

Receive The Engrafted Word

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Date: 28 May 2023

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[0 : 00] Let us resume our public worship of God by singing to this praise from Psalm 103.

Psalm 103, and we're going to sing from the beginning to verse 7. O thou, my soul, bless God the Lord, and all that in me is bestowed up his holy name to magnify and bless.

Bless, O my soul, the Lord thy God, and not forgetful be of all his gracious benefits he hath bestowed on thee. All thine iniquities who doth most graciously forgive, who thy diseases all and pains doth heal and thee relieve, who doth redeem thy life, that thou to death mayst not go down, who thee with lovingkindness doth untend and mercy's crown.

Who with abundance of good things doth satisfy thy mouth, so that even as the eagle's age renewteth thy youth.

God righteous judgment executes for all oppressed homes. This way is to Moses, he his acts made known to Israel's sons.

[1 : 21] And so on. We can sing these verses. Psalm 103, verses 1 to 7. O thou, my soul, bless God the Lord, and all that in me is.

O thou, my soul, bless God the Lord, and all that in me is.

This dead end of his soul, we may to magnify and bless.

Bless, O my soul, the Lord thy God, and all forgetful be of all his gracious benefits.

He hath bestowed on thee. All thy name is.

[2 : 54] O thriving, O thou, my sea. All that in me is. O thou, my sea. B parece Prototy, from the goddessaluuu. O thou, my sea. All that in me is. O thou, my coer in me, this to me be of all my sins.

All thy soul, becomes■ire and ready. And the love little holy coffee. Our love hell he is. This to me.■em numerate with betty seit bonnie. There is no kind o'er.

The love that in me. falls on earth, earth near y arm. Relieved Who doth Redeem Thy life That thou To death This Doth Go down Who Thee With Loving God's Ness Doth Untender Merities Crown Who With Abundance All Good Things Doth Satisfy

Thy Mouth So That In Last Thee God's Age Renew It Is Thee God For Righteous Judgment Execute For Your God's Blessed Ones He■ Is Lastoton In Let's turn together in prayer.

O Lord, O God, as we come before you at this evening hour, we give thanks for the opportunity to gather. It is an opportunity afforded us that many are denied.

[5 : 41] Do not allow us to overlook that. It is an opportunity that many do not take. Do not allow us to overlook that. Help us to recognise the privilege that we have when we are met under the sound of your word.

Our prayer is that it may have free course amongst us. That it will not return to you void, but that it will be accomplishing that which you have purposed for it in the lives of hearer and preacher alike.

We pray that you would bless it because of your good name. You are a great God and your word is a word that you have given to us unlike any other.

And we bless you and thank you that while it may appear to us that the world is able to nullify its impact, in your good time.

In your good time it can bring forth that which you have purposed for it as we said. In some places, in some occasions, that word has lain dormant.

[6 : 58] And seemingly it is forgotten. And yet, all it takes is one breath of your spirit and it fans into flame embers that seem to have passed into the ashes.

So that they are lifeless and without the potential to come again into flame. But this is your work.

And we pray that your work would continue amongst us. And that you would use your word to encourage the spiritual life of your people.

That would use your word to add to their number. And that we would recognise the true beauty of belonging to the fellowship of the saints.

The family of God. Those who bear the image of Christ. Even though they themselves are fearful. That that image is there in a very vague and very shadow like.

[8 : 10] Their hope is that ultimately the promise will be fulfilled in their experience. When they shall indeed be like him. And they shall bear his likeness in all the fullness thereof.

But in the world their fear is that what is true of them is that they are so different to what they envisage Christ to be like.

And yet it is still calling to turn to Christ and to follow in his footsteps.

And to walk in his strength and bear testimony to his great work in their lives. For the work that he has done in the life of all his people.

May we shine forth as lights in this dark world.

[9 : 12] May we be salt. May we be light. As your word encourages us to be. May we seek your help in order for that to be fulfilled. Remember our congregation here.

The communities that we have fallen part of. Every home and household represented. We bring them before you and ask that you would bless them. Far in excess of our asking.

