

Active Listening

By David Feddes

Today we continue our study of the book of James, and we're going to be considering James chapter 1 verses 19 through 27. When you read the first part of James chapter 1, you find that it comes to a point where it says that God is the giver of every good and perfect gift, and he chose to give us birth through the Word of truth so that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all that he created. He chose to give us birth through the Word of truth. The first part of James talks about how we can become mature through trials, but that doesn't happen automatically. It comes through God's wisdom, and God's Word of truth gives birth, but that's not just an automatic thing either. Just as we need wisdom in order to profit from suffering, so we need to learn to listen if we're going to benefit from God's Word of truth. And so today I want to focus with you on active listening as it's described in James 1 verses 19 through 27.

James says, “¹⁹My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, ²⁰for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires. ²¹Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent, and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. ²²Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. ²³Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror ²⁴and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. ²⁵But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it, he will be blessed in what he does. ²⁶If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless. ²⁷Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world” (James 1:19-27).

Before we dive into the details of this passage in James, I want to mention two books that have been helpful for me and I think would be helpful for others who want to dig into the message of James. One is simply titled *The Message of James* by J. A. Motyer, and the other is *The Letter of James* by Douglas Moo. These are two commentaries that are readable for people who aren't trained in Greek and all the other stuff, and are also very helpful from faithful authors who really help you to understand the message of James.

Quick to listen

Now let's look at our passage for today. “My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.” God gave you two ears, one mouth, and you should probably use them in that proportion. Listen more than you speak. Be quick to listen, slow to speak, and certainly slow to become angry. Keep your ears open, your mouth shut, your temper under control. Unfortunately, we often do the opposite, where we're slow to listen, quick to speak, and quick to become angry.

James is a book of wisdom, and wisdom literature in the Bible often draws on or reflects the book of Proverbs. Proverbs says, “He who answers before listening—that is his folly and his

shame” (Proverbs 18:13). When you already have all the answers, when you don't even need to hear the whole story because you think you already know, that's embarrassing. It's shameful. It can get you into a lot of trouble. That's true in our ordinary relationships with people. When we're not good listeners, when we're constant interrupters, when we're not paying close attention to the other person, that's folly, it's shame, and it's even worse when we're slow to listen to the Word of God.

In the Bible, the Lord sent prophets to the people to bring them back to him, but they would not listen. That's almost a summary of the whole Old Testament, where God would send prophets again and again and again, and the people wouldn't listen. We're slow to listen when it comes to other people and even slow to listen when it comes to God, and we need to learn to become quick to listen to others and quick to listen to God when he speaks to us.

Too many of us are quick to speak instead of slow to speak. Proverbs says, “When words are many, sin is not absent, but the one who holds his tongue is wise” (Proverbs 10:19). “Do you see someone who speaks in haste? There is more hope for a fool than for him” (Proverbs 29:20). If we're always blabbing, if we're always running off at the mouth and never learn to hold our tongue, then sin is very close by, and there isn't much hope if we never learn to quiet down and listen.

Quick to anger: “A quick-tempered man displays folly” (Proverbs 14:17). “Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools” (Ecclesiastes 7:9). Or as James puts it, be slow to become angry because man's anger does not bring about God's righteousness. The anger, the wrath of man, does not bring about the righteousness of God. If you want to honor God, if you want to accomplish things, if you want to avoid embarrassing the cause of Jesus if you're a believer, then you need to be slow to anger.

A while back a local mayor got into some difficulty because he was at a baseball game for little girls, and he ended up punching the umpire and breaking his jaw. In the next election he lost, and it was probably due at least in part to that incident where his temper got away from him. Haven't we all had that, where our temper got away from us and we did something that we really couldn't undo, and it wasn't very good?

I know this past year I think of the mayor and that baseball game for girls. I think of basketball games. I was at a girls basketball game. I was responsible to take care of the scorebook, so I was at the scorer's table along with someone who was keeping the other book and running the clock, and then the officials are refing the game. In the middle of the game I started yelling that the ref should be calling a certain call out there, and the ref told me to be quiet or I was going to have to leave. I felt embarrassed when the referee told me that, because if I'm doing the scorebook I'm supposed to be quiet. And even if I'm not doing the scorebook, I'm a Christian and a pastor, and I probably shouldn't tell the ref how to call the ball game when little girls are out there playing basketball and I'm getting ticked off. That doesn't reflect well on my walk with God or on the progress of the game. It doesn't help very much, but when you're quick to anger, if you're quickly provoked in your spirit, then you're acting like a fool.

