

The Complete Christian Listens and Obeys

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Date: 18 February 2024

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[0:00] With me please to the book of James, James chapter 1. It's nice to look out and see a couple of new faces I've never met before. That's always nice as well. This evening we are continuing our series of studies in the book of Genesis, the life of Jacob, and I commend a real-life person with real-life problems.

And I'm sure we can relate to many of those as we see. We're looking at another kind of counseling, kind of pastoral type area when we look at the battle with sinners.

We don't just sin once. We are always sinning. We are prone to sin despite the fact that we have that. Why that is the case. Why we can fall into sin. So we'll deal with that.

James is dealt with, we should blame God. We are led away or enticed by our own sinful desires. So that's where we're going on Wednesday to Lindsay as well and the musicians for leading our service at this point.

Gerald's obviously read the passage. He's just singing, teach me your way. We're very much looking at the Word of God this morning. And the importance of growth as Christians. And that's our topic this morning.

[1:03] But let's just ask for the Lord's help as we come to His Word now. I do thank You for Your Word. Lord, at this point in the service, Lord, we have been singing about You. You have been listening to us.

Praise, Jews. We have prayed together. But Lord, this is where we listen to You, where You come and You speak to us from Your Word. What the Spirit would be saying to us as a church and as individuals.

Our desire is always that we would become more like Christ, Holy Spirit, the fruits of the Spirit. So, Father, we pray that this might be another step in our Christian growth as we sit on Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. WhatsApp. That's my message. I like WhatsApp. I prefer it to emails and phoning. You can just ping a message to somebody.

And you can see if they've read your message. If they've got two wee blue ticks, in case you didn't know. You said, you can read those things. And you can see that. It's usually very quick.

[1:58] My only problem is the group as well. The daughters and they ping stuff. They've got a habit of saying almost like two words and then have to read about 40 unread messages, which could have been done in one small part.

A typical text. I won't let you read that. Hi, can you help me out? Sure time, please go ahead. And so it goes on. This is not. But that type of thing. You can't just come in at the last one. You have to go way back and see when this thread conversation has been like.

This morning, we're continuing our studies in the book of James. By way of recap, if James wasn't writing a letter, but was sending a WhatsApp message, it might go something up.

He might say something like, Sorry to hear you guys have had to flee persevere. They reply, I wasn't expecting this by becoming a Christian. Where is God?

And all of God is in this. He's trying to perfect you. It's not all bad news. Press on. Let people know that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

[3:01] But I'm struggling to understand what to do next. I'm really struggling to cope. He says, Ask for wisdom. If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault.

I really don't like this, though. I've lost everything. Everything I've worked for. I'm skint, basically. He says, No, you're not. You're rich in Christ. Eternal life. A crown of life.

Believers in humble circumstances are high position. Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial, because having stood the test, that person is the Lord has promised to give to those who love him. But I'm not doing well. I really don't think out even at God. After all, I feel it's his fault. He's placed me in this position. Beware of your tendency to react wrongly.

When you're tempted, no one should say, God is to buy evil, nor does he tempt anyone. But each one of us are tempted when we are dragged away. But remember this, he says, The cause is not lost.

[4:06] You can endure and grow. Verse 18. Because he chose to give you birth through the word of truth of all he created.

That's by way of summary. If that was a text, it might have gone something like this. James anticipates how they're feeling. He'll say something, he anticipates something, and he replies. They are a persecuted, scattered church, and they are struggling at loads of levels, struggling with... And James speaks into their situation. Why?

Because he wants them to think like a mature Christian, to be making anything. No, that's where we left it. Now, what James does next, he basically sends him another text, the same theme.

And in the midst of this, if you've been in a particular problem, or one of the next things that you can hit out, not only at God, but at others, you can become angry.

[5:02] 19. My dear brothers, here's another text in WhatsApp. Take note of this. Everyone should be quick to listen to become angry. When we're stressed in life, we are quick to speak, quick to speak out.

Situation's not good. We moan and whinge and complain, and we raise that to the point where we actually be situation angry with others. And the reason for this is because we are still sinners.

