's draining away your eagerness to hear the word.

Be careful. He fills the hungry with good things, but the rich who are self-satisfied, he sends away empty. You come in hungry this morning?

You come to the word of God hungry when you read it? There's the promise. He'll fill you with good things. Now, when we introduced this whole letter of James, we saw that his main theme is to get us to pursue holiness of life.

That's what he's out to do with us. He wants us to chase after holiness, so he tells us that's why trials come. So your attitude toward your trials is a good measurement of how eager you are to be holy.

[14 : 02] Well, now he's giving us another one. A person's pursuit of holiness can be measured by what they do with God's word. Are you eager to hear it?

And we can easily fool ourselves at this point. We can think we really want to be holy. We can tell ourselves that we want to be holy. We can tell others and God that we want to be holy. And all the while, live in neglect of the holy instrument that he uses to make us holy.

How does that work? What would you say, kids, about a student who says, I want to get straight A's. And they barely crack the books and study.

You say, I wonder how sincere his desire really is. Read this week of a college basketball player who wants to be the best three-point shooter in the nation.

Well, that's easy to say, isn't it? I'd like to be that guy too. But he then followed it up by setting a goal. And his goal was to make 23,000 three-pointers this summer over a 43-day period.

[15:18] Now you do the math. Ding, ding. That's 535 three-pointers every day. That's the ones that go through the hoop, not the ones that miss. So if he's shooting 50%, which isn't a bad percentage for three-pointers, then he's got to shoot over 1,000 every day.

And if he skips a day, well, then he's got 2,000 the next day to make up. So you get the idea. This guy really wants to be the best three-point shooter.

What should we say about him if twice a week he goes to the gym and grabs a ball and throws up 10 and hits for the showers and suds it up?

He's bragging about his great desire to be the best three-point shooter. Well, we ought to question his desire. We ought to question it. And what should we say about the man who says, I desire to be holy.

I want to be like Jesus. But rarely cracks the book. Is not eager to get into the gym and to shoot his three-pointers.

[16:23] Is not eager to get into the book that sanctifies us and makes us holy. The very instrument that God has chosen. What does your Bible, if your Bible could speak, what does it say about your pursuit of holiness?

What is it saying? How serious are you? It's a hard word that James is bringing to us. Don't deceive yourself about this point, he's going to tell us.

Everyone should be quick to listen. Did you hear that, kids? Everyone. That means young and old. Wise and uneducated or fools.

Everyone. Educated, uneducated. New Christian, old Christian. Saved, lost. Do you have ears? Do you even have one ear? Let him who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

Let the wise listen and add to their learning and become wiser still, the Proverbs say. You see, none are too wise or too foolish, but that they can add to their wisdom.

[17:44] You know, even Apollos, that evangelist who is mighty in the scriptures, he needs to be quick to listen. He needs to be quick to listen to Priscilla and her husband Aquila as they detected something deficient in his message when he came around preaching in Ephesus.

Max 18, 26. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. Can't you just see him? Boldly, mighty in the scriptures and he's preaching away. And afterwards, Priscilla and Aquila say, you've got something not quite right in your message.

Who are you? A couple of tent makers. What do you know? I've been trained in this business. No, you know what it says? He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. And when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately. You may be tent makers, but you're bringing me the word of God. I'm all ears. Quick to listen. Good for you, Apollos. I'd have been prouder and been slow to listen.

And even the apostle Peter needed to be quick to listen. When in Galatians 2, Paul meets up with him and finds his behavior is out of line with the gospel.

[19:01] It was good for Peter and for the whole church that he was quick to listen that day. What is it that makes us slow to listen? Why do we even need a commandment like this in our Bibles?

Why are we so slow at this business of listening? It's our pride and arrogance. That's all. I know. I know. I know.

Some people, you can't teach them anything. I know. You know any kids like that? You know any adults like that? Maybe the one teaching is from a different denomination from us.

Maybe the one teaching holds different views on different things from us. And so, they have nothing to teach me when we're slow to listen.

We impoverish ourselves in our pride. Everyone, everyone should be quick to listen. Quick to hear. Another reason we're so slow to listen is because we're so quick to speak.

