

## **The Bible, The Basis of Fellowship**

### **James 1:21-25**

21 Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. 22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; 24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. 25 But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

We live in a strange world today. Strange in the sense that it is not normal. It is not the world that our grand parents grew up in. And I can hear you say of course not. Look at all the advancements that we have made. And to be sure we have made sweeping advancements.

But that is not what I am talking about. I am not talking about our computers or the advancements of micro electronics that has brought us the smart phone. I am not even talking about all the social media that we spend so much time with today. Good or bad these things are here to stay.

What I am talking about is how someone has changed the dictionary. Not the one put out by Webster or any of the others. I am talking about the one that is not written. The majority of people today say the same things but they mean different things by it. And it is because they have changed the meaning of the words. That way they can say one thing and mean another.

That is the definition of a lie. When you say something that a person will understand one way but you mean the opposite then that is a lie. Politicians are great at this. When they pass a law that has the word affordable in it you can be sure that it won't be affordable. And when they pass a law with the word liberty in it, then you can be sure that the majority of people are going to lose some of their liberties. And when they talk about protecting women's health you know that someone is going to die and the abortion industry will send more money to political campaigns.

The Bible pronounces a curse on these sort of people. Isa 5:20 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

And so it is in the matter of religion and philosophy that the most harm is done. From evolution to Marxism to secular humanism to post-modernism and cosmic humanism, lies are dressed up to look like truth and paraded out for show. And regardless of how many lies they must tell, they will press on for it is their religion that they must promote.

But these things have eternal consequences. They rob people of truth. Jesus said that if you know the truth it will set you free. And Paul told Timothy that Satan's plan is to blind people so that they cannot see the truth and turn from sin to Jesus. And we live in an age that does not have a love for the truth. 2 Thessalonians 2:10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

James calls people to adhere to a tried and true standard. The standard of the scriptures. He encourages a careful examination of the word to see if one's actions correspond to that standard. One's conformity to the word tells us how much we should be involved with them.

Ga 6:16 And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

Php 3:16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

- I. The Bible is true. "the perfect law of liberty"
  - A. Here in our text it is called the perfect law of liberty.
    - 1. As we saw last week it is perfect because God gave it.
    - 2. It is liberty because it tells us how to live a life free of regret.
  - B. The Bible means what it has always meant.
    - 1. This is one of our problems, that people may use the same terms from the Bible that we do but those words do not mean what they have always meant.
    - 2. If someone redefines the terms they can change the basics of Christianity.
  - C. By adhering to the perfect law of liberty we will avoid the pitfalls of this life.
- II. The true test of one's acceptance of the Bible is the way that they live.
  - A. Therefore we are to abstain from the evils of this world.
    - 1. I am far from perfect but I have a problem with those who indulge in the vices of this life.
    - 2. 1 cor 6:9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.
    - 3. Galatians 5:19-26 (NKJV) 19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of

God.

- B. We are to be doers of the word and not hearers only.
  - 1. Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. 24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.
  
- III. For the Christian the word is implanted, engrafted in us and is able to save our souls.
  - A. 1Th 2:13 ¶ For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.
  - B. Joh 15:3 "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.
  - C. Joh 17:17 ¶ "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.
  - D. Joh 17:19 "And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.
  - E. Ro 6:17 But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. 18 And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.
  - F. Heb 4:12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.
  - G. Jas 1:18 Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.
  - H. 1Pe 1:23 having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,
  - I. 1Jo 5:4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world — our faith. 5 Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?
  
- IV. For the non-Christian they read the word but it does them no good for they are a forgetful hearer.
  - A. The fellowship of the saints is a fellowship of the Bible.
  - B. Those who have given themselves to Jesus Christ are those who have given themselves to His word.
  - C. But the hypocrite are not so.

1. They claim Jesus but disobey His word.
  - a. John 8:31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;
  - b. Mt 7:21 ¶ "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?'
2. Jude 12 These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves. They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; 13 raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

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