Perfect. We still have aches and pains. Things still impinge upon us. But look at verse 21.

Therefore, get rid of so prevalent. We can get things wrong.

We can wander from God. We can be angry. And that's why James says we should be slow to become angry, because human anger God desires.

Anger speaks of frustration. We're not untrusting, perhaps. Unloving. It's a visible sign that probably things are.

[6:01] If we are quick to be angry, men are particularly prone to this, but it's not exclusive to me. How we say something reveals that perhaps we're not doing well.

Jesus said this. A good thing is stored up in his heart. An evil man brings out evil things out of the evil stored in his heart. For the mouth full of... I mentioned about the milk being spilled.

Why was the milk spilled? It wasn't because somebody had done it. And if there's something in us and we are provoked or placed in a situation, what is there will come out. It's not a pure emotion. It's heavily impregnated with sin. Self-importance. Stubbornness. Fearful. Anxiety. And when anger comes, righteousness disappears.

And God, when we are angry. And this is what James is dealing with here. The reason why they can be angry. It's not good. So once again, Pastor James anticipates this.

[6:58] He's writing more as a pastor than a... He's writing to them, and he wants to show them how they can grow in the midst of all that's gone before. Why they should grow, but how they should grow.

And this is very much the importance of God. He mentioned how we got life in the first place. God spoke the word. We read the word. We heard a sermon or whatever.

Let there be life. Let there be light. Let the birds of the air fill the earth and so forth. It's this epic time and said, let there be light. And the light of the gospel came in.

And it was this was to give you life through the word of truth. Verse 18. That's the... And then this same word that gave us life is the same word that causes us to grow.

It's like word. It's like fertilizer in your life. You hear this. The fact that you have a plant there. They're a monster. You can climb those things.

[7:56] I just... I'm amazed every day the speed that there's... In one minute, there's nothing there. There's not much under the soil. Next thing you've got all this material, this thing grows.

The God who works in the natural realm in that way works in the same way as a Christian. You're a new creature. And you have the potential to act or to change, to become more Christ-like and more

godly.

And James tells us how this comes about in this, that, and the other. It's through the word of God. The word of God doesn't just save you, grow. And that is very much what James is saying.

That's why he says in verse 21, get rid of these things, that you accept the word planted in you, which can save you, ultimately take you to glory, and so forth.

I've entitled this sermon, The Complete Christian. That's what we're looking at, Christian maturity.

That is what we're looking at this morning. And James wants us to consider two main things related to the nature of God's word, and secondly, the need of God's people.

[9:02] So I only have two points, this word, and the need of God's people. So first of all then, let's look at the nature of God's word. He describes it in two ways.

It is perfect, and it brings... So let's first of all look at perfect. The nature of God's word, it is perfect. Who has perfect law.

This is God's word. God's word is perfect. It is perfect, first of all, and he is perfect. It's not rules and regulations made up by a government or a council, or just why.

It is the living word of the living God. And as he is perfect without error and flaw, so we will be to us is free from error in that way. But it also comes from a loving...

As children are supposed to be taught, by Christian parents. That's God's ideal. That's not the job of parents. God gives you children if you are a Christian mom and dad.

[9:59] Your task is to teach and do their bit. But that's really your task, not just to provide game cubes and what have you for them and clothes and designer layers. Grow to teach them. And that comes from a loving parent's heart.

It comes from God's love towards you and I. That's why John says, His commands. And His commands are not burdensome. I know before I became a Christian, I just thought the Christian life and Christians were just killjoys.

They were just out to tell you what you couldn't do. And that's all the Christian life that you shouldn't be doing. Who on earth would want to live a life with just do's and don'ts and what have you? His love and His word is loving and gracious.

It is a loving, perfect. Because it matches our nature. We have been now formed, reformed, we're created in the image of God. Everybody's created in the image of God with the Holy Spirit.

And therefore, the law of God, the Word of God is perfect for us. We're wired what we should do and so forth. And that is why 2 Timothy 3.16, you know John 3.16, 2 Timothy 3.16 is worth memorizing.

