

Title: God's Great Purpose For The Believer

Text: James 1:17-27

Take your Bibles, please, and turn with me to the book of James. The book of James chapter 1 beginning with Vs 17. As we look at (1A) How the believer can live with faith and trials, we come today to GOD'S GREAT PURPOSE FOR THE BELIEVER. What is God's purpose for your life and mine?

James chapter 1 Vs 17....(READ Vs 17-27)

PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, we thank you that we can come before you and lay before you the needs of our heart. Father, we ask that you would speak to us. In an age when ^{People} men feel that God is dead, Father we pray that we might know your voice this hour. We thank you that the WORD OF God is quick and powerful. That it is able to show us the thoughts and intents of our heart. That it is able to show us what is right and what is wrong. And Father, we pray, that the Holy Spirit might take your Word and apply it deeply in our lives. Father, we pray that you would help us to be doers of the Word and not just hearers. And we ask this in the precious name of Jesus our Saviour....AMEN

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A couple of weeks ago we started a study of this great book of James. Now, please refer to your outline. James is dealing with the HOW TO'S OF CHRISTIAN LIVING. How do we live the christian life. What are the things we are suppose to do. And what are the things we are not ^{suppose} to do.

Now, chapter 1-(1A)-is talking about HOW TO LIVE WITH FAITH AND TRIALS. And we began (1B) with a discussion of the first 12 verses concerning the trying and testings that the believer faces. And we looked at the purpose of God in these testings. The trying of our faith works JOY, PATIENCE, AND FAITH. This section concluded with that 12th verse: "Blessed is the man who endures under trials; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

(2B) Then beginning at Vs 13, we began a discussion of Temptation. And everyone of us has faced this problem. The great problem of SIN. You see, sin is the problem of being a doer of the Word. WE find it hard to be a doer of the Word because we are sinners. And the Bible warns us in Vs 13, "Let no one say when he is tempted, I am being tempted by God; for God cannot be tempted and He himself does not tempt anyone. But every person is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own ^{desire} lust. And when lust has conceived it brings forth death or separation from God. Then, we have that wonderful promise of Vs 16... "Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren." In other words, stop running away from God. Why? Because you are a beloved brethren of the Lord.

(4C) Now, this brings us to the fourth thing that I want to share with you about the (2B) PROBLEM OF SIN. And that is the purpose of God in all of this. And I would like to share God's purpose ~~in temptation and sin~~ in three ways.

(1D) First, please notice in Vs 17, the motive behind God's purpose for us. The Bible says, that "every perfect gift is from above." Everything that God wants to do in our lives, he is ready to do. And His motive is that He has "gifts abundant." He has a supply that we know not of. And he is ready and willing to give them to us. *What a Blessing*

You see, there is no inconsistency with God. He does not change. There is no variation or shifting shadow, as He says in Vs 17. God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. And he wants to give us every good thing. Ephesians 1:3 tells us that we have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. In other words, every perfect gift is from God.

SURELY

You know, ~~my friends~~, if we would just begin to see what God really wants to do in us. If we could just understand how God wants to work in our lives. ~~All these good things are from God.~~ *god will allow see tremendous things*

It reminds me of the poor woman in the slums of ~~New York~~ *Los Angeles* who was taken on her first tripe to the ~~ocean~~ *Pacific*. She looked at the ocean and tears started flowing down her face. And someone ask her why she was crying. And she said, "Isn't it wonderful to see something that there is enough of." That ocean empressed her deeply/

But, the truth is that God has enough of everything. "Every good thing and every perfect gift is from above." God wants to do a wonderful work in our ~~hearts~~ *Lives* if we would let him.

1. Believe

(2) Secondly, I would like you to notice the means by which God's purpose is accomplished./.....Look at Vs 18: "in the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth." ~~Now that does not mean~~

We were born again by means of God's will. And this was accomplished with the word of truth.

Now, what does it mean to be "brought forth" or ~~as your KJ says "begotten"~~ "begotten."? It means ["]to be born a second time.["] We were born once physically. But the Bible teaches that we also need a spiritual birth. We need to be born a second time, *spiritual*

And this new birth does not mean reformation. You cannot go forth from this ~~service~~ saying to yourself that you will turn over a new leaf and call that spiritual birth. ^{Why? Because} You cannot cause the second birth. The Bible says that it is God's work in us. To be born again means that God will produce a new life, spiritually, in you. ~~The Holy Spirit of God produces this new life.~~ The Bible says that we were born not of flesh, not of the will of man, but of God. It is God' work in us. And Vs 18 says: "in the exercise of His will he brought us forth."

Well, how did God do this? He did this as it says in Vs 18 "by the Word of truth."

