

## James #4

James 1:16-27 (NIV)

[16] Don't be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. [17] Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. [18] He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

[19] My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, [20] because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.

[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.

[22] Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. [23] Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror [24] and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. [25] But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

[26] Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless. [27] Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

The Source of All good news

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- Everything that is good and perfect is from God
- God does not change (like the seasons, like the people on the earth)
- He birthed us through the word of truth (LOGOS = eternal word)
- We are the BEST and MOST loved “first fruits” of all that He created

**Where do you get your news? (Reuters, BBC, Fox, MSNBC?)**

- What source do you accept as authoritative, true and valuable?
  - o We can't coast on this one...
    - **What we believe about ourselves and the world is defined by our SPIRITUAL SOURCE..**
- What do you believe about your value, your direction and what is important
  - o Is it defined by **The Spirit of God** or by **the Spirit of the Age**...

**YOU REALLY HAVE A CHOICE OF TWO... WHICH SOURCE DO YOU TRUST? = Two Spirits**

1. **Zeitgeist** – (German word) which means “Spirit of the Age”

- o Definition: The values, tastes, outlook and spiritual characteristics of a period
- o Definition: a collective mind or worldview that influences a society's culture and history
- o The spirit of the age – led by the shifting view of what is good and right
  - Guided by “change makers” & “influencers”
    - Based on what is expedient, what feels good
    - Does not value the Spirit of God – but chooses immature, selfish perspectives

## 2. Spirit of God

- “Gives us birth through the truth”
  - Our life (SPIRITUAL BIRTH) comes from being defined by the Spirit of God
    - SO THAT WE KNOW who we are
    - SO THAT WE KNOW what we are here for
- WE CAN CHOOSE THE REGENERATION OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD – Being saved from the Zeitgeist...
- Eph 2:1-7 (NKJV) And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, [2] in which you once walked according to the course of this world [ZEITGEIST,] according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, [3] among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. [4] But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, [5] even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), [6] and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, [7] that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.
  - We were spiritually dead following the ZEITGEIST
    - Enslaved by sin (fulfilling the lusts of the flesh)
    - Inviting the correction of the Lord – no blessing
  - We were made alive by Jesus (Spirit of God)
    - Raised up with Him (to know who we are)
    - Seated in heavenly realms (given a correct perspective)
      - Made to rule with Him
    - Living in the riches of His grace

### James 1:19 – GODLY INTERACTION

[19] My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, [20] because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.

#### **Quick to listen to others...**

- We must learn to show love by listening well
  - I struggle with this one
- We live in a culture that is self-consumed = about where we are going, what we are doing
  - We think about our responses rather than listening carefully to what is being said
  - We don't ask questions for more information
  - We don't maintain eye contact
  - We interrupt – We must learn to put others first
- We must learn to LOVE OTHERS by listen well..
  - Ask questions
  - Don't interrupt
  - Maintain good eye contact
  - Active Listening
- Jhn 13:35 (NKJV) By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."
  - Listening and caring for one another reveals the LOVE OF GOD for others...

### James 1:21 – SPIRITUAL DECONTAMINATION

[21] Therefore, get rid of all moral contamination and the evil that is so prevalent [in the world] and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

- GET RID OF MORAL CONTAMINATION (filthiness) and Following the Spirit of the Age