[11:11] It's useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training because it's just what we need. I love reading, I think I've maybe mentioned to you, I love reading 500 page user manual.

Usually if I buy something, I get something with the highest spec that I can afford and it keeps me up all night and I use about 10% of the functions on this thing that I've just bought and I do, I don't know why I do this, but I do this all the time.

But there's nothing worse when you download the manual for that thing. It's almost, but you're reading things, oh wait a wee minute, where's that button? It doesn't have that button. God's Word is perfect for us.

It's just what you need. It's how you're wired. It's your user. It's God's instruction manual to you. And that is how important the Word of God is.

The nature of God and it addresses our divine nature as well, recreated. And Jesus said, the importance of God's Word. Man shall not live by bread alone, but on every word.

[12:16] You need this as equal as you need your necessary food. It is far more important. We need it to live, to survive. We need God's Word to grow.

It tells, the Bible tells us how vast our path is more precious than gold. And it's through the Word that we grow. To either comfort us, to challenge us, maybe even convict us or rebuke us.

And that is why you're a person who's quick to listen. This isn't just dealing with conflict. The context of this is the Word of God. You need to be a person who, and Lord, what are you saying?

A bit like Samuel of old, speak, Lord. You're saying how we go through life. Lord, you speak. I'm listening to other voices. I'm listening to TV and film and movies and music. You're speaking to me. It's what I need to hear at any point in time. So the right word at the right time, joy. Jeremiah, when your words came, I ate them. They were the joy of my heart's delight.

[13:15] For I, it says, your word was found and I did eat it. And it became unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart. Halfway through February now, you started in January.

We looked at all the different programs, reading January the 23rd, and you're back to usual. Or whether you're persevering in the word of God. It is such an honor reading it.

We need it because we know that we can't live just by bread alone, but by the word of God. So it is perfect. It is right. Freedom. It says, whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom will always set you free.

If you go to a GP and the GP tells you bad news, bad news. You can put your head in the sand and live in denial and you don't like the negativity of what the scan might show. Know when you know the truth.

The truth can set you free to respond in a particular way. The Holy Spirit does. He takes the word and he applies this to us. He says, John, this is for you at the right time.

[14:15] This is what you shouldn't be doing. Or this is how you're feeling, but you should be feeling like this. You shouldn't be downcast. You should hope. You imagine it as a Christian if you never had the word of God and you were just relying on good words from each other.

The word of God really encourages, teaches, challenges, convicts. It does so much for us. And it's right. Children function better.

People function better. I remember we, my first pastor, it was a church in southeast London, a place called Thamesmead. And the youth work, I inherited a small youth work there.

And you were competing. 200 was another Hawksmore Youth Club or something. That's what it was called. And they had about fuckers. And they had a budget of about 300,000, 400,000 pounds a year.

We had to try and deal with ours. They had quad bikes and floodlit football pitches. And they had it all. And we are trying to compete, trying to say to them, come and do what we are doing. But one of the things was our work really grew.

[15:20] We had to have a waiting list. And one of the things we had strict rules and regulations. You're a Scotsman. Of course you do. But by nature, it comes quite easy to me. When our girls went through school, in every report, it used to be, and you instill that in them.

This is right. That is wrong. You don't do wrong. Wacky, honey, watch, I'm getting distracted here. But I remember once, we're leaving at half past six. I was out the driveway.

This guy wanders, I'm here. I'm going, you're not getting in. It's 32. And they said, oh, let them in, let them in. No, no, half past six, we're off. And these kids were all set, follow them.

No, no, because we were going ice skating or somewhere. We always took them off site. And nobody was, and our club was a safer club than the other club. It was the time when Stephen Lawrence was stabbed.

It was safe. So much so that the leaders eventually came and looked at our work and thought, why are folk coming to your safe? And so they just watched what we did. We had a fashion parade.

[16:23] We gave them newspapers and a stapler and says, right, doll yourself up and there's a catwalk. And they're thinking, we've got quad bikes. They've got a stapler and a pile of newspaper. They had rules and regulations and they were confined within that.

