

Sermon 8 James 1.22
April 10 1853 38 pages

6 1/8"x 7 1/2", & p.31-42 4 1/8"x 6 1/4"

James. 1.22. But be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

No one is able to estimate or duly appreciate God's word both written and spoken. It has respect not only to our actions and prosperity in this world but it looks far beyond the bounds of time and informs us what will be our destination there and the busy scenes which

[page 2]

will engage our attention. It is an invaluable treasure to those who obey its dictates but a source of incalculable injury to those who disregard its instructions. Hence the exhortation [sic] in the text. Be ye doers of the word and not hearers [sic] only, deceiving your own selves.

Three things are clearly suggested in these words of the apostle, to which we will give our attention in the following order,

who are much

- I. Those who hear [sic] of the word.
- II. The doers of the word.
- III. The deception practiced upon upon [sic] themselves.

[page 3]

To attend Divine service is a duty enjoined [sic] upon all whose circumstances are such as will give them an opportunity, for this is one of the means which infinite Wisdom has appointed to bring men to a knowledge of the truth. But we are commanded to take heed how we hear; because we are in great danger of hearing amiss, and the word spoken prove a savor of death unto death. All do not attend to the word spoken alike, and this is the thing now to be attended to; and

[page 4]

I. Those who are merely hearers of the word.

Of the great variety of hearers, the following are a few,

1. The inattentive hearer.

The great importance of the subject presented in the word spoken, though it come from the lips of a fellow being, should excite our attention and action to secure those blessings thus communicated to man.

But so frequent are men called to listen to the

word spoken the subjects presented have become so
or no
trite and common as to excite but little ^ attention and
their minds

[page 5]

are like the fools eyes, to the end of the earth,
or engaged in some foolish revery of the imagination.

They hear the sound of a human voice but very little
do they understand and much less enters their heart,
because of their inattention. Such hearers have
constituted no inconsiderable part of most
congregations in all ages of the world. On account of
such hearers, Moses after he had spoken all word
of the Lord unto Israel, in order to call their attention
to what he had spoken and arouse
them to action adds,

[page 6]

with great emphasis, Set your hearts to all the words which I testify unto you this day, which you shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law. And as a reason for this required attention he further adds, For it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life.

Deut.32.34. However careless the inattentive hearer may be, there can be no excuse for such at the bar of God, for he has sent forth his word in the manner which was most agreeable to infinite wisdom, so there is no excuse. Therefore we ought [sic]

[page 7]

to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation. Heb.1.1-2-3.

We cannot escape. He who pays but little or no attention to what he hears of the word of God, never intends to be a doer; which neglect he does at the peril of his soul.

2. The inconsiderate hearer.

He never applies his mind seriously

[page 8]

to consider what he hears and understand its solemn import. He never one thing with another of the truths he hears, whether there is any distinction between obedience to God's word or disobedience is pleasing to him, or holiness or unholiness, but passes on heedless of consequences, as the unconscious bruit [sic] that perisheth. He may hear his character portrayed in the sublime language of inspiration, and hear his doom denounced in the solemn language of God's word; but traces on his mind are like

[page 9]

traces upon the sand, easily obliterated. [sic] He like
unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass. For
he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way; and
straightway forgeteth what manner of man he
was. James.1.23-4. The most trifling occurrence
catcheth away the word because he did not consider
and treasure it up in his heart. As our Savior
illustrates by the way-side hearer in the parable of
sower: Some seed fell by the wayside and the fowls
came and devoured them up: as he explained it, Then
cometh the wicked one and catcheth away
that

[page 10]

which was sown in his heart; and he is never profitted thereby, but continues in the same sinful course and in the world dies as he lived ^ without God and without hope.

3. The injudicious hearer.

He never makes up his mind to judge correctly concerning what he hears, whether true or false, and consequently never correctly understands any thing, but all things come and go alike to him. He hears all the days of his life, but never becomes the wiser for it. Ever remaining ignorant of God & deity, as described by inspiration, Ever learning, and

[page 11]

never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. 2

Tim.3.7.

