

Victoria Fellowship Church
International & Interdenominational
Bible Study Worksheet – April 24, 2022

Theme: James: Faith in Action **Topic:** Putting the Word into Action

Main Text: James 1:19-27

Key verse: James 1:22 – *“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”* (NKJV)

INTRODUCTION: To put the word into action is to obey the written word of God that we have read and understood. Earlier in the series on Faith in Action, we noted that the book of James was written to believers who were experiencing trials. And to teach them what authentic faith looks like amid trials. It is not surprising then to find obedience as a recurring theme in the Epistle of James. Our passage today is no exception, with our key verse explicitly declaring that God wants us to “be doers of the word, and not hearers only...” (James 1:22 NKJV). But hearing precedes obedience. Technological advancements like radio, television, internet, have multiplied the volume of hearing going on in our world today. Curiously, the level of obedience lags far behind the volume of hearing. What this means is that between hearing and doing is a huge gap. What causes this gap? How can the gap be narrowed or removed? How can we convert hearing to doing? Does God offer any tips in the Epistle of James or anywhere else in Scripture?

1. Read James 1:19-25; Ecclesiastes 5:1; Matthew 13:23 (a) What must happen for us to hear? (b) What hindrances to hearing do we see in James 1:20? How have you experienced these hindrances in your life? (c) How can we avoid forgetting what the word of God tells us about ourselves or about what He wants us to do?

To put the word into action we first must hear and understand. And to understand, one must listen and listen carefully. Yet each of us can recall instances where a full understanding did not lead to obedience. Often, that lag in obedience can be traced to the level of importance we attached to what we have heard and understood or to the origin of that knowledge or information. God must have foreseen this obstacle while urging believers to a life of obedience. So, He told us that Jesus’ coming was not some ‘*clever stories made or invented by the Apostles. Adding that we, ‘...must realize that no prophecy in Scripture ever came from the prophet’s own understanding, or from human initiative. No, those prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit, and they spoke from God.*’ God buttressed this point with reference to firsthand experiences of the Apostles, like the one on the Transfiguration Mount. And then urged that we “*pay close attention to what they wrote...*” (2 Peter 1:16-21 NLT). So, we may hear, understand, and yet not obey, and simply because of what we think of the speaker or origin of what we have heard and understood, or because of other issues going on in our lives at the time.

2. James 1:21 (NLT) says, ‘So get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the word God has planted in your hearts...’ (a) How is acceptance related to obedience? And why do you think humility stimulates the acceptance of God’s word? Please share a time when you have experienced this in your life (b) In addition to 2 Peter 1:21, what other compelling reason for acceptance of the word of God do we see in Deuteronomy 32:46-47; Psalm 33:4; 1 Thessalonians 2:13? (c) If these are true about the written word of God, then what should my response be?

Talk is cheap, God says in James 1:26. He goes on to contrast between two types or religions: one He says is worthless and the other, He says is pure and good, and pleasing to Him (James 1:27). This contrast connects well with the earlier contrast He had made between the “doers of the word” and those who hear it only. Those who merely hear are likened to those who look at themselves in the mirror and immediately forget what they have just seen (James 1: 23–24). We are not to approach the word of God like that. Rather, after we have carefully looked, understood, and accepted the word of God, God expects us to do what it says. Being a doer of the word brings blessing (James 1:25). Only those who look at the Word and submit to it will find the liberty it gives.

3. James 1:19-20, 26-27 mention examples of ways to put the word into action. What are they? What other areas or ways do we see in Exodus 22:22; Leviticus 19:13-16; Matthew 25:35-36; Ephesians 5:22, 25? (b) Let participants identify those ‘pollutants’ of the world which hinder our obedience to God’s word, and suggest practical ways to nullify their evil influence. (c) Share one or two areas you would apply these lessons in your life from now on?

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for Your holy inerrant written word. Help me to humbly accept and put them into action as an act of worship to You. In Jesus Name Amen.