

Date: November 11, 2009

Reading: James

Paul often advised the readers of his epistles to “put off” certain things and “put on” others. In a similar fashion, James commanded his readers to “lay aside” and “receive.” They were to lay aside all filthiness and “overflow” of wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word.

That’s an interesting expression – the implanted word (“grafted” – KJV). The word is “implanted” in our hearts as we are taught and choose to “receive” it. James instructs us to receive (the Greek word means “to receive favorably, give ear to, embrace, make one’s own, approve”) it with meekness, i.e., without resistance or struggle.

Note, however, that James didn’t write that the implanted word **will** save our souls, but rather that it is “able” to save our souls (1:21). The difference between the two statements suggests the reason for the exhortation which follows.



The word cannot save us if we are hearers only. James encouraged his readers to be doers of the word and not just hearers (1:22). He compared the “hearer only” to a man who sees himself in a mirror and goes away, immediately forgetting “what kind of man he was” (1:23-24). Whatever he sees, he does nothing about it!

In a sense, the word of God is like that mirror. James described God’s word as the “perfect law of liberty” and the man who looks into this “mirror” and continues in it will be blessed.

In our daily readings of God’s word, in our Bible classes, etc., we are looking into the mirror. We are “hearing” the word. What will we do with the illumination we receive?

James also wrote that those who only hear the word are “deceiving themselves” (1:22). It is self-deception to believe that we can benefit from Bible study which sees no application in our lives.

Let’s be doers of the work (1:25)!

Happy reading,
Allen