4. The stupid and uneffected hearer.

Being uneffected [sic] arises from his stupidity originating from absence of mind, hearing for others or engaged in some foolish revery which steals away the attention, so the truth reaches not the heart. When they hear for others, their minds are constantly engaged in culling out the faults of others and applying whatever truth presented which may hit the case, and cause the one they wish to torture to feel the force

[page 12]

of the reproof. They feel not themselves to be worthy of the same reproof because they because they [sic] considered it more applicable to others. These ironically might be termed generous or benevolent hears [sic], giving all to others and retaining none themselves. This shows a want of self examination to show them the wickedness and corruptions of their own hearts. Should they look within and see what is going on there, no longer would they hear for their neighbors, but for themselves; they would obey the injunction Take heed how ye hear, and

[page 13]

make a just and appropriate application and be benefitted thereby. But giving their attention to those things which belong not to themselves, they become as the heath [sic] of the desert and knoweth not when good cometh.

5. Prejudiced and disaffected hearers.

These injure not themselves only but are a great cause of injury to others.

Our Savior was troubled with this class of hears [sic], who were neither will [sic] to enter the kingdom of heaven themselves nor allow others to enter who were disposed, to hear &

[page 14]

believe his word. These he severely reproveth saying,
Verily I say unto you the publicans and harlots go
into the kingdom of heaven before you. Math.21.31.

The same evil obtains at the present day, and
is a fruitful source of retarding the progress of Divine
truth and of curtailing the powers and energies of the
Church, especially when such hears [sic] are found
among the professed disciples of Christ. For
then the Church is weakened so far their numbers are
concerned and far as their influence goes against the
word. Christians therefore

[page 15]

should be exceedingly cautious lest [sic] they commit a fault and do an injury where they do not intend.

But to a more general view of the subject.

Such hearers come to the house of God with a determination not to be satisfied.

Being predisposed to be dissatisfied they will most assuredly find enough to gratify their censorious disposition. They are prepared to put wrong constructions on what they hear, and make wrong inferences, and cast what they cannot pervert, into the darkest shades.

They sometimes imagine

[page 16]

themselves particularly marked out whenever some particular viced [sic] is condemned or some friend abused by some censorious remark.

Such hearers have enough to feast their censoriousness, as they come not to be doers of the word but judges. They effect much evil to themselves, and withhold [sic] great good from others.

6. The voluptuous hearer.

This class of hearers are not often found in ordinary congregations though they make their appearance in some places. They listen to the word with great attention

[page 17]

to the word spoken not to be instructed in the ways of godliness, not to treasure up knowledge to make them wise unto salvation but to satiate a fastidious taste and gratify an exorbitant curiosity.

They are delighted to hear a fine discourse, made up of sentences finely arranged and beautifully closed. They look for sublimity of thought and arguments brought forwards [sic] and arranged according to their fancy, and take more pleasure in applauding the eloquence of the speaker than obeying the truth. They come not for instruction but to be pleased, not to worship

[page 18]

God but to gratify a vain curiosity and bow at the shrine of fancy. Such are in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity, & pursuing this course cannot receive the approbation of God nor an enlightened conscience.

7. The self conceited hearer.

This class of hearers are wiser in their own conceit [sic] than seven men who can render a reason. They set themselves up as umpires to judge of truth and falsehood in doctrine in which they are exceeding zealous in word but slow in doing, and thus honor

[page 19]

God's law with their lips while their hearts are far very far from keeping it.

Hence they displease him, deprive themselves of the true knowledge which maketh one wise even unto salvation.

