

How to Receive the Word of God

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Preacher: Jon Hueni

[0 : 00] If you would take your Bibles and turn to the book of James, the New Testament book of James chapter 1. We're going to begin reading at verse 13 and read through the end of the chapter.

James chapter 1, verse 13. When tempted, no one should say, God is tempting me.

For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when by his own evil desire he is dragged away and enticed.

Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin. And sin, when it is full grown, gives birth to death. Don't be deceived, my dear brothers.

Every good and perfect gift is from heaven or from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. He chose to give us birth through the word of truth that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

[1 : 13] 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.

If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless.

[2 : 17] 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.

Let's hear God's words preached. God says in Isaiah 65, 1, I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me.

I was found by those who did not seek me. It was good to hear Mitchell Lawmaster's testimony of the grace of God that sought him when he was running from the Lord and how the Lord, by grace, arrested him and saved him.

Well, a blessing again to have the word of God in front of us tonight. Yesterday did mark the 503rd anniversary of Martin Luther nailing his 95 theses to the chapel door at Wittenberg, Germany.

And what he intended to be just a posting of a notice to call a debate on 95 points. God intended to be a spark that would ignite a flame of revival and reformation, not only in Germany, but spilling over into many other of the European nations.

[3 : 38] It was a recovery of the saving gospel of Jesus Christ, salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. It was also a recovery of the supreme authority of the scriptures alone, not the Pope, not the Cardinals, but the scriptures.

It was a Holy Spirit-sent revival of true religion, of biblical Christianity. And here we are 503 years later, still reaping the benefits of God's revival that he sent to his church that long ago.

Well, it was some 20 years after the nailing of those 95 theses that a young French man was preaching the gospel in Geneva, Switzerland.

His name, John Calvin. And it was his habit just before preaching, just as I would have done maybe two minutes ago, to often lead the congregation in this simple prayer.

Lord, give us that meekness without which the word of God will do us no good.

[5 : 07] Now, the Holy Spirit was pleased to answer that congregational prayer in great measure there in Geneva. Where did this prayer come from? Why is it so important if we are to get anything

of value, of good from the ministry of the word of God?

Well, it comes from James 1:21, if you'd open your Bibles there. James 1:21 in the passage that was read for us. 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, the broader context of that verse here in chapter 1 is that James is dealing with our trials and temptations, which is the normal Christian life all the way to heaven, trials and temptations.

Indeed, every trial from the Lord is a temptation from the devil. And every temptation from the devil is a trial from the Lord. And that's the way we go to heaven.

So that's the broad context of chapter 1. The more immediate context of our verse is found in a section of verses that show us the critical role of God's word in our lives.

[6 : 30] Indeed, the wisdom that we need and must pray for in the midst of our trials is nothing less than the wisdom found in the word of God.

It's here that you'll find all the wisdom and weapons needed to reject those temptations and all the wisdom that you'll need to persevere in your trials and to get the most out of your trials.

Thank God there is no trial. There is no temptation in your life that this book will not thoroughly equip you for.

It's all right here in God's written word. But it will do us no good unless we receive it properly. So that's the place where this prayer of Calvin came from.

And James is telling us then how to receive the word of God in a way that it will bring us good. He's got three points that deal with before, during, and after receiving the word of God.

[7 : 39] So what do we do before receiving the word? Verse 21a, we get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent. What do we do during the receiving of the word of God?

Well, we humbly accept, verse 21b, humbly accept the word planted in you which can save you. And then what about afterwards? Well, verses 22 to 25, do not merely listen to the word and so deceive yourselves.

Do what it says. Now, I'm going to park longest tonight on the second point. But I do want to mention the other two points. The picture language of verse 21 is that of a garden, a field.

Calvin calls it a plantation. You see it. Humbly accept the word planted in you. Planted in you.

Now, James is simply borrowing this word picture from the Lord Jesus. You're very familiar with it. A farmer went out to sow and he sowed this. The seed was the word of God.