Nowadays, it's shocking. You don't know if you're a boy or a girl. Well, we can't help you. It's up to you to decide. It's just off the walls nowadays.

It's okay. You do whatever you want. And the world is trying to give kids what you want. When you do that without rules, you do not have freedom. Rules bring freedom.

God's word brings freedom. This is right. This is wrong. Full stop. The truth will make it to be. And this is so important. God's word is perfect.

It doesn't bring us freedom. Freedom from thinking wrong. Freedom from guilt or whatever it goes first to. Secondly then, let's look at the need of God's people.

[17:22] If that's the nature of God's word, primarily those two things helps us, leads us, guides us, but it also brings us freedom when we walk according to it. It mentions quite a few things here and all I can do really is just give you them as bullet points.

First of all, the need of God's people is to be holy. That is the immediate need of God's people. To be a... He begins to look at what God's word says.

He's basically saying in this passage that we need to... When we come to God, we can't be double-minded, wanting God. Remember, he mentioned this before, unstable. The world, that's what it means by unstable.

It's not that you're completely wanting the world, but this... When we come to God's word, have that single heart, single eye for God in your devotions. Lord, I'm having my... I'm going to fester on that, and I'm going to still do what I want to do, and I still want to live this particular...

This desire for holiness. So, really, he says in that verse, you're basically, verse 21, come to God's word. You're clearing your table, the table of your life.

[18:26] You're opening your Bible. You're putting it there, and you're saying, make you the aim of my life. So, it's holiness. When we come before God, you know your Bible, don't you? Those who ascend the hill of God do so with pure hands and a pure heart.

With sin, harboring sin, it's having that desire to be holy. Therefore, get... He never minces his words. You're never left in any doubt what he means. He tells us, get rid.

It doesn't mean moral perfect. To be holy, to working towards holy. The parable of the sower is that, isn't it? Oil, that we're not in the world, and it's just going to choke at the minute we read it.

We've read, you might be reading a paragraph. I don't know how much you're reading. But if the soil isn't prepared and you're holy, and you're worldly, and you're thinking, and you're angry, whatever that is, it's just going to choke the word right away.

Whereas, when we come and we get rid of things, it doesn't mean that you're seeing yourself and flogging yourself. You just say, Lord, show me if there's any wicked way in me. Lead me in the way of a life.

[19:33] Something there, the Lord wants to put his finger on. You may read that verse or whatever. Thou art the man. You are the person. But thinking right. So we come. The need, the immediate need when we come to God's word is holiness.

To prepare the soil. Secondly, is humility. Humility. We need humility. Look at verse 20. And humbly accept the word planted in you.

It's one thing to know God's word. It's another thing to humbly accept it. To receive it. To reject the word. It's almost like putting some kind of Teflon coat over the soil.

It just bounces off us. Accept this. Now, how do we go about this? We're recognizing that the word of God has authority. Oh, authority is given to me in heaven and on earth.

We believe that this is the authority of our life. This is the rule book for our life. It has authority. So we come with humility over the word, but we sit under the word.

[20:35] The word speaks to us. We don't explain it away or are this. The word of God is not just a textbook. It comes with authority. You'll like my watch manual or something else.

It's not just a user manual. It comes with, they're not just good suggestions or good ideas. So we need to acknowledge this. We need to come, that we need to come humbly before his word and sit under it.

Thirdly, we need to come with purpose. Whoever looks intently, verse 25, into the perfect law. One of the commentators says, it's very possible to be unfailingly regular in Bible, Steve, as you just move the bookmark further on in your Bible.

That's all you've basically achieved. I quite like that. You're doing, pastor, I'm at the end of Exodus, but it says, no impact on me. Wherever you be. The word is read, but it's not heard.

And that is the thing. So in the Aureans, you remember, who intently looked into the word of God. Paul came and preached to them. Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those

in Thessalonica.

[21:48] Eagerness, and examine the scriptures every day to see if what Paul said, emotions, they weren't saying, yep, I'm up, it's two Corinthians now. They looked intently.