In Romans 10:17, the Bible teaches that "faith comes by hearing and hearing by means of the WORD OF GOD. A person receives new birth by being born again by the Word of God. *A person grows spiritual by the W. of God.* ~~And the Spirit of God who authored this book, is the one who makes the transformation in you and in me.~~ *Praise God*

You ask, WHEN DOES IT OCCUR? When do I actually receive this new birth? You receive the new birth the moment you place your faith in what God says He will do. The moment you believe God. At that moment God produces New Life in you.

So, many people are trying to be Christians. And it is very obvious they are failing. They are trying to do what is right. They are trying to be good. They are trying to live a life that is pleasing to God. But, we cannot do it by trying. WE MUST TRUST...WE must believe what God says. We must trust Him for it is clearly taught by James in Vs 18 "In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the Word of Truth."

(3D) Now, third, I would like you to notice the manner in which God's purpose is fulfilled. Look at the end of Vs 18: "so that we might be, as it were, the first fruits among His creatures."

Did you know that we are the chief end of God's Work? The Westminster Confession of Faith" says that the chief end of man is to glorify God. We could also say that the chief end of God is to work in man. God's whole plan is summed up in *man*. He is trying to do something in us. He loves us. And God has a great purpose for our lives. He wants to give us every good and perfect gift. He never changes. "There is no variation *for* shifting shadow." He is producing spiritual life. He "brought us forth with the Word of Truth." WHY? "so that we would be the first fruits of His creatures." Man is the glory of God. And man is the one that God wants to do something in. It is you and I that God is concerned about. And I want to say that it is not just a group. But it is each of us as individuals. God loves everyone of us here today. And God knows you whether you realize it or not. He knows your thoughts. He knows everything you have ever said or done. It is God's purpose that is at work in your life.

(3B) Now, what is it that God wants us to do? What is God's will for every single person in this room? ANSWER: THAT WE SHOULD BE DOERS OF THE WORD. That we should practice what we preach...That we should walk like we ^{Talk} ~~take~~..That we do in our lives what we say we believe. That, dear friends, is what God wants us to do.

Now, in understanding this principle, I would like to share several things with you.

(1C) First, according to Vs 19, we need to practice some self-control. Vs 19 says, "Let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger."

Now, most of us are just the opposite. We are slow to hear, but very quick to speak and quick to anger. It is funny how we are. But, God wants us to do the opposite. WHY? Why should we be slow to speak, slow to anger, and quick to listen? WHY? Because as Vs 20 says, "The anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God."

YOU KNOW HOW WE ARE. We ~~so~~ ^{so easily} ~~so~~ easily become angry with what God has done in our lives. Some people experience sorrow, or pain, or testings, and they become upset with God. WHY DID GOD DO THIS TO ME?

Dear Friends, please notice that the Bible is teaching that God wants us to practice self-control. And when we don't practice self-control we are not achieving the righteousness of God.

(2C) Now, what does God want us to do? He wants us to practice self-control. But secondly, he wants us to do some self-examination. Vs 21 says,

"Therefore, putting aside all filthiness, and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls."

Now, remember, that James is writing to Christians. So, don't let that last phrase of Vs 21 throw you off the track. James is telling Christians to "receive with humility the implanted word which is able to save your souls." It sort of sounds like that initial experience when you received Jesus by faith. But, that is not the meaning. Here, it means "to persevere...to deliver...to protect."

And what ^{James} Jesus is really saying is that the Word of God is able to continue to persevere that which you have given to God when you received Christ. The Word is able to sustain this relationship with Him. BUT THERE ARE THREE THINGS WE MUST DO.

(1D) FIRST, PUT ASIDE ALL FILTHINESS. Now, this is great. Do you know what the word filthiness means. It means "WAX IN YOUR EARS." I like that. Because James is saying "be doers of the Word and not hearers only. In other words, you must get the wax out of your ears, ~~if~~ you are going to hear what God says. And the reason we do not hear is because we have wax in our ears.

We come to church and we hear the Word of God. But, it doesn't get through. WHY? Because we have wax in our ears. I don't know what the wax is in your ears. It maybe something that has captured your attention, so

(6a)
that God cannot speak. It maybe your business, your home life, your car, the
roast in the oven, the ball game. But, it is something that has begun to take
ahold of your ability to hear God. "Put aside all the problems with your ears,
so that you can hear God.

(2D) Secondly, PUT ASIDE ALL THAT REMAINS OF WICKEDNESS.

Literally this means "all abundance of malice." Malice is that little
motive that most people cannot recognize. It is in the heart of a person. ~~It~~
~~occurs when all of the desires of the heart are set against God's program.~~ But,
you cannot easily recognize it. It is the intent and motive of the heart to do
something which satisfies self instead of doing what God wants you to do.

And so, James is saying, get rid of all this stuff. All of these wrong
motives and ambitions, and get them out of the heart. So that God can work
in your life.

(3D) Then third, we must receive "in humility the word implanted" in our lives.

