

Sermon Discussion Questions for Sunday, January 3, 2016

“NO HEARER WHO FORGETS BUT A DOER WHO ACTS”

James 1:19-25

HEAR AND DO GOD'S WORD EVERYDAY. Commit to start or continue a daily discipline of time in God's Word and prayer.

THE CALLING of James 1 is the calling of every Christian: Regarding the Word of God...you need to... Receive it and Respond to it.

1. Have you fallen prey to the ‘If God is good, why is this happening to me?’ syndrome and if so, how did you snap out of it?

James 1:18-25 answers the same question we ask: 'Where can I find strength to face all these difficulties?' James's answer is clear: strength is found in the Word of God!

Discuss the following... Receive it. How? (1:19-21)

1. Receive the Word with an open heart. 1:19-20
2. Receive the Word with a pure heart. 1:21
3. Receive the Word with a humble heart. 1:21

Receive the Word...Open heart. Pure heart. Humble heart. Eager to Listen, without resistance or rebellion.

Respond to it. How? (1:22-25) Do what it says.

- 1. CONSTANTLY CONNECTED.** Heart open to receive...every day.
- 2. CONSISTENTLY THINKING.** Head in the game. Engaged mind.
- 3. CONTINUALLY ACTING** upon what you hear and see. Hands on experience.

How can you ELIMINATE DISTRACTIONS to being in the Word? What is keeping you from wholeheartedly diving into the Word?

EFFECTIVE DOERS...RESPOND WELL. HEAR AND DO EVERYDAY.

The only way you will become consistent is by AIMING for every day.

LET's GET more specific...4 things

1. FIND A PLAN. On Dec. 30, 1842, 29-year-old Scottish pastor named Robert Murray M'Cheyne wrote to his congregation. MY DEAR FLOCK,—The approach of another year stirs up within me new desires for your salvation, and for the growth of those of you who are saved. “What the coming year is to bring forth, who can tell? . . . Those believers will stand firmest who have no dependence upon self or upon creatures, but upon Jehovah our Righteousness. We must be driven more to our Bibles, and to the mercy-seat, if we are to stand in the evil day. /// It has long been in my mind to prepare a scheme of Scripture reading, in which as many as were made willing by God might agree, so that the whole Bible might be read once by you in the year, and all might be feeding in the same portion of the green pasture at the same time. There are drawbacks in Bible-reading plans, but the advantages outweigh the drawbacks.

M'Cheyne talked about the dangers and advantages of giving a Bible-reading plan to his congregation. The dangers are formality (where Bible-reading becomes a lifeless duty); self-righteousness (we pat ourselves on the back for doing it); careless reading (we read fast to get it done and don't tremble at the Word of God); and having the Bible-reading plan become a yoke too heavy to bear. M'Cheyne counseled those for whom the plan had become a heavy yoke to “throw aside the fetter and feed at liberty in the sweet garden of God. My desire is not to cast a snare upon you, but to be a helper of your joy.” M'Cheyne's list of advantages include... reading the entire Bible in an orderly manner over the course of a year; no wasting time deciding what portion of Scripture to read each day; improved spiritual conversations between parents and children and between friends when each member of a family or circle of friends is individually reading the same portions of Scripture;

2. FIND THE TIME. Number one question: what are you not going to do in order to make time to do this one supremely important thing? Prov. 13:13 the one who neglects the word will be in debt to it. Prov. 16:20 he who gives attention to the Word will find good. MAKE IT NON-NEGOTIABLE. Not an elective, required part of the program.

3. FIND SOME FRIENDS. Recruit some like-minded friends who can keep you accountable and keep you on track. And do the Word by practicing the one another's with one another. Fellowship. Caring and sharing community. Take personal interest in others. Make new friends. INSIDERS. PLUGGED IN. SERVING THROUGH GIFTING. Not enough to say it, need to do it.

4. FIND GOD FAITHFUL. God's Word is a Daily reminder He is with us and will do what He said. The Bible is the only objective, unchanging, immovable, trustworthy source of truth we have on earth. John Owen said "Scripture is our only blueprint of the glory of Christ. Only in Scripture and only by faith can we behold the glory of Christ while still in this life."

HEAR AND DO. EVERYDAY. STARTING TODAY.

SOLI DEO GLORIA

Pray together utilizing the P-R-A-Y acrostic.

Praise God. Acknowledge His character.

Remember the Gospel. Recount Gospel truth.

Admit your need. Declare your dependence.

Yield to God. Commit everything to His sovereign good pleasure.