[8 : 45] And the word of God was planted, wasn't it? On all kinds of soil. Four of them are listed for us. And in the first three soils that fell on, it never produced a crop. So the seed was planted, but it never produced a crop.

But the fourth soil was good soil. Hearts that understood and accepted the word planted in them and produced a crop, some 30, 60, and 100 fold.

So you're the plantation. And right now, as you're listening to the word of God, it is being planted in you. Now, every gardener and farmer knows that there is a necessary preparation of the soil.

That even before the seed is planted, there's the need to prepare the soil for the seed. Things to be removed like rocks and weeds that would not give the seed a chance to grow.

And Jesus talked about them, didn't he? These weeds and thorns he defined as the worrisome cares of life. All the things that you've got to do every day, all week long, just those worrisome cares of life.

[9 : 49] The deceitfulness of riches that make you want to get more, more, more, and it drives you. And the desire for other things. And these things come in and they choke out the word so that it bears no harvest.

And we did not receive any good from it. These same weeds that are found in the bad soil are no less choking of the word of God in our soil and in our hearts.

They're no less destructive of a fruitful harvest in us as they are in the worldling. They must be pulled out in order to have a harvest of holiness. And the difference is that the Christian really does pull weeds.

And really does remove the rocks so that though they may diminish the harvest of holiness in the saint, they do not dominate him or her such that there's no harvest at all of holiness.

So James is telling us, how do you prepare the soil? What's this weeding, this clearing of the soil that must take place before we hear the word? Well, it's verse 21a.

[10:59] Get rid of all moral filth and the evil that's so prevalent. That's pulling the weeds. Get rid of them. Get rid of them. What? Get rid of the evil that's so prevalent.

That's worldliness. The way the world thinks. The things the world does. The evil that the world calls good. Things that have become acceptable.

They're prevalent. All around you. Single men and women living together before marriage. Hatred. Lying. Cheating on taxes. Cheating on your mate.

Divorce when you get tired of your spouse. Gossip. Spending money you don't have on things you can't afford. All so prevalent, you see. Well, we must get rid of such rocks and thorns.

And then all moral filth. All that does not line up with God's moral law. It's filth in the eyes of God. It's offensive to the Holy Spirit, our teacher.

[11:59] And so we must pull it out. We don't want to grieve our teacher if we would be rightly receiving the word. So we give ourselves to a lifestyle of pulling weeds from the fields of our hearts.

That we might be ready and good ground as we come to receive the word of God. As it's planted in us. And then after we've had it planted in us, there's work to be done.

Don't just listen and deceive yourself. Do what it says. And so forth. But there is something to be done as we hear it. Something for you to be doing right now as the word of God is being planted in you.

The Lord Jesus said, be careful how you hear. Not all hearing is profitable. Not all hearing will do you good. Not all hearing of sermons.

Not all hearing of good sermons will do you good. Be careful how you hear. So Calvin's prayer, give us that meekness without which.

[13:03] The word of God will do us no good. James says in verse 21b. Humbly accept the word of God planted in you.

Which can save you. So again, Calvin saw the word picture being used by James. And he calls believers the living plantation of God. So you're a living plantation.

Identities are important in the Christian life. And so what are you? We had that series.

I didn't have this one, but it's another wonderful identity of the Christian life. You are a living plantation of God. Do you ever think of yourself that way?

What's a plantation? It's a field where a lot of plants have been planted. Someone's planted them with an aim to produce crops of coffee, cotton, sugar, something.

[14:04] So you are God's living plantation. What's he planting in you? Well, he's planting his word in you. That's what James tells us.

His own word found in the scriptures. These are the seeds that God is planting in you from which he is seeking a profitable harvest. And since that is true, your response is to humbly accept that seed.

That word of God being planted in you, which can save you. Listen how Calvin explains it. This is why so few profit in the school of God, because hardly one in a hundred renounces the stubbornness of his own spirit and gently submits to God.

But if we desire to be the living plantation of God, we must subdue our proud hearts and be humble and labor to become like lambs.

So as to allow ourselves to be ruled by and guided by our shepherd. That's how he rules us. That's how he guides us by his word.

