

JAMES

GENUINE FAITH ON DISPLAY

GENUINE FAITH RECEIVES THE WORD PT. 2:

RECEIVE THE WORD ACTIVELY

JAMES 1:22-25

OUTLINE OF JAMES

Section	James	Marks of Genuine Faith
	1:1	Greeting
1	1:2-18	Genuine Faith Considers Trials as Joy
2	1:19-27	Genuine Faith Receives the Word
3	2:1-13	Genuine Faith Loves without Favoritism
4	2:14-26	Genuine Faith Produces Good Works
5	3:1-12	Genuine Faith is Shown in Your Speech
6	3:13-18	Genuine Faith Exhibits a Humble Wisdom
7	4:1-10	Genuine Faith Seeks God's Grace
8	4:11-12	Genuine Faith Recognizes One Judge
9	4:13-17	Genuine Faith Understands Dependence on God
10	5:1-11	Genuine Faith is Patient in God's Timing
11	5:12	Genuine Faith Speaks Truth
12	5:13-18	Genuine Faith Prays Powerfully
13	5:19-20	Genuine Faith Calls Others to Genuine Faith

JAMES 1:19-27

¹⁹This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; ²⁰for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God. ²¹Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.

²²But prove yourselves doers of the word and not merely hearers who delude themselves. ²³For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; ²⁴for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. ²⁵But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.

²⁶If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless. ²⁷Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

JAMES 1:18

¹⁸In 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.

- **In the exercise of His will** – “He decided;” God is the active agent in regeneration; He initiates the work of salvation
- **By the word of truth** – “the gospel” See Col. 1:5; Eph. 1:13.

SECTION 2 OUTLINE

Genuine Faith Receives the Word (verses 19-27)

1. Receive the Word Eagerly (19-20)
2. Receive the Word Purely (21a)
3. Receive the Word Humbly (21b)
4. **Receive the Word Actively (22-25)**
 - a. The Command: Becoming a Faithful Doer v. 22
 - b. The Illustration: Being a Foolish Observer v.23-24
 - c. The Promise: Blessing a Diligent Doer v.25

JAMES 1:22-25

²²But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. ²³For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; ²⁴for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. ²⁵But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.

A. THE COMMAND: BECOMING A FAITHFUL DOER v.22

But prove yourselves doers of the word . . .

But – this conjunction functions as a continuative; there is more to say on the topic he was just discussing



Two types of people:
Word-doers and Self-deluders.

1) Word-doers

NASB95 But **prove** yourselves doers of the word

LSB But **become** doers of the word

ESV But **be** doers of the word

Not a one-time or even frequent act of doing the word, but continually *being a person* who does the word.

John MacArthur: “He is describing characteristic behavior, not occasional activity. It is one thing to fight; it is something else to be a soldier. It is one thing to build a shed; it is something else to be a builder. James is not merely challenging his readers to *do the Word*; he is telling them real Christians are *doers of the Word*. That describes the basic disposition of those who believe unto salvation.”

- **Same truth in Romans:**

Romans 2:13 – for it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified.

- **Same truth taught by Christ:**

Luke 11:28 – “. . . blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it.”

John 13:17 – “If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.”

2) Self-deluders

... and not merely hearers who delude themselves.

- **Hearer** – as each person in the early church did not have their own copies of the Bible, they intake of God's Word was always through hearing the Word read and taught
 - **Merely** – this was the problem, the hearing was not coupled with doing
 - **Delude themselves** – “to deceive, to defraud, to cheat”
- These self-deluded people are hearing the word. This means that they are people who are regular church attenders!

B. THE ILLUSTRATION: BEING A FOOLISH OBSERVER v.23-24

James 1:23-24 – For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; ²⁴for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was.”

1) Faithful Observation

- **Mirror** – usually polished bronze
- **Natural face** – “face of genesis;” his own physical face
- **Looks** – to closely perceive or carefully look

James 1:23-24 – . . . for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was.”

2) Forgetful Implementation

- **Forgotten** – to fail to act on knowledge received
 - Proverbs 3:1 – My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments.
 - Psalm 119:16 – I shall delight in Your statutes; I shall not forget Your word.
- **Matthew 7:21–23** – “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. . . .”

C. THE PROMISE: BLESSING A PERSEVERING DOER v.25

James 1:23-24 – But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.

1) Faithful Observation

- **Look intently** – “to stoop and look, exert effort to see something by bending down”
- **Abides** – “to continue or remain”
- **Law** – still referring to “the word” which is gospel truth, but points to authority of the Scripture
- **Perfect law, the law of liberty** – the fulfilled law through Christ

James 1:25 – . . . not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer.”

2) Faithful Implementation

- **Effectual doer** – a person who acts on knowledge received
- **Matthew 7:24–27**

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. “And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock.

“Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. “The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and great was its fall.”

James 1:25 – . . .this man will be blessed in what he does. .”

3) Blessed Conclusion Implementation

- **Blessed** – God’s favor upon you

APPLICATION

Ask yourself these questions:

- **Might I be self-deluded?**
- **Do I see God's Word as liberating?**
- **Do I consistently live as doer of the Word?**