There is a difference between that initial faith which caused us to receive Christ as Lord and Saviour, and the WORD OF GOD that is implanted in the heart. It is the Word of God in the heart which changes the life as it is used by the Holy Spirit. And it is the Word of God which is able to persevere, to protect, and to save our souls. It is the Word of God which is the imperishable seed that cannot pass away. Lay aside all the things that keep us from hearing, lay aside all the secret motives and intents that violate God's will and plan. Receive with humility the implanted Word. The Word planted in our hearts so that it becomes a part of us. You see, we can never be doers of the Word until that Word becomes firmly rooted in our lives.

O.K. we are looking at ^{What God Wants Us To Do} ~~God's will for our lives~~. And God's will for us is to be a DOER of the Word of God. And in order to be a DOER OF THE WORD we must (1C) first of all be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger. (2C) Secondly, we must put aside all filthiness, all that remains of wickedness, and in humility receive the Word of God.

(3C) Now, third, concerning ^{What God Wants us To Do} ~~God's will for us~~..let's come to Vs 22.."But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves."

Now, this verse seems so simple at first sight. But it is not. This word "doer" has the meaning "to be productive." In other words, James is saying that our lives are not meant just to be a religion of deeds, but their should be ^{Results, Fruit} results and fruit. ^{These Should Be Visible and Victorious} WHY? Because of the Word we have heard. "DOERS"..be productive of the Word not hearers only of the Word.

The word "hearers" is our word for "auditor." Have you ever audited a class? It is the same word. You know what an auditor is? It is a person who takes the class but doesn't take the exams. And of course there is no reward or diplome, either.

WHAT IS JAMES SAYING? Put into practice your faith to the point where it produces fruit. BE DOERS, NOT AUDITORS ONLY. Those who set by and listen and do hear and even understand. But, they are not really with it. They don't take the exams and get the reward. *They are not in the Ball game. They are just spectators*

one Vs 12 says, "Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved he will receive the crown of life." The "crown of life"..the "reward" that God is going to give people.

So, James is saying, "BE DOERS AND NOT SIMPLE ONE WHO AUDITS THE CLASS. That is people who just listen and never permit the Word of God to make any difference in their life.

It reminds me of the person who was operating an elevator. And the only joy this elevator operator had was when a kind older lady rode the elevator and would bring words of encouragement. One time the lady came into the elevator and said to the operator: "You don't get much sunshine in here, do you?" And the operator said: "only what folks like you bring in."

How true that is. There are so many people that need to see a life that produces, that makes beauty. And James says, "Be doers of the Word..of the joy...of the blessings...of the patience..of the faith..that God has bestowed upon us, and not just hearers. Live a life where the Word is real and evident. BE DOERS AND NOT SIMPLY AUDITORS OF THE MANIFOLD BLESSINGS OF GOD.

(4) Now, finally, let me share with you the results of being A DOER OF THE WORD.

~~friends, we must be more than hearers. We must be doers. Now,~~

~~let me share with you, the results of being a doer of the word.~~

(1) First, in Vs 25, a doer of the word will be blessed in what he does. That means, personal satisfaction. The person who serves the Lord will be happy, ^{blessed} ~~belessed~~, in what he does.

(2) Secondly, in Vs 26, the person who is a doer of the word will have self-control. This verse is speaking of self-control. *He Bruckles his tongue*

(3) Then, third, Vs 27 A doer of the word will have concern for the needs of others. Compassite hearts..Hearts that are full of love for the needs of others.

(4) ^{and} ~~the fourth thing is that according to~~ Vs 27, a doer of the word will keep himself ^{unspotted} ~~unspotted~~ by the world. This simple means that the things of the Lord are more important than the ^{things} ~~temptations~~ of the world. Or to put it another way. The doer of the word seeks first the righteousness of God, and knows that all other things will take care of themselves. Be a doer and not an auditor of God's blessings. And that, ^{is} ~~is~~ friends, ^{is} ~~is~~

~~pure religion, ~~but~~ ~~not~~ ~~faith~~~~ *pure religion*

I wonder, today, where do you stand? I wonder, maybe you have heard the Word of God and you are seating here, and ^{yet} you have never come to place your faith in Jesus Christ. God would say to you, "Be a doer of the word and not a hearer only." Cpme and place your trust in God. You know, today, could be the hour of decision for you. Because God is calling you. He wants to give you new birth by his truth.

And my christian friends, what will the Word do to you, today? Be a doer of the Word, not just one who audits the ^{class} ~~class~~. It is so easy to set and lisson and never apply the word to your life. Thus, there is never any results or fruit in growth and service and commitment. I wonder if you will do what God wants you to do. Will you let God have control of your life. Will you permit God to work in you? Will you say: "Lord, I surrender to you. Work through me."

May this be a part of our vision and victory for 1997
Shall we pray