[15:15] Again, changing the metaphor from living plantation now to sheep being guided by the shepherd. Humility. Humility.

Humbly accept the word of God. Humility. The great what? Emptier. Humility's the great emptier.

We must be emptied of pride. That's how we must receive the word of God if we would profit from it. Isn't that the essence of a teachable spirit, though? Humility.

Humility. To be humble enough to be taught. To accept whatever God says simply because he says it. That's what he's after.

That's what we must bring as we have the word of God planted in us. that means we should never find a Christian in a more humble state than when receiving the word of God I should never find you more humble than what I see right here as you're receiving God's word humbly accepting the word of God now we're not called to check our minds at the door are we no we need to gird up the loins of our minds when we come to the word of God but we are called to check our pride at the door and to humbly accept the word of God to to bow our minds to his mind not to sit in judgment upon it but to to bow before the word of the living God now Paul saw that in the attitude of the Thessalonians

and he praised God for it he said in 1st Thessalonians 2 13 we also thank God continually because when you receive the word of God which you heard from us you accepted it not as the word of man but as it is in truth the word of God which is at work in you who believe you you humble humbled yourself when you heard this word you you humbled yourself before the God whose word it was and that's the attitude that we're to bring to the word of God so Adam's fall into sin left us broken and blinded 2nd Corinthians 4 4 says the God of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers so that they cannot see the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God so the unconverted mind cannot see glory in Jesus why we should ever want to give him our lives why we should ever want to follow him obey him there's no glory in Jesus he's he's yawning at that's the blinders that were put upon all of our minds sin and Satan blinded us but sin and Satan sin also hardened us and our pride hardened us 1st Corinthians 2 14 says the man without the spirit does not accept the things that come from the spirit of God for their foolishness to him he can't understand them because those things are only discerned spiritually and he's spiritually blind spiritually dead and so not only does pride and sin blind us blind our minds but it also sets us to not accept the things that God says it's not always just that men can't understand so much as it is that they will not accept remember John chapter 6 as Jesus was preaching about himself being the bread of life that came down from the from heaven and whoever eats of him will live forever and you must eat my flesh and drink my blood well on hearing Jesus teaching many of his disciples said this is a hard teaching not who can understand it but who can accept it who can accept it they were offended at it and from this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him yes sin blinds us so we can't understand it but sin due to the pride of our hearts also refuses to accept it and isn't that what we see all about us what people are saying about the basic teachings

[20 : 00] of God's word like in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth oh I can't accept that it's so unscientific no I can't I can't that's foolishness that's foolishness exactly exactly the way the world because they cannot see they cannot understand but they cannot and will not accept like life beginning in the womb and it being a gift of God and not a woman's choice whether to keep it or to end it like gender being determined by biology at birth sexual relations being limited to marriage and marriage being only between one man and one woman salvation and eternal life being received through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ alone and eternal hell being the destiny of all men who do not repent and believe and these things are foolish foolish they're foolish they're going backwards they're on the wrong side of history as they like to say as if we have advanced beyond such archaic ideas well the problem you see is not only a lack of understanding yes the spiritual man or the the lost man cannot see cannot perceive things rightly but it's also the fact that his heart will not accept a God with absolutes about what's right and wrong a God to tell me what I'm to do with my body what I'm to do with my choices no sin keeps us and pride keeps us from humbly accepting the word of God

Romans 8 7 the sinful mind is hostile to God it will not submit to God's law nor can it do so so this is what the fall has done to us every single one of us here have had this kind of result due to our sin and nothing's more proud than our sin what do we do when we sin we put ourselves in God's place isn't that what Eve did that she I'm going to be my authority and determine what's best for me not what God says not what his word says and we we choose what we want over God so that's that's what sin has done to us you say but that's the natural man that's the lost sinful man and blessed be God there is such a thing as as redemption and salvation through Jesus Christ that he does come and find us blind and he opens our eyes we see glory in Jesus the very glory of God in the face of Christ and we understand the things that God has given us in his word we have been brought out of darkness into the light once we were blind but now we see and oh the things that we see of our savior in the word now and yet redemption in Christ is not yet perfected is it one day it will be all made new without a shadow of darkness but not now for now there is a remaining blindness in my heart and my mind there is a remaining hostility that doesn't want to accept the things of of God is that