Yes, want to really see if this is true of God's word. What you're saying is really true. They are called people, other Christians, who were less noble. I don't know if you can be described as noble.

I know I can. I'm not too sure. Are you of noble character that's wishing? Lord, speak to me. Show me things out of your law.

You're reading. You're listening. Perhaps for intellect, for discussion, for obedience. Samuel said, didn't he? He has an intention to listen. I wonder what your intention is in your quiet time.

I wonder what your intention is wins. Do you look intently to see your need, personal blemishes, mindsets that need to be readjusted?

[22:50] Maybe you're misjudging God or the situation or you really are. The word of God is, it really is gold. One thing is, I have the time to study the scriptures.

Sometimes I envy the road sweeper, I'll be honest. It's hard work, but not the study. The study for me is the best thing. I pity you when you're doing, making widgets or whatever that is.

I'd rather have my crust of bread. But the thing is, the treasures in God's word are never revealed just on the surface. Unless you're a new, because every promise is just, wow, that's for me.

But when you become older, they become, and you need to dig a bit deeper. Maybe something you've not thought before. I thought, that's why I'm stuck with my same daily readings, but I'm using one or two new blogs.

And there's one called Tim Charlie's Thought for the Day. And it's usually quite a contemporary thing, but there's, he calls it a la carte. So if you can choose, I like that.

[23:51] So that's very good. So ask me about that. I'll spell his name and stuff like that. That has, that's been oxygen great. Every day I look at this and then I've signed up to another one called Purpose, London Institute of Contemporary, right through, they do a, they give you a wee thing on purpose.

What's your purpose in life? That's great. So the more you do this, but it's having this intention that you, you want to know more. If you, God won't disappoint you, you'll get nothing.

But if you come and say, Lord, help me to behold wonderful things. Enough. Fourthly, obedience. This is James' main point here. In all of this, holiness, you're coming in the decks, you're coming in humility, you're coming with intention.

What is the intention in all of this? It should argue the Word of God, to do what it says. The end of the law, the definition of it, follows Jesus. We're followers.

That's what we do. We're going somewhere, and we're going somewhere on the path of obedience. We're living an obedient life here. Mature Christians obey God's Word.

[24:54] It's as simple. Maturest Christian, you know, will be the most obedient Christian. He'll be thinking right. He'll have control of grace and mercy. They will be obedient to the Word of God, serving God, loving God.

It's obedience when all is said and done. It's not just a character. It's obedience. Remember when Jesus rose in his actions to them with this, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Therefore, because I have all authority, therefore go and make disciples, not just converts. Convert is just the beginning. Discipleship is an ongoing process.

Make disciples, England, Wales, Ireland, whatever, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded.

Not just some, not knife, teach them to obey everything I have commanded. Jesus basically links you. So therefore, the Word of God is not just to come and wrap arms around you and give you the warm fuzzies.

[25:58] The main purpose of God's Word is to make a disciple as somebody who obeys. Let me read one of the commentators to you just now. What does the Word of God do? Does it tell you that your prayer life is not what it

ought to be?

What are you going to do? Are you going to do? Does it tell you that you have bitterness and resentment towards a brother or sister in Christ? What are you going to do? Does it tell you that you're not as diligent as you should be about your study of it?

Does it tell you that you're not as faithful as you should be? Does it tell you that your love of Christ has grown cold? How do you respond? Are you going to take action?

In other words, are you going to just listen and not do? The Word of God is to affect our hearts, minds, our various churches.

And there are certain Christians who do hear the Word of God. It affects them in their mind. But sometimes it doesn't work its way out to your will. It begins here. You hear it.

[26:57] You weigh it all up. You hear it. You embrace it. You love it. Although it's hard, the truth is setting you free, but it should work. It's something about it. There shouldn't be a blockage between this.

It shouldn't just be cerebral or whatever. It should be more than that. It should be heart, mind, heart, and illustrating here. The Word of God should change us.

He gives us illustration, doesn't it, about a mirror. If you just look and look in a mirror, then you immediately forget what you look like. It's the doing of it. You're looking intently when you're looking in a mirror.