Proverbs says, “A man of knowledge uses words with restraint, and a man of understanding is even-tempered. Even a fool is thought wise if he keeps silent, and discerning if he holds his tongue” (Proverbs 17:27-28). Do you want people to think you're smart? Don't say very much, and they might think, “There's a very deep thinker. There's the person who only talks when he has something to say.” Even a fool is thought wise if he keeps silent. As a matter of fact, you do have a measure of wisdom if you can manage to keep silent when you don't have much to say.

Be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to become angry, because man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.

And when it comes to the Word of God, be quick to listen. I know that for many people it's a struggle to get into a pattern of daily reading of the Bible, but it's very important to do that, to read the Bible daily for yourself, to read the Bible daily with your family, to listen weekly to sermons that are expounding and applying the Word of God, to take the time to memorize Scriptures, to meditate on those Scriptures.

Very often we have our excuses: “Oh, I'm too busy,” or “I've got other things I have to do,” or “I don't have a very good memory.” Well, don't you think it's time to put away the excuses? Sometimes God slows our lives down big time. Are you saying you're too busy? God may say, “Yeah, I agree with you. You're too busy. I'll slow it down for you. Let's see how you do then.” Once you're slowed down, even then, are you reading the Bible daily and listening to God's Word and memorizing and meditating on God's Word, and then taking time, where you have the opportunity, to study it more deeply, to discuss it with others? These things are all part of being quick to listen when it comes to paying attention to the Word of God. Listening is very important. Quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to become angry.

Sometimes you're going to read something in the Bible or hear things in a sermon that make you mad. When that happens, what are you going to do? When you hear that passage that really bugs you, are you going to say, “There's something wrong with the Bible. I don't know why in the world God would say something like that”? And maybe you have a hard time saying that about the Bible because, after all, you know it's the Word of God, but maybe you hear a sermon that mentions something you've been doing, and you don't like the way the preacher spoke about that because it offends you, it bothers you. Well, before you decide that the message was wrong, be slow to anger and listen to the Word of God.

Soil plowed, seed planted

And then once you've listened, James warns us that listening alone is not enough. We need to really accept that word planted in us. “Therefore,” he says, “get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent, and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.” You listen carefully, but in the case of God's Word, you're not just hearing words and putting them into your mind. You're accepting the Word of God which is planted in your heart, and that Word has the power to save, to bring you to a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. The gospel Word is what you believe and trust as you receive God's salvation. That Word transforms you. It gives you new birth, and it gives you life. But in order for the Word to have that impact on you, the soil needs to receive the seed.

Jesus told a story of a farmer who went out and scattered seed all over the place, and it landed on different kinds of soil. One kind of soil was a path, and the path was so hard-packed that the seed just landed on it and sat there and didn't sink in at all, and birds came along and grabbed the seed away. Jesus said that's like people who hear the Word, but it goes in one ear and out the other, and the devil comes and snatches it away, and they forget it. When they leave church, on the way home they've already forgotten it. They read the Bible, maybe, and before they even had a shot, they already forgot what they read. Satan wants to snatch it away from a heart that's hardened and not prepared.

There's another kind of soil that is like rocky soil. It's shallow; it's got rocks underneath. Seed that lands in it sprouts up right away, but then when the heat comes, it shrivels up because it has no root. Jesus says that's like people who receive the Word and get excited about it, and then life gets challenging and trials come along, and it shrivels and withers down to nothing because the soil wasn't ready and it had no root.

There are other types of soil where there's weeds and thorns in it, and the seed lands among those weeds and thorns, and the seed may sprout a little bit, but then the weeds and thorns come in and tangle it up and choke it. Jesus says that's like people who have lots of pleasures and cares in their life. Whether it's the good things they're enjoying or the things that worry them or bother them, either way, if there's too much of that, it's tangling up, and it's a cluttered heart that's not ready to receive the Word. And that's why James says get rid of all moral filth and the evil that's so prevalent, because when your heart is full of that kind of garbage it doesn't have room for the Word to grow and bear fruit.

But thank God those are not the only kinds of soil out there. There's hard soil, there's shallow soil, there's cluttered soil, and there are hard hearts, shallow hearts, cluttered hearts where God's Word does not have its proper impact. But there are also hearts that have been prepared, which is like deep, rich soil. And when the seed of God's Word lands there, says Jesus, it comes up and it bears a crop—thirty times, sixty times, a hundred times as much as the seed that was planted. The message is: What kind of soil are you? The Word is good. It's the Word of the gospel that Jesus and his messengers scatter around. But when it lands in your heart, what kind of reception does it get?