Romans 7 that sin remains in me remaining corruption that anti God flesh that resists God in my life it's at work in our members affecting all we do affecting my mind as it thinks my affections as I desire my will as I choose my conscience as it judges we don't see what 2020 vision we've got floaters don't we and blind spots and we still see through a glass darkly yes blessed be God the Holy Spirit attends my reading and reception of the word and gives me sight and convinces me of the truthfulness of these things but Galatians 5 says that I've got a flesh that wars against the spirit

but even as the spirit comes to teach me there's a part of me that doesn't like his teaching and that fights back against him indeed that resists the spirit and that we can grieve the spirit and we can quench the spirit how subtle our proud flesh can be and its resistance to God's word hence our ongoing need as Christians I say our ongoing need as Christians to the last day here is to humbly accept the word of God planted in you which can save you proud stubbornness can leave us refusing for a while to follow God's word and exposes us to the discipline and correction and chastening of the Lord that's why we're told today we are told believers are told in Hebrews chapter three today if you hear his voice that's what you're hearing tonight his voice what do not harden your heart you see we we can harden our hearts to what we hear and we can just push it off not yet I'm not ready to do that yet it's hardening our hearts rather than humbling our hearts and accepting whatever

God says to us so there's the teenage virgin Mary and the angel Gabriel comes to her with the word of God that as a virgin she is going to give birth to a son who will be the son of God the son of the most high and the news and the news of this word from heaven left a thousand unanswered questions in her mind it left her anticipated marriage to her beloved Joseph in jeopardy it would leave her exposed to the shameful gossip of the rumor mill and to the challenge of being a single mother all sorts of other questions and fears but she's exemplary for her humbly accepting the word that was planted in her and her response I'm the Lord's servant let it be to me according to your word there's identity again you're the

[27 : 02] Lord I'm the servant so so I take my place before the master let it be to me according to your word servants exist to do the will and word of the master that's humbly accepting the word planted in her that's putting God's plan above her own God's will above her own whatever you say just because you say it master so what have we seen we've seen that remaining pride can make us stubbornly resist God's will hence the need hence the reason we're told humbly accept the word planted in you but secondly it can cause us to miss the very interpretation the right interpretation and application of God's word this remaining pride and stubbornness and here

I'm thinking of the twelve disciples and how blind they were to the clear words of scripture to the clear words of God the son as he planted his word in them over and over again he said to them I counted four times these words are recorded in in Mark's gospel or similar words he taught them that he must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders chief priests teachers of the law and that he must be killed and after three days rise again he spoke plainly about this and they humbly accepted his word planted in them no he spoke plainly about this and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him never Lord this shall never happen to you that's not humbly accepting the word planted in him now we can understand why Peter did not accept a messiah who dies the long Jewish history for many centuries was that of being an oppressed people 400 years as slaves in Egypt and then the Assyrians swept in and took them captive and then it was the Babylonian empire that put them under their heel and then the Medes and the Persians and then the Greeks and now it's those Romans who were ruling over them so we understand why they might have twisted the word of God into a liberation theology and viewed the messiah as someone who's coming to liberate us from oppression the oppression of those nasty Romans that we have to pay taxes to and knuckle down under and so they read right over the suffering servant of the Lord passages they read right over his suffering his death and his resurrection and all that they heard and all they saw was the glorious conquering lion of Judah passages yes we're going to be the head and no longer the tail messiah is coming to put our enemies under those cursed Romans they'll be under our heel when messiah comes you see messiah's death was unthinkable to the disciples even though Jesus told him he was going told them he was going to die Peter's proud prejudice kept him clinging to his preconceived ideas about messiah he chose his own understanding over Christ's own word and he refused to humbly!