We pray for the many homes and households not represented. And we pray that you would draw them to yourself. That you would intrude into their darkness.

And bring their doors. To be opened to the voice of Christ. And that they may hear gladly. The invitation that comes with the gospel.

Remember Lord your own people who cannot be with us. We pray for them again this evening. Being thankful that we are able to bear their burdens. To a throne of grace.

[10 : 19] That we are able to bear one another's burdens. And so fulfill the law of God. Help us to do what you have entrusted us to do.

Be near to those who are unwell. Those who feel weak and infirmed. Those who are troubled in their spirit. Those who are perplexed in their mind.

We pray that you would encircle them with a sense of your presence. Visit the sick in all their need. We pray. Guide the hands of those who are entrusted with their care.

Wherever their duty takes them. Throughout the world. We give thanks for those who have the missionary seal to preach Christ. Christ. And their calling is to go to parts of the world.

In fulfillment of that calling. To places that have little or no interest in the things of God. But through their testimony and through their witness.

[11 : 21] There are those who would hear of Christ. And we pray that their labors would be blessed. We are mindful of the fact that it is our own nation today.

That is receiving the witness of saints from other parts of the world. Lord. There is a marvel to us. That you would remember us in that way.

Do not allow us to think that we are above having missionary activity carried out in our communities. Because we have gone so far from you.

The wonder should be that you would permit such. That you would encourage such. That you would not allow us to be bereft of the witness of Christ.

Even though it's strangers that bring it to us. We pray that your blessing upon all the activity of your church. We pray that you would remember the congregations and communities represented.

[12 : 32] Where your name is on the lips of few rather than many. We pray for all that is done in your name throughout our land.

Cities and towns and villages. Wherever the witness to the gospel is still ongoing. May it be blessed. We pray for our nation.

Our king and his family. Those who govern in his name. We pray for wisdom from on high. We pray for light into their darkness.

We pray for those who have a voice that is sanctified. May it be heard. Those who have the desperate desire to instill negative teachings.

Contrary to the truth. That their voice would be silenced. That they would not be heard. We ask Lord that you would remember the word that you have given to us.

[13 : 41] So as to bless it. So that we would have an interest in those who are careless about the lives of infants. Or the lives of the frail elderly.

Those who are unwell. And who practice. And who think of practicing euthanasia. Or who think of practicing the cessation of infant lives before they have come to full age.

Help us to remember the wickedness that is done in the name of goodness. Help us to pray to the heavens that all who are engaged in that would be thwarted.

And that their machinations for evil would be misdirected. So that their purposes would not come to fruition.

Remember the nations of the earth where infanticide is part of the culture. Remember the parts of the world where there is little care given to the elderly.

[14 : 51] Once they have outlived their usefulness they are discarded at will. There are such places. And the gospel alone has been instrumental in correcting such evil.

And yet the gospel is despised. Lord hear our prayers. And enable the gospel to have recourse in such places. May the gospel to have recourse in such places.

So bless us together this evening. Remembering any and all who are in need of being directed to your word. And your word directed to them.

May you speak to them through it. Forgive our many sins through Christ the Lord. We ask it all. Amen. I'm going to sing again to God's praise this time.

The words of Psalm 51. Psalm 51 at verse 7. Do thou with hyssops sprinkle me. I shall be cleansed so.

[16 : 25] Wash thou me and then I shall be whiter than the snow. Of gladness and of joyfulness make me to hear the voice. That so these very bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

All mine iniquities blocked out. Thy face hide from my sin. Create a clean heart. Lord renew a right spirit me within.

Cast me not from thy sight. Nor take thy Holy Spirit away. Restore me thy salvation's joy.
With thy free spirit me stay.

Then will I teach thy ways unto those that transgressors be. And those that sinners are.
Shall then be turned unto thee.

O God of my salvation. Guard me from blood guiltiness set free. Then shall my tongue
aloud sing of thy righteousness.

[17 : 24] And so on. We're going to sing verses 7 to 14 of Psalm 51. Do thou with hyssop sprinkle
me. I shall be cleansed so. Do thou with hyssop sprinkle me.