[20:02] We don't listen well when we're talking a lot. And so, he says, everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak. We must not love to air our own opinions.

We must not fall in love with our own voice or be quicker to give advice than to receive it. Quicker to teach than to be taught. This too is pride. It's the very snare of the devil that entraps novices who jump prematurely into teaching positions in the church, wanting to be heard rather than wanting to hear.

1 Timothy 3.6. And later on in chapter 3, James is going to tell us, don't be many teachers, my brothers. Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we

who teach will be judged more strictly.

Be slow to speak, slow to teach, so that when you do speak, it's something worth listening to because it's grounded in the Scriptures, the Word of God.

And so James has much to say about our tongues and slowness to speak and control of our tongues. He's going to return to it over and over in this letter and we'll return to it as well. But right along with slow to speak, he adds, and slow to become angry.

[21 : 19] And the connection is not hard to understand. When Moses was provoked in his spirit, he spoke unadvisedly with his lips.

Anger often leads you to say things that you later regret. So if you would control your tongue, control your anger. Be slow to speak and slow to become angry.

Slow to become angry at those who oppose you, those who disagree with you. Religious controversies are dangerous atmospheres because they're so conducive to sinful anger.

I'm reading at present about a church leader in Scotland. Blessed man. But when there came a political controversy that touched the church and state, it divided the church right down the middle and this dear man wrote invectives against his own brothers.

Strong words. As if he was the final say in these matters. As if he was the teacher and no one could teach him. And it was a sad blot on his character. You see, controversy, religious controversies are dangerous atmospheres because they're so conducive to sinful anger.

[22 : 33] And when we're angry, we say things that we ought not to say. The God of peace is not served by your angry passions of irritated pride.

The Lord's servant must not quarrel, but he must be kind to everyone. Able to teach, but not resentful. And those who oppose him, he must gently instruct. Slow to speak.

Slow to become angry. Thomas Manton says, The God of heaven needs no tongue set on fire of hell. In his service. Slow to speak.

Slow to become angry. And why? The reasons given. Verse 20. For man's anger, that's the source of it, man, man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.

This isn't the path leading to this end. Man's anger isn't going where we all want to go. The pursuit is what? Holiness. The righteous life that God requires.

[23 : 30] That becomes the determiner of anything that's allowed to live in my life or what must go in my life. Does it bring about the righteous, holy life that God desires?

Man's anger doesn't go there. Then it must, must be gone. Must be gone. Man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.

That's really an understatement because it brings about the opposite. It brings about a whole lot of unrighteousness and a whole lot of sin. It brings regret, not righteousness.

It grieves the Holy Spirit. It gives the devil a foothold. And it leaves you out of sorts unprepared to receive the word of God which is what he's leading to.

And I thought about what's the relationship of this passage to the whole subject of trials. Think about it when you're in a hot and heavy trial. What two sins are very prevalent in trials if not sins of the speech of the tongue and anger?

[24 : 43] Do we not get angry in our trials? Do we not speak unadvisedly in our trials? We get upset because of the trial whether we explode or whether we're just on simmer.

It may be anger directed against other people. Maybe they're involved in the trial. Maybe they're just your innocent family and you just vent on them.

Anger. Maybe it's anger against God for bringing you into this trial and leaving you there in it so long.

And you start to seethe against God. Jonah was angry with God because things weren't going his way.

It wasn't life as I want. First of all, fire didn't fall from heaven and destroy the Ninevites. Instead, God spares them. Strike one against you, God.

[25 : 42] How could you do that? I've been preaching about destruction. And then the gourd plant that God provided to grow up and shade his head from the scorching heat was chewed by a worm that God had provided so that it withered and exposed his head to the scorching sun and the withering wind that God sent.

And now Jonah is very angry and God says to him, do you have a right to be angry about the vine? And Jonah is so angry that he says to God, I do.

I do. I do. I do. I'm angry enough to die. And I say to you, beware of growing angry under your trials. Honesty will show this is more common with us than we might first admit.

Because when you're angry, you're unable to profit from the word of God that you desperately need in your trial. What about your anger? Is it bringing about the righteous life that God desires?