accept the word planted in him and so he was he was in right field when it came to the reason the messiah came he missed it and for it he received a rebuke from his divine teacher get behind me Satan you're a stumbling block to me you do not have in mind the things of God but the things of man now of course Peter wasn't alone was he in that misunderstanding of messiah's mission the whole group of them it was their pride and prejudice that blinded them to the truth as it was in Jesus and it was from Jesus being taught to them on another occasion when Jesus spoke of that the son of man will rise from the dead they kept the matter to themselves discussing what rising from the dead meant now again we're this side of the rising from the dead but still those are clear words

aren't they and they're wondering wonder what he means by rising from the dead well maybe he just means that he's going to rise from the dead and that means he's going to die and they kept it to themselves and discussed what the 12 the son of man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men they will kill him and after three days he will rise but they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it you've got to be humble to ask questions don't you you're acknowledging ignorance aren't you

[32 : 30] I don't know I don't understand please please enlighten me teach me Lord what do you mean by being killed and then being raised from the dead three days later but they were afraid to ask maybe they were afraid that it would expose their ignorance or maybe it was they were afraid that maybe he really meant what he was saying in plain language and they weren't ready to accept it but you see how their minds were were missing what God's word said to them because they weren't humbly accepting the word of God there's an interesting account only in Mark Mark's gospel about a strange healing that Jesus had of a blind man and it's interesting it comes right before two revealing comments of Peter it's found in Mark chapter 8 if you want to turn to it and verses 22 to the end you remember how

Jesus spit in the eyes of this blind man and then he put his hands on him and he asked do you see anything and the man responded I see people and they look like trees walking around all right so it almost appears as if Jesus blew!

his healing of the man he blew! he failed so we know that can't be the case so why in the world is Jesus halfway healing him well he's not done so once more Jesus puts his hands on the man's eyes and his eyes were opened his sight was restored and now he saw everything clearly we never again read of Jesus healing a man in that fashion first to see people as trees walking and then to see clearly so why well listen what immediately follows then Jesus asked the twelve who do people say that I the son of man am and they gave him the answers and then he said well who do you say that I am and Peter answers for the twelve and says you are the Christ the Messiah right you are Peter you got it right you know the identity of Jesus of Nazareth he is the long promised Messiah your eyes can see but then Jesus spoke of his sufferings and death and resurrection and Peter pulls him aside and said never Lord that's never going to happen to you rebukes the Lord you see as for Messiah Messiah's identity he got it but as for Messiah's mission he missed the boat completely why has Messiah come that he missed he's still seeing men like trees you see he's he's not seeing clearly he sees Messiah yes it's you Jesus but he doesn't understand his mission that he came to die and rise again for our salvation to bear our sins there in our place a lot more work would be needed before

Peter and the twelve would clearly see the meaning of scripture concerning the mission of Messiah well again there was not the humble acceptance of what Jesus was saying and it left them with the wrong interpretation of scripture so we see it in Luke 24 with those two disciples on the road to Emmaus we thought this we had hoped he was the Messiah but that would save us but no no he died and then we see the same later with the eleven in Luke 24 and how Jesus says to the two how foolish you are and how slow of heart to Moses and all the prophets he explained to them what he said in all the scriptures concerning himself folks we can miss Christ in the scriptures that's what they did they didn't see Christ in the scriptures and so

[37 : 01] Jesus had to open those scriptures to them and later with the eleven he says to them this is what I told you while I was still with you everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the law of Moses the prophets and the Psalms and then he opened their minds so that they could understand the scriptures this is what was written the Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day without humbly accepting the word planted in us we can miss precious meetings and sites of our Savior beyond the sacred page we seek the Lord our spirits long for you that's what we want to see and yet we can miss it you see we we can miss it we want to see the glory passages we don't like to see the suffering so we read over the passage so we find what we're looking for maybe we grew up with a certain system of theology that men imposed!

upon the Bible and so we ran everything through that grid as we read the scriptures and we missed it we didn't see what it was saying because we didn't bow our minds before scriptures we rather had our system that we imposed upon scripture and we judged the scriptures through that system or we come to a familiar text and as soon as it's announced well we kind of say well I've read that a thousand times and I know everything that that passage has to say and we miss some new insight into Christ and we're the poor for it we need to humbly!