I shall be cleansed so. Yea, wash of me and then I shall be whiter than the snow.

Of gladness and of joyfulness. Make me to hear the voice.

That all these very bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

All mine iniquities blowed out.

[18 : 56] Life is high from my sin. Create a clean heart.

Lord, angel, arise. Set me within.

Cast me not from thy side, nor take thy holy stead away.

Restore me thy salvation's joy. Where thy peace let me stay.

Then will I teach thy way unto those that transgressors be.

[20 : 18] And those that sinners are shall then be turned it unto thee.

O God of my salvation. God, me from blood guiltiness.

Set me then shall my tongue allow. Sing of thy righteousness.

Sing of thy righteousness. God damn thy righteousness. I shall lord. Father, thy purity.

We will direct you through that Zhuze.iar. For the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes
which are scattered abroad, greetings.

[21 : 50] My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into diverse temptations, knowing this, that the
trying of your faith worketh patience.

But let patience have a perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. If
any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth
not, and it shall be given him.

But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering, for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea,
driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of
the Lord.

A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways. Let the brother of low degree rejoice in
all that he is exalted, but the rich in that he is made low.

Because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun is no sooner risen with
the burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower that off falleth, and the grace of
the fashion of it perishes.

[23 : 11] So also shall the rich man fade away in his ways. Blessed is the man that endureth
temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath
promised to them that love him.

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God. For God cannot be tempted
with evil, neither tempteth he any man. But every man is tempted when he is drawn away
of his own lust and enticed.

Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth
forth death. Do not err, my beloved brethren.

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above. It cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.

[24 : 25] For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Wherefore, lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass.

For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightaway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

Pure religion undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

[25 : 44] Amen, and may the Lord add his blessing to a reading of his word, and to his name be the praise. Let us sing the words of Psalm 65.

Psalm 65, from the beginning down to the double verse marked 5. Praise waits for thee in Zion, Lord, to thee vows paid shall be.

For thou that hearer art of prayer, all flesh shall come to thee. Iniquities, I must confess, prevail against me do. But as for our transgressions, then purge away shalt thou.

Blessed is the man whom thou dost choose, and makest approach to thee, that he within thy courts, O Lord, may still our dweller be. We surely shall be satisfied with thy abundant grace, and with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy place.

O God of our salvation, thou in thy righteousness, by fearful works unto our prayers thine answer dost express.

[26 : 57] Therefore the ends of all the earth, and those afar that be upon the sea, their confidence, O Lord, will place in thee. And so on.

These verses, one to the double verse, Mark 5 of Psalm 65. Praise waits for thee in Zion, Lord, to thee vows paid shall be.

Praise waits for thee in Zion, Lord.

To thee vows paid shall be. O thou that here art, O prayer, all flesh shall come to thee.

Iniquities I must confess, prevail against me too.

[28 : 13] But just for our transgressions, then purge away shall thou.

Blessed is the man whom thou dost choose, and makes thou approach to thee, that he within may still thy force, O Lord, may still a dweller be.

We surely shall be satisfied with thy abundant grace.

And with the goodness of thy house, in all thy holy place.

O God of our salvation, thou in thy righteousness.

[30 : 08] Thy faithful words unto our prayers. Thy notes are just expressed.

Therefore for the ends of all the earth, and those of thy flood be.

Upon the sea their confidence O Lord will place in thee.

We turn to the passage read, General Epistle of James, Chapter 1.

We can read again at verse 19. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.

[31 : 34] For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Wherefore, lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. Wherefore, lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

Those of us who are familiar with the Epistle of James will be aware that the Apostle is someone who is at times severe in his teaching.

What he has to say, he says it. And he doesn't mind what those who are reading his word think about him.

Because he has to convey the truth. And for that reason, I think some people are quite uncomfortable when they read the Epistle of James.

[33 : 11] Because some of what he has to say is, as we say, very near the bone. It strikes at our very heart.