These are some of the most prominent of those who are merely hearers of the word. While some seem to have no particular object, others manifest a strange degree of ostentation and selfishness. All this is sin, they incur the displeasure of the Almighty [sic], dishonor his word, and bringing upon themselves certain destruction. For they are exceedingly guilty in the

[page 20]

sight of a holy God, who giveth his word not for such purposes but to make men wise and good. No one then can exhonorate [sic] himself from guilt who treats the word of God with such indignity.

less criminal

Nor is the conduct of others ^ who hear the word with any other motives than those which are productive of good and to glorify God; for by so doing they virtually say that they despise the word and of course its Divine author even Christ, who saith He that heareth you heareth me;

[page 21]

and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me. Luke 10.16.

To such inspiration saith, Behold ye dispisers [sic] and wonder and perish; This shall ye receive at my hands, Ye shall lie down in sorrow!!

Having shown some of the general characteristicks [sic] of mere hearers of the word, we now come to the

II. The doers of the word.

It is natural for man to think more highly of himself and all which he does, and therefore is liable to be self-deceived. Knowing

[page 22]

this to be the fact, it becometh

us to examine carefully our hopes, lest we be caught in the same evil snare Self deception. A mistake of this kind persevered in, endless ages in the world of retribution cannot retrieve. We should then fear lest a promise being left of entering into his rest some of us should seem to fall short of it.

As sinners are denominated workers of iniquity by which we understand it to be their habitual practice to roll sin as a sweet morsel under their tongue,

[page 23]

to conceive sin and bring forth iniquity; so he that is in Christ Jesus is a new creature; old things are past [sic] away, behold all things have become new, his employment is necessarily changed; and as he was before a habitual violater [sic] of the word; he now becomes a habitual observer or doer of the word.

This necessarily implies

1. A fixed determination as to course of conduct.

No one can be called a child of God in heart, unless he has entered into the determination to

[page 24]

serve him with a whole heart and a pure mind and persevere unto the end. This is the only position we can take through Christ to receive the remission of our sins viz. by an unreserved surrender of all we are and all we have, to him for time and eternity. If Ananias and Saphira [sic] were so severely rebuked for keeping back a part of the perishable things of this world and pretending an entire surrender, how can we expect the approbation of heaven and the remission of our sins, if we refuse to render unto the Lord all which he demands?

[page 25]

No one therefore ever did or ever can become a child of God by the washing of regeneration, without this unreserved surrender, and of necessity an unwavering resolution to persevere in obedience. This is the language of all true believers. Says one I have sworn and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgements. Ps. 119.6. Here is not only a determination to be a doer of the word, but is sustained by a solemn oath to keep God's righteous judgements. Again, thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage forever; for they are the rejoicing

[page 26]

of my heart. I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes alway [sic], even unto the end. Nothing can be more expressive of a decided and fixed determination to continue in obedience to the word of God even unto the end.

This we find is the strong and decided language of all the faithful.

2. He, who is a doer of the word seriously applies his mind to that word to know what is the will of the Lord.

God in infinite goodness has given man his precious word to

[page 27]

illuminate our path and guide us in duty. To profess to be a doer of the word and have this sacred volumn [sic] in our hands, and still be in ignorance in respect to his will in ordinary cases, is a paradox which needs only to be mentioned, to be rejected by the candid.

^r
They sea^rch the scriptures and learn that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandents [sic]; his praise endureth forever. Ps.111.10. To do his commandments we must know them, for how can one perform that

[page 28]

of which he has no knowledge? Nor can he be a doer of the word unless he put himself in a way to know what God the Lord saith. All pretentions [sic] of being doers of the word, unless we use the means in our hands to know, his will is but solemn mockery, which God will reject and punish.

3. To be a doer of the word requires reverence in hearing it dispensed.

It is true it is committed to earthen vessels,
which are weak and sometimes error^eous,
yet it is intended to be in accordance with the law of
the Triune

[page 29]

Jehovah. Irreverence clearly betrays a disposition to disregard [sic] and neglect its requirements.

