

HEARING AND THEN DOING

James 1:22

Introduction: All of us at one time or other have been told to do something and we knew that we should and sometimes we did what we were told to do and sometimes we put it off, sometimes we forgot about it but sometimes we decided we were not going to do it at all.

The Gospel is a practical, living message for ordinary people and is intended for those who are living normal daily lives involving their homes and jobs. People who formed the great majority of the early Christian family were simple people.

The reason some are disappointed in their Christian lives is because they read their Bibles in a "hunting" fashion. They hunt things to disagree with, things to argue about, things to "prove" their point of view. These people have good reason to be disappointed for that is not what the Bible is for.

The keynote to successful Christian living is found in our text (v22). It speaks of there is being more to being a Christian than just "hearing" or "reading" God's Word. There are truths each of us are to live by and there are truths we do not apply to our lives, but we do apply those truths to others however. To be a successful Christian, we must take ALL of God's Word and let the Holy Spirit implant it in our own hearts and not merely in our heads. *"...let us therefore be DOERS of God's Word and not hearers/readers of it only..."*

I. THERE IS THE HEARER WHO IS CONVINCED

1. Some like the direct, truthful, straight to the point approach. "If the shoe fits, wear it.." They like what they "hear" and agree with it all the way and frequently are heard saying "Amen, right on brother." These often "rededicate" their lives during a worship service.
2. However, for some reason, that "shoe" never fits his/her foot. It is always for the other person and his/her convictions are seldom carried outside the Church. It appears that he/she has two lives, one for the Church and one for the world.
3. Outside the Church, it seems as everything he/she ever said "amen" to has been forgotten. He/she drops whatever he/she has been listening to and readily takes up the affairs of the world without batting an eye or missing a step and never appears to be troubled for an instant with what he/she was listening to or reading in God's Word. It is as if two complete different people existed inside this one person - one for the Church and one for the world, never becoming one, same person.

II. THERE IS THE HEARER WHO IS IN A CONSTANT STATE OF RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY

1. Some seem to be always "active" in religious activity but never personally get involved. Their feelings are stirred up over some religious subject but they never get around to doing anything.
2. These people are always the ones who "make a motion to do this or that" but is always willing for somebody else to do the work, for he/she is never as qualified as someone else and doesn't want people to say he/she is trying to run things. So, he/she never actually does anything at all.

3. After all the religious activity, his/her life never seems to reflect any spiritual growth and his/her life is not any more spiritual or active for the Lord. He/she hasn't really given up anything for the Lord and hasn't really done anything for his/her Church, just talk and if anything has added to the burdens of others.

III. HEARING MUST BE PUT INTO ACTION

1. It is good and necessary to have religious feelings, deep ones and casual ones for both demand respect and both can be just as earnest and zealous as the other.
2. Religious feelings and ideas **MUST** produce religious activity, religious excitement is good **ONLY** when hearts become tuned more closely to God and lives become more improved and stronger.
3. Religious emotions and obedience to duties called for cannot be separated for the results, if separated, are always disastrous.

CONCLUSION:

1. Think about people you know who always appear excited over something "religious" what did they do? Did they work hard at doing what they got all excited about? Or did they let somebody else do it?
2. It appears that one type of hearer and not a doer is content to become emotionally involved and never physically or personally involved in doing the work of the Lord or His Church. It seems as if the other type is the one who approves, likes what he/she hears, but never goes outside the Church with his/her "Amen's."
3. Every Christian needs to remember: *"...faith without works is dead..."*
4. So, how do you rate yourself - a Hearer only or a Hearer and a Doer?