If we are not as we ought to be in our Christian lives, the Apostle is somebody who highlights that.

He's not ashamed of doing it. He points out to all the many defects that a Christian may be riddled with.

And that they need to identify and address, if at all possible. It's something I noticed.

I have many commentaries in my study. And there's a vast array of them over, some of them over many centuries. You know, you've got modern day commentators.

[34 : 13] You've got commentators going back to the turn of the century, the turn of the last century. And so on. You go right back, some of them, to the times of Calvin and Luther.

And when you read what these commentators have to say about what James is teaching, it seems every one of them believe that James has something to say to contemporary society.

Which is strange, is it not? He has something to say to contemporary society. Contemporary with what? Or with who?

Well, with the people that are reading this book. So in a sense, the people that James was writing to, and he tells us here, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad greeting.

What he had to say was relevant to them. But then, so again, what he has to say is relevant to every generation since then. Because he is pointing to the nature of the relationship that exists between a believer and their God.

[35 : 32] A believer and their Saviour, Christ Jesus. And he is, in a sense that he means that it sets before believers of every generation, the kind of principles that should govern Christian behaviour, wherever they are in the world, at whatever time they live in the world.

And that is true. I think it's an excellent book to read for a Christian. And if it gets to you, if it makes you uncomfortable when you read it, then you should ask yourself the question, well, what is it that's making me uncomfortable?

What is it that is being exposed in these words? We can't avoid it. We can't turn our back upon it.

It's there for our good. It's there for our stimulation. It's there for the believer in particular to recognise how they can address the significant areas of weakness in their Christian faith if they're there.

And to strengthen the areas in their life which may already be strong but can always be made stronger.

[37 : 27] Well, we're going to look at the verse before us here, verse 21 in particular, and leading on to verse 22. I think the whole, if you go back to verse 19, you'll see there that, well, verse 21 says, wherefore, or as some translations have it, therefore, in other words, it's basing what is being said here on what has been said before.

So, the apostle is wanting the hearer of this word to respond to what he has said and to identify what needs to be done by them.

And we're looking at verse 21 in that respect. So, he's wanting, first of all, something to be put away. Wherefore, he says, lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness.

That's what the lay apart means. The word means put it away. The second thing, he wants the believer to receive something.

he wants us to receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your souls.

[38 : 56] So, there is, there is, first of all, what you need to put away because, clearly, by doing that, the reception of the word becomes possible.

it is not distracted, it's not limited. I think that's what we need to understand. There's, there's a putting away in order to receive.

And then, thirdly, what, what follows on from that and what he goes on to expand on, we'll just touch on it. He says, be you doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

You engage in this activity of putting away in order to receive so that when the word comes your way that you engage with the word, that you imbibe the word, that you apply the word to your lives.

The word of God is all important to the believer, but it's not just a word that we familiarize ourselves with simply so that we know something about it, but in order for our knowledge to be put into practical use.

[40 : 23] That's what a Christian is, somebody who has been given this handbook by God for their practical application of it in their lives.

So the first thing we have here is put away. The first thing the apostle wants the Christian to do, he says, is lay apart. And it's interesting when you look at words, when you look at original meanings of words, the first understanding of what, the word that the apostle uses here, is normally associated with a change of clothing.

Divesting yourself of the clothing that you're wearing. Put it off, you understand what it means. Put it off, but in order to put something on, I'm not sure, I think it's Derek Prime, one of the preachers, associating these words with the practice in the early church that some engaged with at the time of baptism, that it was not just simply the person being baptized, having water sprinkled on them, normally on those occasions they would practice immersion and they would go to a river and they would walk into the river, but part of the practice according to Prime was that there was a big thing made of the clothing that they were wearing, not all of the clothing, but the outer garments that they wore being taken off so that there was visible demonstration of them doing that and then entering into the water where they would be baptized and on the other side of the river there would be new clothing awaiting that they would put on and it was all symbolic of what was happening in the new birth that they were putting off as we read in the morning the old man and putting on the new man now whether that is connected with the putting off that we have here or if it's more akin to the modern understanding of it get rid of it get rid of it whatever meaning is given to these words that is based on the translation that we have before us it requires action that's the thing that we need to grasp it requires action get rid of it put it off and what we are to put off he says is all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness now these two words seem to me anyway quite at odds there is the word filthiness which suggests to us something that is quite extremely dirty filthy you know it is covered in dirt or the dirt that is associated with it is deeply ingrained and the word filthy suggests that to us but then the word naughty in the meaning of the authorized version you have to remember that the time that the authorized version was translated to English the meaning of the word naughty was probably stronger than the meaning that we would give it today when we talk of a naughty child we are talking about a child who is being disobedient or doing something that it shouldn't it is not a strong word it is not a strongly nuanced word but originally it probably was because