You're doing it to, if you see something, a bit of your breakfast is still here. You don't leave it there, do you? Maybe you do. Anyway, you brush it away. You see something that's not quite right. Oh, that's not, there's toothpaste here.

I need to get rid of that. You're looking in. It's the same when we come to God's Word. We don't just look at God's Word, but we have that intention to obey what we see.

[28:00] That is so easy to understand. None of James' stuff is difficult doing it. The problem is putting it into practice. How many of us can say, Pastor, I'm a mature Christian. I've been years worth of a Christian.

Remember, I think it was the writer to Hebrews says, at this time, you should be teachers. It's very possible to be a Christian and still be baby on baby food. The wee tiny verses.

But the writer says, and that is possible. You can be saved, but still be an infant in Christ. It's on solid food. The solid food of the Word of God. Knows it. Knows how to handle it.

The right verse that they're out regularly and putting it into practice. Linked to this, point five, is honesty. For us to kid ourselves on. So he says this, do not merely listen to the Word and so deceive yourself on.

Because that's not what it's about. Christians need to be honest here. Listeners of God's Word and good at putting it into practice. One of the commentators, his life, Stevenson, never heard of him, don't know who he is.

[29:03] Once opened an address, he says, this guy, once opened an address to students, I understand that I am here to speak to you and you are here to listen. Let's hope we both, I like that.

I thought that was very good. I know there's nothing more discouraging for a preacher when your person's gorned out, they're gone and you're still speaking. You're finished at different times.

And I remember as a young pastor, he used to annoy me when folk fell asleep in the congregation. But I always remember that they said to somebody, excuse me, ma'am, can you wake up your husband? He said, well, you put him to sleep, you wake him up.

I'm aware of that, that it's not the husband's fault. But I'm also aware that I was just starting to preach. I was still a student and there was an elderly woman there and no sooner had you started and she's gone.

And at one point, he said to me, he said, you know, I was always asleep. Thinking to myself, you need a word with her. And he's in bed every night and she thinks that IRA is up the loft.

[30:07] So she never sleeps a wink at night. She just, so when I hear through people's minds, you do not know what night they've had that night or any other night. So if you doze off, rest assured, I won't be on you.

Between you and the Lord. But we need to be honest here and say, Lord, I'm coming. But unless he's singing, because I'm just carnally minded. As long as I get good jokes and so forth, that's what

I'm going to do.

So we know why we're here. Why when you come to a sermon, this is to be honest here, why do you, do you look forward to the singing? Is that really how you come?

I hope the singing's going to be game and Ian's going to be banging the piano and we're singing good modern stuff. I'm not keen on the old stuff. Or is it the Word of God?

Do you come thinking, I like this part. This is the bit where we hear God. And it has an effect on me and I'll grow. It really should be the second of those two. Because up in, that is where we speak to God.

[31:07] And our hearts become warm when it speaks to us. And there would be something wrong if we kept saying, Lord, I don't mind singing to you. I love singing to you. Lord, listen to me. I've got a great voice to me. I'm not really that interested.

I mean, if your preacher or your pastor can't preach, get rid of them. They have to be able to expound the Scriptures. You'll never grow if you do not get fed from God's Word. Not just, I mean, unnaturally trying, I just come out with funny things.

I know that. But all I've done is make them laugh. I remember in London, somebody said, I reminded him of Billy Conley. It wasn't a compliment to me, I can tell you.

Martin Lloyd-Jones might have been a compliment, but no Billy Conley. It would be the case that there's, yes, you kind of keep folk at this deep level all the time. You need to lighten it, relax, but to hear the Word of God again, that's why I do that.

It's not just to make you laugh. You can't keep, you come. Be honest about that. Is it to hear the Word of God? When you're looking for a church, is it the Word, or is it the doctrinal belief and the ministry of God's Word?

[32:11] It should be the ministry of God's Word. When I've been student in college, find a good church, or maybe recommend some churches. These are good churches. Go there. But don't just go to a frother and pizza and stuff like that.

