

Law of Liberty is Our Friend 2017-11-05

James 1:18-25

Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

19 Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; 20 for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness that God requires. 21 Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. 24 For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. 25 But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

Christians need to be more than transparent, need to be transformed....change.

- Here James describes the impact new birth can have on our lives.
 - What it looks like to live single-mindedly with our faith permeating all areas of personal life, relationships & public life.

Obviously applies to relationships (later), but agree with many scholars that context is our response to God's word. James 1:19, Psalm 46:10a, 1 Peter 2:2-3, 1 Corinthians 2:14, Galatians 4:16

- Quick to hear: eager (not passive), hungry to take in Word and then obey.
 - Really heart issue: Ears listen for what heart craves. Cricket/coin
- Be slow to speak as a teacher of God's word.....developed in James 3:1-12.
- Not get angry/excuse away Word if it is counter to your desires, will, comfort.
 - God has called you to His plan, will, message, purposes not yours.

Called to "pursue" Word and respond with obedience, not momentary glance at/listen to Word & move on without addressing problems/needs it revealed. James 1:22-24, Hebrews 4:12-13

- Word, like mirror, is not at fault. It simply reveals the truth of who we really are.
 - In our "undone" condition James brings hope and proclaims freedom.

Changes terminology from "word" to "perfect law" that does not restrict freedom but produces it.....seems strange at first. James 1:25

- Law= 10 commands and all Old Testament and New Testament imperatives (Do, don't do) inc. 1:22
 - Law is perfect because it's a reflection of our holy God.
 - Not lie = God is truth.
- Wise/holy God uses the law to show sinful people what holiness looks like...what is good, right, true, Christlike.
 - For unbelievers, the law is terrifying because it brings condemnation. Gospel

For Christians, the law brings joy...law can never hurt us, only help us. Galatians 3:23-26, Matthew 5:17, John 8:36

- Justification's "great exchange" included Jesus Christ's substitutionary death and LIFE.
 - Jesus perfectly kept the law. He did what we could never do ourselves!
- Because of Christ, the Law is no longer an enemy that condemns Christians but a friend who helps them know how to honor and glorify God.

Law humbles us (can't do ourselves) and more importantly drives us to Jesus Christ because it doesn't give us power to do what it commands.

- Christians are empowered to obey by the indwelling of One who perfectly fulfilled the law.
 - When we fail, fall far short of holiness....the Gospel comforts us.
 - Law says "Do this", Gospel says "Because you couldn't, Jesus did."
- Law of liberty is our friend because it can't condemn but shows how to honor/glorify Jesus.
 - We are now free to obey....not to gain Lord's favor/acceptance, but because we already have it. We joyfully get to OBEY!!!
 - Walking in obedience to Word/Lord brings freedom from bondage of sin, joy and blessings. Matthew 11:28-30, James 1:25

With new birth came new life and grace that empowers obedience....grace that works

- Written Word is like a mirror, reveals you to you and living Word rescues you from you.
 - Be more than transparent, let Jesus Christ's love/grace permeate your heart and transform your character, speech and behavior to be like His.
 - Walk in liberty and proclaim that liberty to captives around you!