

Reflection Guide - James 1:19-21

HEAT: What circumstances are God's trial for your right now?

Is there something that you THOUGHT was true about yourself... but a certain circumstance is revealing its not?

THORNS: What sinful ways are responding to this circumstance?

Have you been quick to hear and slow to speak and slow to anger recently?

BAD ROOT: What heart issue lies at the root of these sinful responses? What new HEAT is created by our sinful response? What about God are we failing to believe in our THORN responses? What are we showing is our "overdesire"?

Vs. 19: *let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger;*

ARE YOU QUICK TO HEAR?

Or is it hard for you to be a good listener?

- Do you want to know why it's hard to be a good listener...b/c your heart is more consumed with your own thoughts...plans / agendas...opinions
- Don't confuse not talking with hearing: it doesn't mean that you are actually listening...what is consuming your mind is your agenda for the conversation

OUR WORDS MATTER (all of ch. 3)

26 If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart

Concern #1 - Christian Authenticity

it's not Keeping 100...shoot straight...say it as it is...say whatever your thinking or feeling to whoever it is you're talking to and not taking them and your words into consideration...

Want us to be careful and make sure that in our heart we are not deceiving ourselves into thinking that "authenticity" is a hall pass for rudeness...wonder why we have a hard time keeping friends...just say "I'm too real"...

- We're to be "authentically" new creations, first fruits of the gospel, reflecting the righteousness of Christ...to keep it 100 would be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger
- We're meant to reflect the One who has saved us and sent us...Righteousness is reflected in slowing down

ARE YOU SLOW TO GET ANGRY?

Think about it this way: how much of your anger last week was a result of you angrily defending the law of God? How much of your anger has anything at all to do with the kingdom of God?

slow to anger; 20 for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

1. Anger of man...it doesn't produce or reflect the righteousness of God, unrighteous
 - a. Rear it's head when our plans, desires, position, opinion, etc is crossed
 - b. What do you get angry about? someone/thing gets in the way of what you want
 - c. In the Garden, Peter was slow to hear, swift to speak, and swift to anger—and he almost killed a man with the sword. Most fights are the result of short tempers and hasty words.
 - d. *"Anger resides in the lap of fools"* (Ecc1. 7:9); *"Do not associate with one easily angered"* (Prv. 22:24); *"You must rid yourselves of [...] anger..."* (Colossians 3:8)

CROSS: How is God or his grace displayed in the text?

God's righteous anger against sin and man unrighteous anger take Jesus to the cross. On the cross Jesus bears the full weight of them both...so that by the grace of God through faith in Jesus people can be free

from the anger of man. By grace they can reflect the righteous anger of God toward sin...anger of mercy, justice, grace, compassion...

GOOD ROOT: What should I believe about God because of the cross? What could I desire now MORE than before? How does Christ enable me to obey his commands? How is Jesus the solution / motivation for transformation and action?

Being Quick to Hear...comes out of an being an ambassador of Christ...means that the conversation isn't about your thoughts and agenda

- Requires humility, sacrifice...you actually caring about what the other person is saying and why...not just your opinion (*asks questions to understand*)
- We are quick to listen b/c God has given us the privilege of being His Ambassadors right there in that conversation...in that moment
- Not just being quiet...don't get self-righteous here...making space for that person and the Lord

Right there with it: ARE YOU SLOW TO SPEAK (or quicker to speak?)

Fruit is seen in being slow to speak..as Ambassadors of the grace of God are slow to speak...

- Or do you have a "hair trigger" tongue?

An ambassador of Christ is slow to speak b/c we want to make sure that what we say, the words we speak will represent the One who has called us, saved us, Son died to make us new creations.

- Huge privilege...high calling

21 Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

By His own will God has made you new creations, firstfruits of grace, ambassadors of Him, reflecting righteousness...at the cost of His own Son.

*21 Therefore...*B/c of His great love...*put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness*

- b/c of His great love I want my life to reflect the righteousness of God who loved me and gave Himself for me
- b/c of His great love for me I want to be serious about my sin, my self deception, the wickedness and filth that my own heart tries to deceive me with
- Grace-Drives me now to confess those things, admit that I don't always see them for what they are...I want to see the way God sees them and be repulsed by them...put those things away...to not play with them, to turn away from them (*words, anger, etc.*)

and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

This word that has given you new life (*vs. 18*)...it has opened your eyes to glory of God in Christ...made you to be a firstfruit of His creation...called you into the life of His ambassador

This Word of Truth that has saved you...decisively and definitively...it's this same Word that is still saving you now. (*OT promise of a new heart, new desires, delight for His Word on it*)

- Our salvation can be spoken of as something that "has happened", is still happening as God is producing the fruit of His righteousness in us, and will one day fully happen as all of His promises to us come to fruition.
- So, as His new creations, the firstfruits of His grace...receive His word with meekness
 - Come with humility, surrender, trust...not with the intention to justify your dream or to justify your behavior...not to twist it to best suit you
 - Quick to hear it, slow to argue it
 - It exposes us, shows our need for mercy and brings us to the only One who can give it...cultivates new desires, delights, new fruit follows
 - This is the Word that saves you - Come b/c you want to know the One that loves you so...has saved you, is saving you, will one day finally and fully save you

Pastor James knows our greatest defense against self-deception is The Word of Truth:

That gives us new life, born again, become firstfruits...cultivates righteousness in us and is reflected from us...and as we receive it in humility it continues to do the work of saving us and changing us.

James is calling us as God's people to a lifetime of growth and change by grace.

RESPONSE:

The Christian life is a recognition that we do not have within ourselves the ability to change ourselves, we need to look somewhere else. And the only 'somewhere else' to look for that is in Jesus Christ and at the cross.

He died the death we deserve, in our place for our sins...body was broken, blood was shed that by the grace of God opening our eyes we could place our faith in Him and be born anew, firstfruits...assured that this Good News has saved us and is still changing us.

It's when we renounce our own ability to try and change ourselves and we run to Him for grace to change us that we find salvation and grace to change. And so, if you having been diagnosed by the word of God and realize that you're fooling yourself, that's where you need to go.

FRUIT: What would the expected fruit of the gospel be in this situation? What does obedience look like for you personally? Does it speak of this in the text? Where else in the Scriptures is this?

How can you be quick to hear and slow to speak and slow to anger?