accept the word planted in us letting God tell us whatever he wants to say through his word humbly taking our place as ignorant children at his feet needing to be taught don't let me miss what you're saying to me here in this passage I need a fresh sight of this truth I need a powerful sight of Christ something that will leave me changed it's a humble acceptance of the word so Psalm 119 18 the psalmist most likely David gives us another prayer just like James 121 it's fitting for us every time we come to the word of God it's open my eyes that I may see open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law that's not the cry of a lost sinner whose mind is completely blinded by Satan open my eyes that I might see no it's not even a baby believer in the family of God coming and saying open my eyes Lord I've been so long in the world I've just been born spiritually and there's so much darkness still in my mind open my eyes that I might see no this this is a mature seasoned saint if you don't believe me read the rest of Psalm 119 what a saint this was what maturity what what a walk with God what a hunger!

for the word of God he's the one praying open my eyes that I might see this is humbly coming to the word of God saying keenly aware of his remaining blindness that drives him to the living God and makes him say unless you do something supernatural right now as I sit here and receive your word unless you open the eyes of my heart I'll miss what is here for me I'll go home not as rich as I could be and should be open my eyes that I might see wonderful things in your word well that's something that the humility that we need and it is humbling isn't it to know that even as Christians unless God by his spirit comes and enlightens and illumines our minds we won't get it or we might get the surface but we won't see what we ought to see we won't see things so clearly that it will leave us new men and women as we leave for having seen it so remaining pride what have we seen well we've seen that remaining pride and preconceived ideas can make us stubbornly resist

[41 : 37] God's will it can secondly make us miss the correct interpretation and application of God's word and thirdly remaining pride can blind us from our own sins we acknowledge that we have blind spots you've been behind a semi truck and you've read the sign if you can't see me I can't see you well maybe that's innocent enough that he has blind spots but our blind spots aren't that innocent are they no our blind spots are due to pride more often than not thinking too highly of ourselves Psalm 36 2 in describing the wicked who have no fear of God before their eyes David says they flatter themselves too much to detect or hate their sin so why can't they see it why can't they detect it when everybody else can see it why not them because they got too high of a view of themselves they flatter themselves too much so that they can't see they have blind spots and that again is not only the problem of!

saints as well so David the man after God's own heart guilty of adultery guilty of murder and he seems to have just continued on his way for nine months without coming before the Lord and acknowledging his sin and confession and repentance and so God sends his word to him in the mouth of Nathan the prophet and so Nathan comes as the bearer of God's word to David and to bring him to repentance but David doesn't get it he was flattering himself too much so so so the story of God's word was a rich man receiving a guest and instead of killing one of his many sheep he kills the neighbor's pet sheep to feed his guests and David listens he's emotionally moved by the word that he's heard even to the point of being angry at the way this man acted in the story and demanded that justice be meted out to him but very word of

God through the prophet he missed it he saw other sins but not his own until Nathan said thou art the man and then the whole house of cards came tumbling down and he saw himself for what he was we too can see how God's word applies to everyone else I'm sure glad she's here to hear that passage sure glad he's here to hear this sermon or wish he was here tonight to have heard that and we leave without having heard what is it about me Lord that I needed to see tonight what was it about you that I need to see what was it about this mirror of the word that was showing up on me that I dare not walk away from without changing and aligning myself with what I see hence we need to pray open my eyes that

I might see the need to humbly accept the word planted in us to respond search me oh God and know my heart test me and know my thoughts and see if there be any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting that's what it means to humbly!