- Heb 12:14 (NIV) Make every effort.... to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.
  - Moral contamination keeps us from hearing and being directed by God
  - Following the Spirit of the Age is opposite of
  - A LOST DISCIPLINE = “GET RID OF SIN” = Confession of Sin
    - When was the last time that you asked God to forgive you for your sin...
    - 1Jn 1:9 (NIV) If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.
    - We must regularly confess our sins & repent
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- THE SUBSTITUTION FOR SINNING IS “LETTING THE WORD GROW IN YOU”
  - This means HEARING AND OBEYING THE (Spoken word) RHEMA of God
  - Jas 1:5 (NIV) If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.
    - We read this earlier
      - God is speaking all the time, He gives guidance and wisdom generously!!
    - We must allow the WORD OF GOD to be PLANTED in us
      - The Sower (Matt. 13:18-23):
      - The seed is the word of God = God is always speaking...
        - The issue is not related to God’s silence
        - The issue is our receptivity – WE CAN BE UNABLE TO RECEIVE THE WORD
      - The types of Receptivity
        - The Path – hard heart, unreceptive = the enemy comes & takes it away
        - Rocky Ground – Limited receptivity, trouble /persecution causes to turn away
        - Thorny Ground – Too many other things going on, the word grows but does not produce fruit
        - Cultivated ground – The word of God is PLANTED and can grow and produce much fruit
          - Mat 13:23 (NIV) But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

#### James 1:22-25 – THE RELATIONSHIP OF HEARING AND DOING

[22] Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. [23] Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror [24] and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. [25] But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

- HEARING AND DOING
  - Some believers are “Rhema collectors”
    - They collect inspirational ideas and principles for a hobby
      - They have a journal full of inspirational data
    - They consider these inspirational ideas as “long term goals” or “Christian ideals”
    - Bible calls this having “itching ears” (2 Tim.4:3)
      - 2Ti 4:3 (NIV) For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.

- James is the New Testament Book of BALANCE
  - **Paul was a legalist** who is amazed at the value of Grace and Mercy to set us free from the law
    - Paul Has no trouble obeying God... He assumes that obedience is there
    - So Paul does not talk as much about OBEDIENCE
  - **James is based in Freedom** but and is focused on fulfilling the Grace of God by obedience
    - James Has no trouble living in the Grace of god... He assumes that Grace is there
    - James does not talk as much about Grace – HE ASSUMES that we are walking in Grace
      - OBEDIENCE is the focus of James because..
        - Grace is no good without obedience
        - Hearing is no good without obedience
- What is James proposing
  - Don't give your primary attention to listening (ONE STEP PROCESS)
    - Give your primary attention to obeying (TWO STEP PROCESS)
      - TURN OFF THE PODCAST WHEN YOU GET A RHEMA
        - 1. HEAR FROM GOD
        - 2. DISCERN & PLAN YOUR OBEDIENCE
  - So many believers are in process about decisions in their lives
    - What Has God said?
      - They can read it for you!
      - The question is What is the NEXT STEP?
        - We must not glory in being able to hear God
        - We must GLORY is OBEYING what God says...
  - Example:
    - I had resigned from being pastor of Cornerstone Church of Albemarle
      - I was burned out... I was discouraged
      - I was sinning... I began smoking again, drinking more that I should
    - I was praying everyday
      - Listening to the Lord
      - He said, "I want you to gather all the people in the city for a prayer meeting."
        - I wrote it in my journal
        - It didn't make sense
          - I wasn't a pastor
          - I was sinning – out of sync with God
          - I was disinterested in prayer
        - I did it out of obedience to the Lord
          - I did it with expectation
        - 50 people showed up
          - It was the beginning of the House of Prayer
            - And the Dwelling Place
- I believe that God is moving us RIGHT NOW to be SALT AND LIGHT believers
  - Mat 5:13-16 (NIV) "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. [14] "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. [15] Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. [16] In the same way, **let your light shine before others, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.**
    - NOTICE that Being Salt and Light are not about BELIEVING GOD
      - Being Salt and Light are "DOING GOOD WORKS"