Make sure you're taught. Make sure you feed on God's Word. That's how you will work. You won't grow. So it's such an important thing. Do you love the Word of God, church, or deciding on another church?

Because sermons are not easy to listen to sometimes. They are like a scalpel, and they can be hard. All Scripture is, God breathes sharper than any two-edged sword. Two is in that way.

That's not a bad thing. Something that's not right, a verse comes and just kind of clears away someone very, very near the end. Two more small points. Perseverance. It's not enough just to listen and even just to obey.

Verse 25, that gives freedom and continues in it. You won't grow. It's not an instant thing. That's why we have sermons every week. You don't go, I've done James.

[33:09] I remember in 1965, we did the book. It's continuing in it. Something fresh, something new all the time. We won't know. It's the same. I have my watch.

I'm trying to get fit again. When I came here this time last year, I used to cycle a lot in London. I'm back on the bike, and my watch tells me my aerobic level, my high aerobic, is where your heart changes quickly.

So you go from zero to maxing out, like a sprint or something. It measures where that's my optimal. I should be within this range. Well, my low aerobic, but my high aerobic, if I showed you just now, high aerobic shortage, it would say.

I'm getting it, creeping up a wee bit as well. And it will say productive, or it will say minted, basically. So, there's no shortcut to that.

You continue in it. You don't go, yeah, it doesn't happen that way. It's the same with God's Word. It's a walk. It's a lifelong relationship. That is what James wants to mention.

[34:13] Not just being obedient once, but always. Long obedience. You used to see T-shirts, don't you? You sometimes get them, and it's usually a slogan, like a mantra. It might be, and that's basically their life.

That's their life story in three words. It can be anything. Basically, for the, repeat. And don't forget the repeat. And you could have this, listen, obey. That's a great T-shirt.

What would ask? What a great conversation starter that would be. You don't need to pay royalties for that. I'll give you that for nothing. It's the Christian life continuing in this. And if we do all these things, holiness, clear the decks, obey, being honest in these things, persevering in it, lastly, we will be blessed.

They will be blessed. Verse 25, in what they do. Obedience brings blessing. It brings, you know this yourself. If you've been disobedient, and you come back to God, the peace and the joy that you lost, is return.

Your mom and dad when you were a child, and they hugged you for it, and they gave you a wee treat, it brought joy. It is the same way. And this joy spills over to you and I. And we can know a peace.

[35:20] But when we disobey, and we wonder, we become miserable, we become angry, and so forth. But if we do this, we will know something of the good and faithful servant.

That will bring peace and joy. It will make us holy, make us more like Jesus, make us better people. We will stand strong. We will be that impressive, shining Christian, fruits of the spring, peaceful bunch of people.

That is God's Word. And James commends all our circumstances of life. We're going to stand, and we're going to sing, Speak, O Lord, as we come to the sermon.

But the words of this are so relevant as we finish the sermon. So, let's pray as we come to the Lord, as we bring our time to a close. Speak, O Lord, to receive the good of your holy word.

And in deep in us, shape and measure us, in your love. The light of Christ might be seen today in our 30s of faith.

[36:43] Speak, O Lord, and whom be purposed for your glory. For your glory. Teach us, Lord, to love you, be reverent, true in reality.

Test our thoughts in the radiance of your purity. Cause, cause, cause, arise to see your majesty in love and of me.

Words of heart that can never fail and overrun me. Speak, O Lord, and read your minds above your plans choose and change from the dark and put down through eternity.

And by grace we'll promise us and by faith we'll walk as you walk with hope till your church is built and the earth is filled with and by grace we'll stand on your promises and walk as you walk with us.

Speak, O Lord, the earth is filled and the earth is filled with your glory. Loving Heavenly Father, we praise and thank you for your chosen to give us new birth through that living word of the living God.

[38:32] Father, we thank you for your... We thank you that it is indeed the living word of the living God and we pray that as we read it that we would have that humbly with you. Lord, cause us to grow as Christians in these days.

Make us people of the book, we pray. We ask these things in Jesus' name. Thank you, folks. Thank you.