Or is it destroying relationships? Is it destroying yourself? It must go along with your angry, proud words. Quick to listen. Eager to hear.

[27 : 02] That brings us to the second instruction on how to listen to God's word. Not only be eager to hear it, but secondly, remove all hindrances to it. Verse 21, therefore get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you which can save you.

Now there's two steps in verse 21 and it's the garden that provides the picture lesson for us in it. There's two steps. The main step is to receive the seed, the planting of the word, but there is something that must be done before that.

The accepting of the word planted, is the main verb of the sentence. The participle which must go before is getting rid of all the hindrances to it.

So what must be done before planting the seed? Well, you've got to prepare the soil. And you prepare the soil by pulling the weeds. Verse 21, therefore get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so abundant, so prevalent.

Get rid of the weeds so that you can receive the seed into a well-prepared heart. Otherwise, the weeds will drain all the nutrients of the soil and your little seed won't get any strength and the weeds will choke it out.

[28 : 28] They'll choke out the word so that it will not grow and produce fruit in your lives. So get rid of these noxious weeds of sin. The word therefore get rid of is translated in other places, put off.

It's what you do with a stinking filthy shirt. You put it off. And often Paul follows it up with put on. But before you can put on Christ and his virtues, you've got to put off that stinking rag.

Get rid of it. Be done with it. And notice how James refers to these weeds in our hearts that have got to be pulled out. Moral filth and evil.

Moral filth and evil. That's picturesque language. And when he says moral filth, you know what he's thinking about? He's thinking about your sins and mine.

And he's especially thinking about the sins that he's just put his finger on. Your anger and your uncontrolled tongue.

[29 : 39] these slips These slips of the tongue, these outbursts of anger, these simmering bitternesses are more serious to God than we may realize. He views them as filthy garbage that unfits you for receiving the word.

Filthy sins do not provide a garden for the holy seed to grow. So get rid of all moral filth.

filth. Spurgeons vary to the point on this matter. Filth is offensive to all cleanly persons.

We cannot bear close contact with a person who neglects the washing of his body or of his clothes so as to become a living dunghill. However poor a man is, he might be clean.

And when he is not, he becomes a common nuisance to those who speak with him or sit near him.

If bodily filthiness is horrible to us, what must the filthiness of sin be to the pure and holy God?

[30 : 49] Get rid of all moral filth. It is the word of God that you are waiting to receive. One day Martin Luther was unable to make it to the church services.

So he asked Katie, his wife, after she got home, how the congregation was that day. And she said the church was so full it stunk. And Martin says, yes, they had manure on their boots.

Well, it gives you a picture into the lack of hygiene in the 16th century. And I'm glad some of you didn't bring your manure boots this morning. You took a shower, you cleaned up, but I wonder if we had the nose of God, what we would smell today in the way of filth.

Unclean thoughts, unclean words, unclean actions, proud and angry attitudes. If we're having someone over for company, what do we do?

We clean the house. Folks, when we sit down to open our Bibles, we need to clean house and get rid of all moral filth and wickedness because our heavenly guest is coming in the word to teach us.

[32 : 13] Get rid of the filth. That's what James tells us. The holy seed is to be received into holy ground of a well-prepared heart.

So Jeremiah says to the people of his day in chapter 4 and verse 3, break up your unplowed ground and do not sow among thorns. Get rid of the weeds, all of them.

What does James tell us? Get rid of all moral filth and evil. Those roots of pride, that lust, that greed, that bitterness, that discontent, get rid of it all.

You see, when we hate sin, we hate all sin, Manton says. So there's to be no peaceful coexistence with any sin, no known sin, harbored, cherished, allowed to live on in the garden of our hearts.

Pull them out by the roots. It's radical mortification and cleansing that is being called for. And all of this in preparation for the right receiving of the word of God planted in you.

[33:19] give the seed of God's word the very best soil in which to thrive. Now, it's not a self-help cleansing. It's not something we do on our own.

