

The Bulletin

Meeks St. Church of Christ

1201 Meeks St. Corinth, Ms. 38834

Phone – (662) 287-2187

Visit Our Website at:

MeeksstreetchurchofChrist.com

July 22, 2018

“Be Doers of the Word....”

By Phillip Keathley

James 1:22 “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”

When we consider the impact of James 1:22 we find that God wants us to be more than those who constantly accumulate knowledge. It is through God’s word that we obtain knowledge, however, an individual that does not use knowledge to work for the Lord, is described as one that is deceiving their own self. Let us look more closely at this passage of scripture, striving to be the kind of people that God wants and expects us to be.

“But Be”— This phrase is interesting in that it implies the kind of attitude in which God does not want us to merely *attempt* to have towards His word, but it is the attitude He *expects* us to presently have.

In 1Corinthians 11:1, Paul wrote, *“Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.”* (KJV) Here we find the expectation of following Paul’s teaching, and thus the teaching of Christ. The phrase “Be ye” in 1Corinthians 11:1 is an indication that we are expected to strive towards having this way of thinking presently in our lives, just as we were told to “be doers of the word” in James 1:22.

“doers”— The KJV renders the beginning of this verse as *“But be ye doers...”* This emphasizes the individual responsibility for each of us to ensure that we are practicing God’s word in our lives consistently.

The devil would be happy if we were spectators and waited for others to work in the Kingdom. However, James 1:22 is clear in that God expects every one of us to be active in the kingdom of Christ. In Acts 8:4, we are told, *“Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.”* The work of these individual Christians contributed to the spread of the Gospel in the first century.

In the 21st century, the individual responsibility for each Christian to be doers is still an expectation from God. We learn in Acts 10:35 *“But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.”* Here we learn from Peter that one must not only fear God, but this fear produces one to work God’s righteousness.

It is said this way in Hebrews 11:7 *“By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.”*

“of the word” — There are various areas in life in which individuals actively engage in. One could perhaps be a star athlete. Others may be professional artists or musicians. While none of these are in and of themselves sinful,



being a star athlete, professional artist or musician is not how we will win souls to the Lord, nor how each of us as individuals practice God's righteousness. It is the word that James emphasizes that we are to actively be doers of.

In Romans 10:17, Paul discusses how our faith is produced by the word of God. Interestingly, a few verses before this Paul writes in Rom 10:14, *"How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!"*

As Paul leads up to Romans 10:17, he discusses the action of those who proclaim the gospel. He uses the phrase "sent" which is a word that denotes action. It is the actions of these doers, in proclaiming the gospel to others, that allows others who hear, to learn about God and in turn to also become doers of God's word.

"Not Hearers Only"— If we were to go to the doctor and hear him say that we needed to quit harmful habits, diet and exercise, and take some medicine to help us get back our health or else we would not live very much longer, would we listen to the doctor? Would we smile and look at the doctor and agree with everything he says, but when we get home, just ignore everything he said to us? Or would we take the doctor seriously and not just hear him, but put in practice the recommended treatment to live healthier?

Now imagine God is that doctor, and His word is the medicine that can cure our disease (Mark 2:17). We must do more than hear what God wants of us, but be a doer of His word so that we may be saved from sin. (Romans 6:17-18)

Notice how God's people came out to hear what the prophet Ezekiel had to say to them, *"But as for you, son of man, your fellow citizens who talk about you by the walls and in the doorways of the houses, speak to one another, each to his brother, saying, 'Come now and hear what the message is which comes forth from the Lord.' "They come to you as people come, and sit before you as My people and hear your words, but they do not do them, for they do the lustful desires expressed by their mouth, and their heart goes after their gain. "Behold, you are to them like a sensual song by one who has a beautiful voice and plays well on an instrument; for they hear your words but they do not practice them."* (Ezekiel 33:30-32)

God's people were not saved from their condition of punishment by just hearing what Ezekiel had to say. They failed to look at the messenger of God's word seriously, as to them, it was just entertaining dialogue!

But can you imagine that men treated Jesus the same way? When Jesus, the very Son of God, came to the earth and was teaching men the words of the Father, some would hear only and not put into practice His teachings.

Jesus would say in Luke 6:46, *"Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?"* Jesus would then go on to say *"Everyone who comes to Me and hears My words and acts on them, I will show you whom he is like:"* (6:47)

From this is the wise and foolish parable that illustrates the dangers of NOT putting into practice the words of Jesus. The foolish man's house fell, while the wise man's stood firm on the rock. One listened and obeyed and the other did not!

"Deceiving yourselves"— Self deception is a dangerous position for us to be in if we truly desire to go to heaven. It can be a surprising reality, that someone can be deceived into thinking they are in good standing with God, but in reality not be!

But what about the person(s) who may assemble every first day of the week and mid-week Bible studies— but never puts into practice what they hear? Can just being where truth is spoken very often save them?

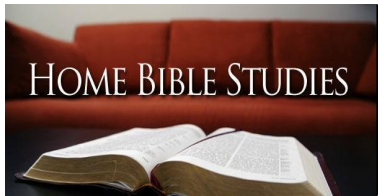
Could it be that just maybe they may be thinking that because they listen to *"Brother Big Preacher"*— a very well known and respected Bible class teacher and preacher— they are saved from just the sound of their voice!?

Just being in a big church or assembly doesn't make us a faithful follower of Christ any more than *"being in hen house makes us a hen!"* Or another similar illustration, *"Just being in a garage doesn't make us a car."*

We actually have to do as God and Jesus commands us for us to be faithful in His word! Hearing and believing are extremely important— but so is the doing of His word as well!

Someone has once said, *"The road to hell is paved with good intentions."* Good intentions alone do not save, but may keep us from thinking we are lost.

Therefore, let us heed the mandate of the Holy Spirit in James 1:22, and not simply hear what this passage says, but let us also do what this passage says. Let us take God's word, apply it to our lives, and teach others about the Lord, so that they too, can become doers of the word!



HOME BIBLE STUDIES

A Women's Bible Class
will meet monthly at Miche, TN. at the home of Chris and Kathryn Callahan the 3rd Thursday of the Month at 7:00 PM.

News and Notes: Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, Betty Hurst, Steve Switcher, Gail Armstrong, Nicky Curtis, Martha Norvell (Mississippi Care), Charlene Newborn, Delain & Robbie Doles, Greg Fields, June Lawson (Lisa Busby's Mom), Clois Wright, Debbie Keplinger, Gaddy Hall, Madeline Flippo, Karey Trimble, Jerry Trimble, Janis Johnson, and Nathan Meade.

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Paul Busby
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon: *"Things Which Require No Exact Measure"*

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service: Paul Johnson
The Book of John (Mike Willis)
Page 14, Question #12

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements: Russell Briggs
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Tim Harris Jr.
Psalms 23:1-6
Dan Cottrell
Russell Briggs
Assisting: Brian Meade & Chris Callahan
Song Service: Men Lead in Singing
Invitation: Brian Meade
Closing Prayer: Tim Harris Sr.

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

July 25th:

Auditorium Bible Class: Paul Busby
1 & 2 Chronicles (Mike Willis)
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Invitation: Russell Briggs
Song Leader: Adam Harris
Closing Prayer: Daniel Holloway