Get rid of all moral filth and the evil that's so prevalent, and humbly accept the Word planted in you. Listen to it as though your life depended on it, because it does. This Word, says James, saves your soul. So humbly accept that Word planted in you, which saves your soul.

Doers, not just hearers

And then James goes on: "Do not merely listen to the Word and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the Word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror, and after looking at himself goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like." What a picture! I know when I get up in the morning it's not a pretty picture. I look in the mirror and hair is all over, there are some sleepers in the eyes, and if it's a bad day you might have a little drool on the corner of your mouth. There's a lot of stubble that needs to go

away. Now, after looking at that mess in the mirror, I have a couple of choices. I can walk away and forget what I just saw, or I can do something about it.

And so it is when we come before God's Word. When you come before God's Word you're going to find out that you don't look so good. You're going to find out things that need changing. You're going to find things that God's calling you to do. But if you just look at it and then go away and forget about it, you're like the dummy who looks in the mirror and then forgets what he looks like and does nothing about it. Don't just listen. It's got to move you to action or you're just fooling yourself. You're deceiving yourself.

What are some ways that happens? One way is just playing church. You can go to church, or you can listen to a sermon, and nothing happens. You go to church again and again and again and again, and you're never any different than you were because you're not taking it to heart. You're a hearer of the Word and not a doer, and yet the fact that you keep going to church makes you feel religious and kind of good about yourself.

Maybe you know the story of the family that went to church, and then when it was all over they did their usual critique of how the service went. Dad thought the sermon was dull and boring that Sunday. Mom did not like the choice of music, and she wasn't very fond of how it was played either. Big sister thought the congregational prayer was way too long, a real drag. But little brother said, "Well, I know it wasn't perfect, but you've got to admit it was still a pretty good show for a nickel." Well, a lot of people who invest a nickel in the kingdom of God and are expert critics of how church goes are not going to grow in grace because they're playing church.

Another way of deceiving yourself, of hearing the Word but not doing it, is becoming a collector of trivia, an expert in Bible trivia. You are fascinated: whatever became of the Jebusites? Who are those Hittites anyway? What does that Hebrew word really mean if you dig into it? What's the timetable for the events of the end times? And so you want to acquire lots of different kinds of Bible knowledge without asking what it means for your life right now and how God wants you to become more like Jesus and draw closer to him, and what actions he wants you to take. You're constantly listening to the Word for this or that factoid that tickles your fancy or satisfies your curiosity, but you're not walking with Christ and being directed by his Word in your obedience.

Another way of deceiving yourself is listening to a sermon and saying, "That was a good one. I hope so-and-so was listening." As parents you might even do that sometimes with your kids: "I hope they were listening to that one." But whenever you're looking at what the Word is saying to somebody else, you're not paying attention to what it says to you.

Another way of deceiving yourself is to exempt yourself, to have a whole list of excuses: "Yeah, that was a nice sermon, but I don't think it really means I have to make that particular change." The Word may speak to you, or someone may be speaking God's Word to you. For some people it's their drinking. Somebody warns them of their drinking; they may get angry about being warned, but the one thing they're not going to do is quit drinking because "I don't need to change in that regard." You may hear something about the importance of reading the Bible itself or of memorizing it, and you say, "Well, that's fine for people with a good memory and for those who

have the time, but not for me.” And one time after another you'll look at something, you'll hear a direction from God or from the Scripture or from a message from the Scripture, and you'll say, “Yeah, but that's not something I'm going to do anything about this week, because it might not apply to me,” or “I'm not that kind of person who needs that.” And in one way after another—this is just a small sample of the ways we can deceive ourselves—we're hearing the Word but we're not doing it.

The prophet Ezekiel was a very gifted speaker. He had tremendous images, ways that he would dramatize and act things out, or pictures. God gave him some enormous visions, overwhelming, amazing visions, and he also gave Ezekiel words of judgment. Ezekiel would say a fire is coming and it's going to consume the wicked. There was a certain kind of person who rejected what Ezekiel said, but there were others who liked to listen to him. God said, “Ezekiel, my people come to you, and they sit before you to hear your words, but they do not put them into practice. With their mouths they express devotion, but their hearts are greedy for unjust gain. Indeed, to them you are nothing more than one who sings love songs with a beautiful voice and plays an instrument well, for they hear your words but do not put them into practice” (Ezekiel 33:31-32). They enjoy the sermon. They say, “Wow, that Ezekiel, he can really speak. I love listening to that guy. He has a way with words. What a fantastic voice he has. Did you hear the one he gave last week? Even that one about fire, that was quite a sermon. Of course, we all know it's a metaphor and there's no real fire coming on Jerusalem.” But in fact the fire did come, and they were too busy just enjoying the sermon.