both of these words are vivid word pictures putting away what is foul putting away what is dirty and it wants us to understand that this is something that needs to happen because without it happening what is going to follow will not follow in the way that it should it will be frustrated it will not accomplish what it is meant to accomplish and he's talking about the word he's talking about God's word he's talking about the reception of the word of God putting away what is filthy putting away what is dirty putting away and the original meaning of the second word is more spiteful or malicious again a very strong word that is meant to be understood and you know it's talking about superfluity of naughtiness the word superfluity is not one we would use often but we know the word superfluous the word superfluous suggests to us that there is more than is necessary it has at its heart the idea of overflowing the cup or the char is full to capacity and it's over the brim and it's suggesting here that whatever it is is excessively so and it is the reason why the word can be and often is frustrated and it's something that we need to contemplate really because what the apostle

James wants us to understand that any one of us can ask the question of ourselves is there anything in my heart or in my life that is responsible for the word of God being frustrated the word of God is meant to fulfill in my life what God intends for my good is there anything that prevents that from taking place you know one thing that you can say about the epistle of James and this was why Luther was so upset with it what James had to say it was too practical for him too much emphasis laid on doing because Luther probably misunderstood the emphasis because he expected rather than our works righteousness that it was the righteousness of faith which he trusted that

[48 : 38] Paul preached but that wasn't the emphasis that the apostle James had but it is a necessary emphasis where the practical doing or not doing of the believer comes to light I think it's one of the Puritans who talks about that the superfluity that is spoken of here has to do with the deeply ingrained ever present sin that is in our heart that sometimes is hidden from view but its presence is brought to light in particular situations and it is so prevalent in our lives as Christian people who have sin in their heart that God from time to time permits it to be exposed

John Blanchard the commentator says the old nature remains hidden deep in our personalities and therefore we need to be on the alert because of the potential there is for Aaron and that is what we're presented with here first of all the apostle James is saying when it comes to the believer and he's talking to the believer some people you know when they read down here and he's talking about that which is able to save your souls the impression that is given by that statement is that what he is talking about he is talking about it to the unconverted and that the moment in which they are still ignorant of the need for salvation that they need all things to be taken away so that they cannot be kept from coming to that salvation but that's not who the apostle

James is writing to in particular he's writing to Christians he's writing to believers he's writing to those who already know the Lord Jesus Christ and he's challenging the areas of their life where they are coming short or where they are in danger of coming short where there is a potential for harm so having established that the second thing that we find here is something that we cannot do if these hindrances to the word are still in place I don't know who said it but it's been said probably by more than one person that a person who is a Christian who is living in sin that is living consciously aware of sin in their life and consciously knowing that sin is there coming to the word and expecting the word to work in the way the word should it cannot yes we believe God is all powerful but if

God gives us his word and he gives us a command concerning his word then we cannot just go on as if we have liberty to malign the character of the God who gave it and at one level live in opposition to him and then pretend that he is going to give us the blessings that come with his word can't be that that will happen he will find a way of bringing us to our senses no doubt well what does he want us to do with regard to the word well he says receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your souls we are to receive the word first of all putting it simply you are to make room for that word in your heart you are going to make room for it because this word is all important to you and what you want for the word more than anything else is that it will come into your experience with effect you know there's there are many ways in which we can and we all of us