- Jesus is in agreement with James emphasis
    - We must not HIDE our LIGHT... We must DISPLAY it
    - We must not HIDE our SALT... We must APPY it
- THE RESULT OF OBEDIENCE IS POWERFUL
  - James 1:[25] But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.
    - The RHEMA of God is called = The perfect law that gives Freedom
      - When this book was written there was no New Testament
        - “The perfect law that gives freedom” could not have been the OT
        - “The perfect law that gives freedom” could not have been the NT
          - The perfect law that gives
    - Obeying God and PERSEVERING in obedience produces FREEDOM
    - Obeying God and PERSEVERING in obedience commands THE BLESSING of God
      - The first key is being QUICK TO LISTEN
      - The second key is being QUICK TO OBEY
      - The RESULT is the BLESSING OF GOD
- The Example of Jesus – Let’s look at the
  - Jesus was instantaneously obedient to God
    - Jhn 5:30 (NKJV) I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.
      - Jesus lived in direct communion and then obedience with God
  - Jesus SPOKE in obedience to God
    - Jhn 7:16 (NLT) So Jesus told them, “My message is not my own; it comes from God who sent me.
  - Jesus LIVED in RADICAL obedience to God
    - Jhn 5:19 (NLT) So Jesus explained, “I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself. He does only what he sees the Father doing. Whatever the Father does, the Son also does.
  - Jesus did some shocking things in obedience to God!
    - Jesus overturned the tables of unlawful money changers
      - Mat 21:12 (NIV) Jesus entered the temple courts and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves. Obedience is essential to live in the Kingdom of God.
    - Jesus confronted the religious elites
      - Mat 23:27-28 (NIV) "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean. [28] In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.
  - OBEDIENCE TO GOD LED JESUS TO BE DISPISED AND REJECTED
    - The leaders in Jesus time were always looking for a way to KILL him...
    - Luk 19:47-48 (NIV) Every day he was teaching at the temple. But the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the leaders among the people were trying to kill him. [48] Yet they could not find any way to do it, because all the people hung on his words.
  - WHAT DOES BEING OBEDIENT TO GOD MEAN FOR US?
    - Hearing and obeying the Spirit of God will ALSO cause us to be despised and rejected

- Jhn 15:20 (NKJV) Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.
  - We will suffer the same defamation of Character and persecution that Jesus suffered
- Mat 5:11-12 (NKJV) "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. [12] Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.
  - We should expect to suffer and BE HAPPY about it

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#### - THE NECESSITY OF HEARING AND OBEYING

- Mat 7:21 (NIV) "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.
  - **The LORDSHIP of Jesus is tested whenever God speaks to us**
    - **Is Jesus really Lord of our lives or are we just saying "Lord, Lord"**
- Examples
  - The Word of God is very clear about God's creation and intention related to identity, sexuality and family.
  - There is a real assault on the IDENTITY and ORDER of all that God created at this time...
    - **God creates and values life in the womb**
      - Psa 139:13-14 (NIV) For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. [14] I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.
        - The ZEITGEIST insists "Mothers can destroy the life that God created if the child is unborn"
          - "A woman has the right to 'terminate her pregnancy' if she chooses."
    - **God creates people male and female**
      - Gen 1:27 (NIV) So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.
        - The ZEITGEIST (the spirit of the age) insists that "You can be whatever sex you want to be"
        - Gender dysphoria – I am unhappy with the way that God created me. I am going to be what I want... not what I created to be
    - **God created marriage between a man and a woman**
      - Gen 2:24 (NIV) That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.
        - The ZEITGEIST (spirit of the age) insists that God is ok with men being sexually involved with men and women being intimate with other women.

#### - WHITE NATIONALIST

- As a political ideology, white nationalism is an ideology that imposes white cultural, social, political, historical or institutional values on others.

#### - DOMINIONIST

- is a political ideology that seeks to institute a nation governed by Christians and based on their understandings of biblical law.

#### WHAT'S IN YOUR BOOK?

- Are you a RHEMA collector –
  - o Do you have items in your journal that you are HEARING and not DOING?

#### WHAT IS YOUR SOURCE?

- Do you find yourself in opposition to the WORD THAT GIVES LIFE
  - o Do you affirm ideas that are in opposition to God
  - o Are you ashamed of the Word that Gives life
    - Are you afraid of what others will think or say about you?
- Do you give your attention and affection to the Spirit of the Age?
  - o Allow the world to define you, guide you, give you direction?
- Are you radically following the SPIRIT OF GOD as YOUR SOURCE of life?
  - o Giving your attention to seeking the face of God