Are you a sermon enjoyer? The characteristic of a sermon enjoyer is: you hear words and you don't put them into practice—the very thing James talks about when he says be doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

Focused and active

Then James goes on to better things. He says, “But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard but doing it, he will be blessed in what he does.” So this person has a continual focus. He looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, the Word of God that is perfect and that brings about maturity in those who listen to it and carry it out, the law that gives freedom, that liberates more and more from our own foolishness, from our own weakness, from our own sin and failure, and gives us the freedom to be who God means us to be. And you keep looking into that Word. You have a continual focus. And then you promptly act; you obey. And when you do that, then, says James, you'll be blessed in what you do.

It's a tremendous thing to keep focused on the Word of God and really have God directing your day-to-day actions. And when we think of James, we think of faith in action. That's my overall theme for the study of the book of James. But we should not think that the action part is just us trying harder. Three times already in James chapter 1 we've seen that the Word of God is the active power that makes things happen. It births new life in us. We're born again through the Word of God. It saves the soul. The Word of God, that perfect law, frees us and blesses us.

This is a fulfillment of what God promised when he spoke of a new covenant. He said, “I’m going to make a new covenant, and I’m going to write my law in their minds and on their hearts, and I’m going to give them a new heart and make my Spirit live within them” (Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 36:26-27). When you have God’s Word written on your heart and his Spirit working in you, then you receive new life. Your soul is being saved. You’re being set free and you’re being blessed. So don’t take credit for your excellence. When the gospel Word comes to you and the Holy Spirit is at work in you, it is a wonderful thing that he is bringing it about, because the Bible says, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose” (Philippians 2:12-13). God is at work, and when he’s at work in us, his Word puts us to work.

Worthless religion

If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless. We started out by noting that people are often too quick to speak and too slow to listen, and now James comes back to that theme. If you think you’re religious but you can’t control your speech, then you’re fooling yourself. When he says your religion is worthless, the word he uses for “worthless” is a word commonly used throughout the Bible for idol worshipers. He’s saying if you can’t control your mouth, then if you say you worship God but never control your mouth, you might as well be worshiping a worthless idol because your religion is worthless.

James goes into a lot of detail, and I’m not going to get into those things in depth right now, but I’ll give you examples. He talks about the need to be slow to speak because we’re tempted to blab. We’re tempted to run off at the mouth and say too much. In chapter 2 he speaks of people who insult the poor and blaspheme the name of Jesus. That’s a sin of the mouth—insulting those in poverty or blaspheming and misusing the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. He also speaks of those who say nice things. In chapter 2 verse 16 he says there are people who don’t have enough clothes or daily food, and if you say to them, “Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well-fed,” but do nothing about it, what good is it? So you can use your words to say pious, nice-sounding things while dismissing the real needs of real people.

Your mouth can be used to mislead others. So in chapter 3 verse 1 James says not many of you should presume to be teachers. We don’t want the blind leading the blind. If you want to teach, make sure God has called you to it and that you’re handling the Word of truth rightly, because those who mislead others—all teachers—are going to be judged with more strictness. And if you mislead others, you have a lot to answer for.

He says the tongue is a small part of the body but it makes great boasts. Boasting is another sin of the tongue. He says you use your mouth to praise God—it’s wonderful to worship God—and then you turn around and curse people who have been made in God’s likeness. He says, “My brothers, do not slander one another. Don’t grumble against each other. Above all, do not swear at all. Just let your ‘Yes’ be yes and your ‘No’ no,” and we’ll get into all those things more as we study the book of James. But I’m giving you a sample now of what James calls worthless religion: the misuse of the tongue. And when the mouth is under control, says James, then, in chapter 3, you become a perfect man. If you could control your tongue completely—none of us

is there yet—but may God give us the grace to keep moving forward so that our religion is not worthless, that the way we speak is more and more in tune with the way Jesus wants us to speak.

Real religion

Then James says something about real religion, not worthless religion. “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.” In other words, you stand with the very young and with the very old whose lives are at risk. In that society, people who were widows or orphans didn't have people to stand up for them, and so people who were loyal to God and faithful to him stood with those who were at risk. You stand with those who are in need, and you stand against the corrupt influence, the polluting effects of the world.

