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DOES GOD'S WORD REALLY AFFECT YOUR LIFE?

by Dennis Abernathy

A management axiom illustrates a spiritual truth that is important to keep in mind as we read and hear God's Word: "To look and hear is one thing. To see what you look at and hear is another. To understand what you see and hear is a third. To learn from what you hear and see and understand is something else. But to act on what you learn is all that really matters."

A lot of folks read, and hear God's Word preached, but they never act on it. Jesus said: "Everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them may be compared to a wise man" ([Matt. 7: 24](#)). The apostle Paul added: "It is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified" ([Rom.2: 13](#)).

God's Word has not been properly imbibed until it has become a part of one's behavior! Multitudes hear the Word of God taught and preached and have no particular interest in what the Word calls on them to be and do. They go away without the conviction to bring their spiritual lives into conformity with God's will for them. Attending a worship service, and listening to a sermon, and giving brief attention to some truth taught therein, is of no value, if a difference is not made in one's actual behavior as a result. If one hears God's Word, and sees what is wrong with his life, and he sees what he must do to put it right, and he is only a hearer, and nothing changes in his life, his hearing has gone for nothing!

Thus, if what we hear from the pulpit is not lived in our life there is no point in hearing at all! No one was ever made better by simply listening to a sermon. One may gain knowledge, but knowledge

only becomes relevant when it is translated into action. Action means obedience because hearing and doing are summed up in obedience.

It is not just hearing, but the doing that blesses the individual. [James 1: 25](#) says: "But whoso looks into the perfect law of liberty, and continues therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." Warren Wiersbe said: "Too many Christians mark their Bibles, but their Bibles never mark them." Friends, it is action, based on faith that ultimately counts. It is true that "to act on what you learn is all that really matters."

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The Proof is in the Doing

by Simon Harris

In Matthew 21:28-32 Jesus tells a parable about a man who had two sons. He came to the first one and said, "Son, go, work today in my vineyard." The son told his father he would not go, but afterwards he regretted saying that and went to work. The father went to the second son and also told him to go work in the vineyard. This son said, "I go, sir," but he did not go. Jesus then asked His audience, "Which of the two did the will of his father?"

This seems like such a simple question that it doesn't even need to be asked, but with this question Jesus is teaching an important lesson that we often fail to apply to our own lives. Jesus is reminding us that the proof of our love, faith, and reverence for God is in the doing, not the saying. How many times is this lesson taught throughout the pages of the New Testament?

- “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles?” (Mt 7:15,16).
- “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven” (Mt 7:21).
- “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves” (James 1:22).
- “What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?” (James 2:14).
- “My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth” (1 John 3:18).

Every one of these verses is well known to us, but do they express a principle by which we live? Do we claim to love Jesus, but yet fail to keep His commandments? Do we profess to love one another while refusing to actually do good to one another? Do we just give lip service to Paul’s command to give preference to one another (Romans 12:10)? When we examine ourselves do we do more than just acknowledge our weakness, or do we set about to affect change in our lives?

The point is this; make up your mind, today, to stop talking about what you need to do and get busying doing it! Pick just one thing you know you need to be doing and just do it. Maybe you need to be more hospitable; invite someone over. Maybe you need to be a better father; sit down and talk to you children. Maybe you need to study more; open your Bible and study.

They say the road to hell is paved with good intentions. The reason this statement is true is because God doesn’t accept lip service; He only accepts true service from the heart. Don’t allow the guilt of past failures to keep you on the road of good intentions. Simply decide today that you’re going to travel the road of good works, for it is the road that leads to forgiveness, mercy, and eternal life.

BOLDNESS IS EASIER AMONG BRETHREN

Andy Sochor

Before His arrest, Jesus told His apostles that they would all be “scattered” (Mark 14:27). Yet Peter insisted that he would not, even if he had to die with Him (Mark 14:29, 31).

However, once Jesus was arrested, Peter followed to see what would happen and found himself among different company in the courtyard (Mark 14:66). As others kept insisting that Peter was one of Jesus’ followers, Peter denied it three times (Mark 14:67-71), just as Jesus said he would (Mark 14:30, 72).

We have no reason to doubt Peter’s sincerity when he claimed he would never deny Jesus, even if it meant dying with Him. But it is much easier to be bold when surrounded by like-minded brethren than it is around the enemies of Christ.

The solution for us is not to isolate ourselves from the world. We cannot do this (cf. 1 Corinthians 5:9-10). However, it does mean that we need to be especially on our guard when we are in situations like the one in which Peter found himself. It also means we need to take advantage of every opportunity to be around our brethren to gain strength and encouragement from them.

So remember that boldness is easier among brethren. Let’s recognize the challenges we face in the world. Then let’s work to strengthen one another so we can handle them. via. Daily Bible Notes