I'm sure every single one of you here have taken God's word into your hands and you read through that word but at some point during your reading you've discovered the fact that your mind and your heart have disconnected the words have been read by you there's a level of understanding that you have but it is not penetrating where it should penetrate it's not lodging in your heart it's not lodging in a way where you can make use of it or where it can be useful to you even in the situation you find yourself in and the apostle is talking about it in a very specific way he says to us here receive with meekness the engrafted word the engrafted word

[55 : 19] I was wondering about that what word is this some way of describing God's word is the word of God an engrafted word is it a description of what the word of God is like no it is a description of what needs to take place when the word is received the word is received and it is engrafted into your heart if you're a gardener which I'm not and if you know something about different kinds of trees and different kinds of plants you can take two of these and graft one onto the other to produce some kind of hybrid variety one deriving sustenance or substance from the root of the other but the idea that the apostle wants us to understand here is that the word comes to lodge in our heart it comes to be fixed into our heart it comes to begin its work in our heart because it is the engrafted word and is that not what needs to happen it's all very well having the ability to sit down and think about the possibilities that the world has and you begin to reflect on it you begin to think oh well that word just as we've been doing hopefully with more purpose in view but for it simply to be an engagement with the world discovering the meanings of words discovering the alternative applications of words and so on but without you to what that's the question what do you intend by that exercise should every one of us should engage with

God's word at a deep level so that everything that is in that world will be taken out of that world but not just simply as a mental exercise not just simply so that we can say well I've thought about what James has said I've thought about what he means by it to what end what do you intend by the understanding that you have been given you know there are many people and they treat the word of God in the same way that they treat the exercises of a philosopher they think of different ways in which life can be lived out and the possibilities and the problems that life brings and they look at it from a distance and they're not really too concerned at a practical level it's all science to them it's all something that they have an interest in but at the same time they are aloof from it you're not like that you can't afford to be like that if you're a

Christian your engagement with God's word is so that it produces in you whatever it is the word is meant to produce in you as a Christian believer if that is what you are we know the word of God comes at the very outset with power in the hand of the spirit to convict to convert to translate from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of his manless light you understand that you know that to be the case but it is not the end it is something that you move on from daily and you learn and you relearn and you apply the truth as much as you are able to do it he says to us something else that is challenging is it not you are to receive it with meekness receive it with meekness receive it receive it with humility what does that suggest to you well you see if God's word tells me that I'm proud or if God's word tells me that I'm somebody who is not as prayerful as I ought to be or if

God's word tells me that I am not as trusting as I ought to be and his word points that out to me and his word highlights the deficiencies in my Christian experience my Christian life what do I do do my hackles go up do I start saying oh but oh but that's not that's not really the way I am there are there are there are things about me that you don't understand as if you're saying to God God doesn't understand you we cannot underestimate the importance of hearing the word of God aright and if we are contradicting what the word is saying about us or saying to us then there's something that needs to be addressed there's something that needs to be understood you know that if you go through this epistle with care let every man be swift to hear slow to speak slow to wrath let's just focus in on that thought are we prone to to speak hurriedly hastily without thinking through what it is that we're dealing with have we been stimulated to anger because somebody had said something to us or something has happened that we're not content to let sleeping dogs lie we want to prove a point we want to establish the rightness of our position and that

God's word is saying to me you've got to be slow to wrath slow to speak swift to hear listen before you speak hear what is said before you jump on your high horse think about it and the world is saying that to you and what are you saying I'm not like that I'm not like that and what are you doing we are contradicting the word our starting point is completely wrong it can't mean that it can't be I cannot be wrong at this point I cannot be so bad as the word makes me out and at that point we are on very dangerous ground I think in the morning we read in the advice that Paul was given to Timothy he was saying to

