

James 1:1, 22, 26-27 *James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes [Jewish Christians] which are scattered abroad<sup>1</sup>, greeting. ... <sup>22</sup>But **be ye doers of the word** [obey the Bible], and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. ... <sup>26</sup>If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue [can't control what he says], but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain [worthless]. <sup>27</sup>Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit [help] the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world [himself separated from the world's ungodly lifestyle and value system].*

## 1. Introduction

- a. Book of James written by half-brother of Jesus
- b. James wrote to a scattered people due to persecution.

*Acts 8:1 And Saul [later known as Paul] was consenting unto his [Stephen, a deacon at the Jerusalem Church] death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and **they were all scattered abroad** throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.*

- c. James gives several practical principles for persecuted Christians, verse 19 (below).
  - i. Swift to hear (focus attention)
  - ii. Slow to speak (consider your words before responding)
  - iii. Slow to anger

## 2. Doers of the Word: Bridled<sup>2</sup> Tongues

- a. Many Christians have unbridled tongues
  - i. Easier to see wrongs said or done by other people
  - ii. Harder to see our own faults
- b. I cannot control another person's speech, but I can control how I respond to it.
- c. Problem: Man's anger is does not do God's work

*James 3:8 But the tongue can no man tame<sup>3</sup>; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.*

---

<sup>1</sup> "Scattered abroad" means these early Christians were driven out of their homes by persecution and had to move to other areas or countries to preserve their lives.

<sup>2</sup> A bridle is a device put in a horse's mouth so a rider can give instructions to the horse, such as turn left or right, or slow down or stop. James uses 'bridle' to mean that you have control over what you say or express, rather than responding in anger when provoked.

<sup>3</sup> James uses the word 'tame' here to indicate that what we say/express can come out of us before we have thought about what and how we should respond. To tame an animal is to bring it under the control of human commands. To tame the tongue is to bring it under the control of the Holy Spirit.

James 1: 19, 20 *Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath [anger].<sup>20</sup> For the wrath of man worketh not [cannot accomplish] the righteousness of God.*

- d. Solution: I can control my ears (what I take in), my mouth (what I let out), and my heart (the way I think and reason) as I submit myself to God's Holy Spirit. I can decide what words come out of my mouth – “bridle” my tongue.

James 3:2 *For in many things we offend all [offend other people]. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect [fully mature] man, and able also to bridle [control] the whole body.*

### 3. Doers of the Word: Blessed Deed

- a. God's plan is that I help someone else who cannot help me in return

James 1:25 *But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty [reads the Bible], and continueth therein [lives according to what he reads], he being not a forgetful hearer, but **a doer of the work**, this man shall be blessed in his deed.*

- b. Fatherless (orphans) & widows had no rights in ancient society – no money & poor. They could not help you in return.

- c. Do everything as if you were doing it for Jesus Himself

Colossians 3:23 *And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;*

### 4. Doers of the Word: Unspotted from the World

- a. To staying unspotted, keep off the world's dirt. These spots are stains that all can see. They contrast with the rest of your life, call attention to themselves.

- b. Removing dirty spots (sin, falling short of what God wants for you) out of your life

1 John 1:9 *If we confess our sins, he [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

- c. See God's viewpoint by renewing your mind

Romans 12:2 *And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove [test, know] what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*