accept the word we come wanting to have dealings with God about me I can sadly miss so much Lord I can fail to see myself aright please search me please show me what you see that's humbly accepting the word a holy suspicion of myself knowing how committed I am to me knowing how committed I am to my way how do you treat somebody that you don't trust well you treat them with

suspicion and Proverbs 28 26 says he who trusts in himself is a fool but he who walks in wisdom is kept safe so we have this holy suspicion about ourselves I can't trust my heart I can't just do the gut feeling of what might arise from my heart I can't do that I can't go there why because [46 : 22] I can't trust my heart it still has that flesh in it that would want to have me keep going on my way so three times in James chapter one we're warned Deceiving ourselves isn't that interesting and so it's very easy to deceive ourselves hence we need to pray Lord help me help me to humbly receive your word Peter when Jesus brought the word of God to him you're going to deny me three times tonight before the cock crows couldn't believe that word wouldn't accept it you see he thought too highly of himself never Lord I'll never deny you three times maybe they will but not me that's that's Peter and so I trust that we can see ourselves why we need this word humbly accept the word planted in you which can save you all our time's gone so those last words of verse 21 which can save you humbly now if that doesn't wake you up before you go home it needs to we will be saved by the word of

God rightly humbly received there is an initial salvation there is a progressive salvation from sin and then there's a final salvation and when Paul challenged Timothy to preach the word he said so that you might save yourself and your hearers pastor Mark Chansky brought that to the new pastor up in Holland a couple weeks ago when I was there he threw lightning and thunder at Peter Banffy for 40 minutes be careful the salvation of yourself and your hearers depends on how you preach the word now James is saying your salvation depends on how you receive this word so humbly accept it as it's planted in you which can save you you see it's through the word of God that you and I will be saved not just that initial repenting and trusting in Christ but that ongoing salvation from sin of repenting and trusting in Christ with which will not make it to the end and will not be saved whatever we might have claimed so much depends then upon our rightly handling the word of God which can save you

I need God's word to go on saving me from me I need the word of God to go on saving me from my sin which can be so deceitful I need the word of God to save me from the world seductive influence what's so prevalent in our world that has an appeal to my flesh I want to be saved from the devil's lies they're so crafty and dressed up like the truth so it's high motivation to humbly accept the word of God because it can save you that's the word that will lead you to Christ that will make you wise for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ the scriptures the holy scriptures so humbly receive them Deuteronomy 32 47 says they're not just idle words for you they're your life they're your life so listen as if your life depends upon it for it does humbly accept that word planted in you which can save you give us that meekness

Lord without which the word of God will do us no good and Calvin's explanation of this verse hence it is that so few profit from the school of God because hardly one in a hundred renounces the stubbornness of his own spirit and gently submits to God but if we desire to be the living plantation of God we must subdue our proud hearts and be humble and labor to be like lambs so as to suffer ourselves to be ruled and guided by our shepherd what a gracious shepherd to lay down his life for us and then to lead us all the way home with goodness and mercy stand with me and let's sing we should come to the word of God humbly what does that mean we come as clay on the potter's wheel so let's sing have thine own way Lord fitting way that we come to the word of God let's pray we thank you Lord for your word we thank you that there is such a thing as the Holy Spirit illumining our hearts and minds to the very words that he once illumined the hearts and minds of the writers of scripture that they would write the very thought and words and letters of God and that we can be taught by him and we can come and say search me oh God and know my heart and that we need not fear to have him show us any offensive way in us because we have a savior who washes and cleanses us from sin what a gracious teacher and master you are to us and we thank you for the encouragements that we have in scriptures you said in the new covenant that they would all be taught by God we need the teaching that comes from you you said that you desire truth in the inward parts and that's where we we want you to come each time we hear your word and put it into our inward parts you said in the new covenant you would write your law upon our minds and put it in our hearts so come and put your word in our minds sort us out

[52 : 59] Lord our thoughts are all over the place big thoughts of self and little thoughts of you teach us to think aright come and write your law upon our affections we find our desires so disordered and set on the things of this world come and lift our desires to Christ toward those things that are eternal that will last beyond death come and put your heart or your word into our wills that

can still be so stubborn still wanting to remain in our ways and so come and melt all the stubbornness from our wills and teach us to humbly accept your word that Christ might be formed in us that we might bear more and more of his character to this world and to your glory we ask it in Jesus name with confidence amen