[63 : 40] Timothy foolish and learned questions avoid knowing that they do engender strife and that's another different angle on the same thing rather than accept the word of God on the face of it you're turning it this way and that and then debating the issues and debating it with those who don't share the same opinion as you and then you're at each other's throats because you've got a disagreement Paul was saying to Timothy the church is full of people who are disagreeing one with the other because they don't share the same opinion and it's it's not right it's damaging John MacArthur one of the commentators again he says if your heart is pure and humble you will have a teachable heart if your heart is pure and humble you will have a teachable spirit you will set aside all resentment anger and pride so you can learn

God's truth and apply it to your life is that not a challenge to have a teachable spirit have you ever been taught by somebody within the church somebody that you probably thought you should be teaching them what is that but pride if God chooses an infant to teach you a truth that you have forgotten or that you have neglected or that you have ignored you need a teachable spirit you need to be able to imbibe the truth finally what we have here is this look at where he takes us be ye doers of the word and not hearers only that is he wants us to understand this word he wants us to remove every barrier to it he wants us to have this word indelibly imprinted within our minds and in our hearts so that we can apply the word meaningfully to our lives our lives as Christians as believing people who want to witness to the truth of God we submit to the word we apply the word and failure on our part to do so shows that we are actually in need of paying closer attention to it you know it's interesting if you remind yourself that the apostle

James is not standing by himself in this way I believe that of all the apostles and especially Paul and the writers of the epistles none of the epistles carry so much of the sermon on the mountain in the teaching that he has as the writing of the apostle James it's as if he was sitting there before the lord with his mouth open drinking anything everything that he heard from the lord in and then when it came to it when he came to teach others what better could he say than what the lord himself had said but Paul also says the same thing for not the hearers of the word or the law but the doers are just before God Paul says that it's the doers of the word that are just before

God but before Paul and before James had heard these words or said these words the lord had said if you know these things blessed are you if you do them in other words there has to be a practical application of God's word to our lives there has to be a demonstration that what we've heard we've actually believed and because we've believed them we're putting them into practice in whatever way we're called to do so even the things that we find so difficult it cannot be said forcibly enough we need to be putting God's word into practice across the board some truth that we are familiar with may appear to us to be easily put into practice and I would be careful about that one because the word of

God reminds us that the person who is standing has to take care lest they fall and the very place where we think that we are most secure is the very place where we might find ourselves failing miserably I think it's Alistair Begg who talks about the growing Christian he says the growing Christian can only be a growing Christian if the word of God is being applied to his life in a practical way and the growing Christian is quite different to the shriveled Christian what a picture the shriveled Christian the shriveling that James speaks of here is the shriveling that is the result of being deceived it is a challenge no doubt but a challenge that not one of us can afford to ignore we need to have a thirst and a hunger after the word of

[70 : 48] God to drink it in to eat it as if it was the bread of heaven which it bears and then apply it in every area and facet of our Christian experience find ways by which the truth of God is meaningfully applied by us in our friendships in our relationships marathon family community whatever it is all of these areas will be tested but with God's help through his word and through the grace that he accompanies it with we are able to grow in grace and in the knowledge of that Christ whose word it is let us pray Lord O God we give thanks that your word is truth and you have given it to us as a word that you mean to benefit us by help us to do that and to recognise the privilege that we have of having that word of truth in our lives forgive us in

Jesus name Amen Our closing psalm is Psalm 119 and at verse 89 Psalm 119 at verse 89 Thy word forever is O Lord in heaven settled fast and to all generations thy faithfulness doth last the earth thou hast established it abides by thee this day they stand as thou ordainst for all thy servants be unless in thy most perfect law my soul delights had found I should have perished when as my troubles did abound thy precepts I will ne'er forget they quickening to me brought Lord I am thine or save thou me thy precepts I have sought these verses thy word forever is O Lord in heaven settled fast thy word forever is

O Lord in heaven settled fast unto all generations thy faithfulness doth last the earth thou hast established and it abides by thee this day they stand as thou ordainst for all thy servants be unless in thy most perfect law my soul delights are found

I should not perish it when thus my troubles did abound thy precepts I will never forget the quick awakening to me brought Lord I am thy dose say thou me thy precepts I have sought God may grace mercy and peace from God the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit rest and abide with you all never and always amen