When we consider [sic] it carries with it the ^{broad} stamp
of God's awful Majesty it will command ^{the attention} ^ of all who
are doers of the word. It may not come to us with
all that majesty with which it was clothed when
delivered from Mount Sinai, yet it is of
the same general character and demands the
reverence in kind if not in degree. Then it appeared
in such awful majesty, grandeur and terror, that the
whole camp of Israel trembled and quaked with

[page 30]

fear and desired that it might come again in that manner lest they should die; but God now appears to us through the mildness of a Mediator, and must demand our reverence, if we love his word in the way of his own wise arrangement; and if we treat it with irreverence because it comes not to us as it did to Israel, proves us perverse and not doers of the word.

4. To be a doer of the word, supposes that our reading or hearing is mingled with faith.

[page 31]

The word of God worketh effectually in those that believe and in none others.

Belief is absolutely necessary to our acting even in matters of common occurrence,

so in spiritual things. Though we ^{are} taught the

sublime doctrines of God's word. The

wages of sin is death; and the gift of God is eternal

life through Jesus Christ, if we believed not, we

should by no means endeavor to escape the one and

secure the other.

We should remain idle and indifferent in the case and

not doers of the word, hugging the delusive phantom

of hope that it will be well with us until we are

inveloped [sic] in the
flames of hell [sic]. We will then believe as did
Dives and as the devils who believe
and tremble, but by no means can we then become
doers of the word. If the word of God
teaches us that he requires perfect obedience, and we
refuse to give it the assent of our
heart, we cannot become doers of the word. To say
that we strive to do that which we
believe not, is an absurdity and finds no proof in the
word of God or in the exper [sic] of
man.

[inserted in the sermon are smaller pages numbered
31 to 42 picked up in midsentence and ending in
midsentence]
[page 31]

since he became a living soul. The Gospel of
Chris [sic] is the power of God unto salvation to them
that believe and to them alone, as
the Apos. saith Ro.1.16 For I am not ashamed of the
Gospel of Christ; for it is the power
of God unto salvation, to everyone that believeth.

6. To be a doer requires love for truth.

Some received not the truth in love and
consequently perished

[page 32]

2 The.1.9-10. Even him, whose coming is after the working of satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness [sic] of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. But those who have been distinguished as doers of the word have ever expressed their love and attachment to it. Ps.119.97.

[page 33]

O how love I thy law. it is my meditation all the day.

103 Again, How sweet are thy words unto my taste!

yea sweeter than honey to my mouth! Jer.15.16.

expresses his love to the word of God in language

peculiarly emphatic [sic] and says. Thy words were

found and I did eat them; and thy word was

unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart; for I am

called by thy name O Lord God of Harts [sic]

[page 34]

7. It requires submission a compliance of the heart to its requirements.

The language of the natural heart and of all those who are not doers of the word, is we desire not the knowledge of thy ways, neither do we desire that man to raeign [sic] over us. Be it he who comes to God as a doer of his word, comes believing that he is and that he is the reworder [sic] of all

[page 35]

those who diligently seek him; with an exalted opinion of his character as God over all his blessed forever. To ~~the~~ word ~~of him~~ they are willing to submit [sic] and receive it with meekness, for they know that the commandments of the Lord are not grievous to be borne. “The gracious soul is always ready to say “Good is the word of the Lord.

8. To be a doer of the word

[page 36]

require [sic] a previous conformity to it by
regenerating grace.

Of his own will begat he us ~~by~~ with the word
of truth, that we might be a kind of
first fruits of his creatures. By this may we know
whether we are the children of God or
his enemies. The natural heart is not subject to his
law neither indeed can be, for it is at
enmity to all holiness.