All too often the danger is that we do the opposite of that. We don't dare to stand with those who are vulnerable or unpopular, or we don't want to take the time and energy or expense it would take to help those who are truly needy. But we'll absorb all the entertainment the world throws our way. We'll conduct our business in the way the world conducts its business, and that's not what real religion calls us to do.

You see the combination here too, because some Christians have stood against the corrupt influence of the world but have neglected the social implications of the gospel and the need of helping those who are truly needy, while others have been socially conscious and socially aware and want to stand with the poor, but in matters of sexual ethics or other areas they do things exactly the way the world does. Healthy religion combines compassion for the needy and at the same time a strong backbone and a determination not to be corrupted by the world and its ways.

So again, the Word is working in you and having its effect when you can manage your tongue, when you help the helpless, and when you reject worldly filth. This is not all there is to being a Christian, but James chooses his examples very carefully and wisely because this is almost a scientific sampling. How's your mouth doing? What are you doing to help anybody else in need? Do you have compassion? What's your relationship to the world and its corrupting influence? Those three tests will give you a pretty accurate idea of whether the Word of God is having its true designed impact in your life.

And again, all of that depends on the Word that's active and living within. It births new life. It saves your soul. It frees and blesses you. And so you don't say, “I'm going to try harder to straighten out how I speak or help people a bit more or stay away from worldly influence.” Those are all things we should resolve to do as we listen to the Word, but don't try to do it on your own effort. Realize that when that happens, you're cooperating and letting the Word do its thing in you. You're humbly accepting the Word planted in you, which can save your soul after it's given you new life, and now it's freeing you and bringing you more and more into the way of blessing.

The core of this passage is be doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. We're called to active listening, to be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to become angry, and let the Word take root in us. But active listening doesn't just mean paying careful attention and

getting its meaning. It also means being active and actively obeying the Word. Be doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

Jesus said that at the end of time, when he judges the world, there are going to be people who say, "Lord, Lord," but Jesus says, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father in heaven" (Matthew 7:21). Talk is cheap. You can say "Lord, Lord," but are you doing the will of your Father in heaven? And then Jesus says, "Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rains came down, the streams rose, the winds blew and beat against that house, but it did not fall because it had its foundation on rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rains came down, the streams rose, the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash" (Matthew 7:24-27).

You see what Jesus is saying. He says both the wise and the foolish actually hear his words. The difference is the wise man hears and puts them into practice. The foolish man hears but doesn't put them into practice. Be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to become angry. Humbly accept the Word planted in you, which can save you. Be doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

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Quick to listen

¹⁹ My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, ²⁰ for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.

- **God gave you two ears, one mouth**
- **Ears open, mouth shut, temper calm**

Slow to listen

He who answers before listening—that is his folly and his shame. (Proverbs 18:13)

The LORD sent prophets to the people to bring them back to him, but they would not listen. (2 Chronicles 24:19)

Quick to speak

When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise. (Proverbs 10:19)

Do you see a man who speaks in haste? There is more hope for a fool than for him. (Proverbs 29:20)

Quick to anger

A quick-tempered man displays folly. (Proverbs 14:29)

Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools. (Ecclesiastes 7:9)

Quiet and calm

A man of knowledge uses words with restraint, and a man of understanding is even-tempered. Even a fool is thought wise if he keeps silent, and discerning if he holds his tongue. (Proverbs 17:27-28)

Soil plowed, seed planted

²¹ Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

Doers, not just hearers

²² Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. ²³ Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror ²⁴ and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.

Deceiving yourself

- Playing church
- Collecting trivia
- Eyeing others
- Exempting self

Enjoying the sermon

They listen to your words, but they do not put them into practice. Indeed, to them you are nothing more than one who sings love songs with a beautiful voice and plays an instrument well, for they hear your words but do not put them into practice. (Ezekiel 33:31-32)

Focused & active

²⁵ But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.

- **Continual focus, prompt action**

Word within

- Births new life (1:18)
- Saves your soul (1:21)
- Frees and blesses (1:25)

Worthless religion

²⁶ If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless.

blab (1:19), insult, blaspheme (2:6), dismiss (2:16), mislead (3:1), boast (3:5), curse (3:9), slander (4:11), grumble (5:9), swear (5:12)

Real religion

²⁷ Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

- **Stand with young and old at risk**
- **Stand against corrupt influences**

Word working

- Manage your tongue
- Help the helpless
- Reject worldly filth

Word within

- Births new life (1:18)
- Saves your soul (1:21)
- Frees and blesses (1:25)

Active Listening

Be doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. (James 1:22 ESV)