We can't make our hearts good soil, can we? Rather, we go to the fountain, open for sin and uncleanness, and we say, that's the fountain for me. Because of my moral field, I need to come. I need to wash in this fountain. There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emmanuel's veins, and sinners and saints who plunge there will clean all their guilty stains.

And so we go and we plunge ourselves into that fountain. We come to Christ, whose blood cleanses from all sin, and we say, foul eye to the fountain fly, wash me, Savior, or I die.

Here is a sin, Lord, eradicate it from my heart and life. Give me strength to be done with this sin.

Pardon me, empower me. Get rid of all moral faith that you might receive the implanted word.

[34:28] Maybe it was an angry word spoken on the way to church this morning. You ever noticed how Sunday mornings are often tense mornings and tempting mornings to angry, angry, proud, spirits, and unkind words?

You see, there's an evil one who knows if we don't that such attitudes and sins unconfessed keeps us from profiting from the word that's about to be sown into our soil. Beware.

There was a laver of water in the Old Testament for the priests to wash in before they went in to worship God. Well, priests, when we come to hear God's word in the worship of him, there's a laver, and it's filled with Jesus' blood.

Go and wash. How fitting it was for us before we received the word of God preached to sing a song confessing our sins.

Cleanse. Cleanse and keep me pure within. Lord, cleanse me of my sin. That's what we sang.

That's exactly what James is telling us to do.

[35:44] Get rid of our sins that we might then receive and accept the seed planted in our hearts.

Good thing. You prepare your heart for worship to confess your sins.

Pull those sins out. Forsake them. Renounce them right there in your seat. And be prepared to then receive the word. So what have we seen? What's the right use of this word of God?

Be eager to listen to it. Remove all hindrances to it. And lastly, humbly accept it. Humbly accept it. Humbly accept the word planted in you which can save you.

If God gives it, then we must receive it. Notice the attitude without which there can be no proper receiving of the word. Humbly accept it.

It's the word that means to receive it with humility, with meekness, with submission. And they all point at a teachable spirit, a pliable softness to be shaped by the word of God.

[36:46] This is the one I esteem, God says, he who is humble and contrite and who trembles at my word. That person, when I speak, they listen with reverence and awe.

They're receiving the word humbly. And I ask you, what is a better preparation to humbly receiving the word of God than to confess your sins as we did in that hymn?

Humbled and broken by the awareness of what our sins have cost our Savior, we come humbly, not to argue with God's word, but to accept whatever he says to us.

We don't come to the word as a critic, but we come humbly to sit at Jesus' feet and to learn from him. Teach me, Lord. Teach me how to live. Teach me how to think. Teach me how to pray.

Teach me how to father, to mother. Teach me to work. We don't come to sit in judgment upon the word. Well, let's see what the word of God says.

[37:48] And we're up here looking. We come to be judged by the word. That's what submission is. We put ourselves under it. That's the word here. Receive submissively humility with meekness.

Let it judge you. That's what it is. The living and active word of God that judges the thoughts and intents of our hearts. And we come and we submit to its searching light.

We welcome it. Search me, oh God. It's what we say. Search me, oh God. Know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me.

Come on. Search me, Lord. I want to know those ways that are offensive. I want to know what is a filthy stench in your nostril. Search and show me and lead me in the way everlasting. We throw open the doors of our hearts and say, come on in.

Come on in, Lord, with your word into every room, every closet, every nook and cranny, every dark alley of my heart. Shine your light. Teach me, correct me, rebuke me, train me in righteousness.

[38 : 54] Humbly accepting the word of God as it's planted in your hearts. We come as a servant before our master and we say with Samuel, speak, Lord, your servant is listening, reporting for duty, master.

What would you have me to do with Paul? And when you humbly accept the word, you're ready to accept whatever the word has to say, all of it.

You don't pick and choose which parts of the word you want to follow. So there are difficult commands. And yes, you humbly accept those things that call you to do what appears to be impossible.

Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds. Do you bristle at that? You see, that's easy for you to say, Pastor John. Or do you humbly accept the word planted in you? Even those difficult commands. It may come confronting you with sin. It may come accusing you and calling you to repent. It may cost you dearly to humbly accept the word. There's a virgin young lady who's engaged, betrothed to the love of her life, and an angel brings God's word to her, telling her that she's going to be pregnant with the Son of God, which will be conceived in her womb by the Holy Spirit.