[page 37]

If ye love me ye will keep my commandments, and it necessarily follows that those who do not manifest an habitual desire to keep & do the commandments of the Lord, have possitive [sic] evidence that they never have been conformed to his word by regenerating grace. My sheep know my voice they follow me - and the water which I shall give him, shall be in him a well

[page 38]

of water spring up into everlasting life. An external compliance may put on the appearance of sincerity [sic] for a season, and discover much apparent humility and reverance [sic]; but will finally be unmarked and appear in its true character – Hypocrisy [sic] cannot always conceal [sic] itself under the robe of sincerity. The graseless [sic] heart cannot long retain the character

[page 39]

of the saint, when worldly interests comes [sic] in competition with devotion. Hymenius [sic] and Philetus were able to deceive even the discerning mind of the Apostle for a season; but other considerations more powerful than the service of God unmasked their real characters, and they went out from them and thus showed that they never were in heart of them.

[page 40]

[sic] Simon Magus professed much attachment to the case of God, but he discovered a heart estranged from ~~from~~ genuine love and consequently never a doer in reality, he was in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity. By their fruits ye shall know them.

Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servant to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey. - But ye have obeyed from your heart that form of doctrine which was

[page 41]

delivered unto you.

8. It requires a faithful remembrance of it.

No one can claim supreme love and attachment to a cause of which they are habitually [sic] forgetful. Where our treasures are there will our hearts be also, and we shall find no difficulty in remembering under such circumstances. That earthly blessing or favour upon which our affections are placed

[page 42]

most intensely will be the last thing which we are likely to forget. If then the word of God be our delight and to do his will our supreme desire, we shall by no means be forgetful. To forget the word is the peculiar character of the hearer and not the doer. For, saith the Apostle in following verses of our text; if any ~~man~~ be a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is

[ends in midsentence]

[unnumbered page]

III. The deception practiced upon
themselves.

To be self deceived and self destroyed in a
case of all others the most momentous,
is so appalling to the mind, that the feelings revolt
from the thought with horror and
dismay. Yet exercising the most enlarged charity if
we exercise our judgement corrected
by the word of God, we must come

[unnumbered page]

to the conclusion that multitudes are labouring under the influence of this delusion. We ourselves may be found at last among that deluded and self destroyed company. It is self-deception no one to be blamed except the sufferers themselves and great must be the disappointment and chagrin, for they are deceived.

1. In their reward

To this they had looked with hope and inexpressible delight, and it had constituted their chief happiness, and joy on earth. But what must be their disappointment and sorrow,

[unnumbered page]

instead of the bright visions of glory
which they anticipated would burst upon their
delighted senses, nothing but darkness and
dispare [sic] are disclosed to their astonished gaze!
When they fondly believed that they would hear the
welcome plaudit of Come ye blessed of my Father,
inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the
foundation of the world, they shall be the awful
denunciation

Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the
devils and his angels! Instead of a crown of life, they
must lie down in sorrow!!

2. They are deceived in a plain case.

[unnumbered page]

When men deceive themselves in matters of common interest and the circumstances in the case are plain and easy to be understood, they often reproach themselves severely and denounce their conduct as exceedingly unwise and foolish. This is a case of no uncommon occurrence. What then must be their feelings, when they discover that they have deceived themselves in the important interests of the soul! The important truths of God's word are set forth in a most clear and lucid manner. All those truths essential to salvation are so clearly expressed and positively affirmed

[unnumbered page]

that inspiration saith The wayfaring man though a fool shall not err therein, yet multitudes wrest the scripture, to pave their way to heaven on flowery beds of ease, but it turn a snare to their souls and they make their bed in hell. If men reproach themselves by foolishly bantering away their earthly good, what will be the reproaches of consciences in bartering [sic] away their souls, when duty is made so plain in the word of God. Let us take the admonition of our Savior on this subject lest we be left to regret our folly too late to secure our eternal interests. Says the Divine Teacher and

[unnumbered page]

faithful friend of man, Every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which bult [sic] his house upon the sand; And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house and it fell, and great was the fall of it. Math.7.26

&27. Great - great was the fall of it, because eternal ages could not repair it!!!

B~n. April 10, 1853
Bad travelling.
Audience 82

B~n April 17-1853
Preached an old sermon
Audience. 84