[40 : 17] it. And that meant that her reputation in town stood to go up in flames, and she would become the rumor mill. Do you know who's pregnant out of wedlock?

And it meant that the love of her life would probably break that betrothal, and he would slip right out of her hands. But it was God's word, and so Mary said, be it unto me, Lord, I am your servant, be it unto me, according to your word.

She humbly accepted the word, that difficult command. You got difficult commands that you find in the word of God? Come to Jesus. He knows about difficult commands.

God the Father says, Son, you go down and be damned in the place of my people. Go on now. You take human flesh, born of a woman, born under the law, obey every law, then go to the cross with your people's sins upon you, and there I will punish their sins on you.

The Son of God, before that difficult command, here I am. I have come to do your will. And off he goes to the cross, obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

[41 : 36] He humbly accepted the difficult command. difficult doctrines are in here. You must humbly accept.

Hard to understand, harder yet for pride to accept. How about verse 18? He chose to give us birth through the word of truth. Not you. You didn't choose to be born again.

He chose to give us birth. God's sovereign choice to give the new birth to some sinners and not to all sinners.

That's maybe hard for you to humbly accept. You must. A woman at the beginning of a Bible conference said to the minister who was to speak on the theme of the doctrine of election, said, I do not see the doctrine of election anywhere in the Bible.

After several sessions she came back to him and she said, I now see that the doctrine of election is in the Bible. But I don't believe it. Humbly accept the word of God planted in you.

[42 : 47] Whatever you say, I'll do, I'll believe. Difficult promises, hard to believe. God is going to work this thing together for my good.

He will meet all my needs according to his glorious rule. How can I believe? They're too hard to believe. They can't apply to me. Humbly accept. Whoever comes to me, I will in no way cast out. Come to me. You'll find rest. You must accept humbly all that God's word says. What's your attitude when the word of God confronts your cherished opinions or sins?

Are you angry or sweetly submissive? What's your attitude toward the one who brings that word of God to you? Preacher, parent, teacher, friend, fellow Christian, are you angry or are you sweetly submissive and teachable?

Calvin's simple prayer before preaching was often, Lord, grant us the meekness to hear your word aright without which we cannot profit from it.

[43:57] receive with meekness the implanted word which can save you. There's the motivation if you need a little this morning or tomorrow morning as you open the Bible.

This word can save you. That's right. The word of God can save you. When God speaks, he's not playing games.

It's a matter of life and death, eternal issues are at stake when he speaks. The way you receive the word of God is serious business because this is the word that sets forth the only way of salvation through the merits of Jesus Christ and you must believe on him to be saved.

This is the word that goes on to sanctify you. It's the word by which you're born again and then it's the word by which you're sanctified and made holy. It's the word that will save you from your own evil desires from a thousand temptations that would then give birth to sin and sin when it is full grown would lead you to death and destruction.

This is the word that marks out the narrow road that leads to eternal life. This is the word that equips you to fight the good fight of faith. depends upon it because it does it does they're not just idle words they are your life.

[45:35] Take note James is saying you need this book you need it worse than you realize and you need to do three things this morning you need to be eager to hear it you need to remove the hindrances to it and you need to humbly!

whatever it says to you and next week we'll see that you need to be a doer and not merely a hearer of it. That's great.

Our Lord Jesus we thank you that we can safely come to you and say search me because when you search us and try us you not only come to point out our sins to us but you come with grace and how thankful we are that you have perfectly obeyed where we have broken your law and you have paid for our sins by your own death on the cross make us to treasure you more we're we're sorry Lord we confess I confess that I am not eager as I ought to be to listen to your word there have been other things that I have been more eager to listen to pour out your love in my heart that your words might become the treasured words Lord help us then to pull out the weeds that give no room for this word to take place in our life let your word come and dwell in us and may this song and this state of heart to humbly!

what the word implanted has to say to us let it be more and more our experience each time we open your word for the praise of our Savior we ask in his name Amen