

## **Becoming: Doers**

James 1:22-25

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Corporate Youth Meeting

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- Review again Chris Silard's message, "Beholding is Becoming" from this Summer's Youth Retreat (on the Redeemed 2:14 website: <http://www.gracecommunity.ws/Redeemed> )
- As we behold God and His glory and goodness and other attributes, we begin to become like Him.
- Since then, we've covered two specific topics – two areas in our lives where we want to become more like God.
  - Becoming accountable – realizing we're primarily accountable to God and that our accountability with each other is for the purpose of pointing us back to God's truths
  - Becoming humble. Many of you wrote down and discussed with your parents some of the examples Tito mentioned – areas where you felt convicted by God – ways you could become more humble.
- How are we doing with those two areas so far?!
  - Are you becoming more accountable to God and others, and more humble toward God and others? How many of you are really trying to apply what you've been hearing?
  - Do you really want to become more like Christ? Do you want to be accountable, humble? If so, what are you doing about it?
  - Is it enough just to come to this meeting every month and listen? Then go to caregroups and maybe answer a few questions, sing a few songs, but never think about or practice what's been taught at any other times?
  - Are you spending more time beholding God? Learning what He's like? Studying how Christ was humble? Reading what God thinks about our pride?
- Beholding is becoming.  
Simple  
But are you beholding?
  - If you're trying to become without the behold, you're falling into legalism. You're trying to please God with your actions instead of letting Him please you as you grow in your understanding of Him and your love for Him.
  - Are you more like God now than you were at the Summer Retreat?
    - Even if you don't see it clearly, I think you know in your heart if it's happening or not. As you evaluate yourselves right now, you probably know if you're becoming less or more interested in / captivated by / and satisfied with God's beauty and wisdom and mercy toward you.
  - This is critical to your spiritual life:
    - Become doers of the Word  
Not doers of my words, or your parents' words, or your friends.  
Be doers of God's Word

## **Read James 1:22-25**

Illustration: Dave Brewer's son noticing a "boogie" in daddy's nose!

- When someone notices a problem in the mirror, they will do something to fix the problem!

- James is saying, "If you are not a doer of the Word, you are like the person who looks at himself in the mirror, and then walks away and immediately forgets what he sees.
- Your pastors, like James, want you to have lasting fruit in your life
- We want you to behold God and become like Christ, so that you will enjoy your life more – so that you won't regret your decisions – so that you can be a blessing to others and bring glory to God and fulfill what you were created for!
- The Word of God functions like a mirror for us. We look into the mirror, and then we look at how we're living our lives, and then we must do things to change our life – to better reflect what's in Scripture.

### **The motivation:**

Remember our predicament before He changed us: We were all rebels against Him! We all have a sinful heart that tells us we can be our own gods – we can make up our own rules and decide for ourselves what's good or bad for our own lives. That's abhorrent to God! It's evil!

"But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved."  
(Eph 2:4-5)

He gives us a new life – as a gift! And now, we get the privilege to respond with our whole lives! **We don't have to be doers of the Word, we get to be doers of the Word!** Being doers of the Word won't save us – only Christ's sacrifice in our place on the cross saves us – but His work frees us into this glorious new life where we can have a relationship with Him. He doesn't have to keep His distance from us anymore! He dwells in us!

And in this relationship, God wants to bless us! The doing that He's asking of us now is not to earn His favor – it's to bless us!

- So we respond aggressively – rigorously! We give everything we have to this – because we want the blessing He pours out on us when we follow His ways.
- If you really want something, you're willing to work hard for it! You'll do anything it takes to earn the money or win the favor from your parents to get what it is you want.
- If you want lasting fruitfulness in your life – lasting heart change from the retreat or from other messages like last month's humility message, you have to go after it aggressively and rigorously! Pursue it with everything you've got! And keep on pursuing it!

### **Point #1: Get busy doing**

verse 22 says "Be doers of the word, not hearers only"

- Hearing alone **isn't enough** to change our hearts
- v22 tells us we are deceived if we think that simply attending a retreat has changed us. We are self-deceived if we think our experience on the Family Retreat, where we learned to express worship to God, has changed us. We're in danger if we think our baptism has changed us!
  - You can say things like "This retreat has changed me"... "This is a turning point in my life"... "So and so got saved this week"
  - The proof will be in a changed life!
- No one walks away from a message (or a retreat) completely changed, free from sin...and no one walks away from an experience with God (as great as that is) completely changed, free from sin.
  - Illustration: It would be great if we could swap out our sin as simply as we change a video game!

- Wouldn't it be great if you could 1) take out sin and 2) put in righteousness?
- It doesn't work that way. We have to work at it...we have to look into the mirror of God's word and be doers of the word!

It's not like we can just take care of it in one blow. We have to...

### Point #2: Keep on doing

v 25 – “But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be **blessed** in his doing.”

Keep on doing, and you'll be BLESSED with heart change!

**Illustration:** Joey Chestnut and the hot-dog eating contest (66 in 12 minutes)

**Point:** We want to practice sanctification like Joey Chestnut eats hot dogs. ALL AT ONCE! “Let me do this sanctification thing ONE TIME, and I'm done!” We want to shove it all in, in one experience!

But the Bible describes sanctification differently. It's not like a hot dog eating contest where you eat as much as you can in a short period of time! It's more like eating a meal one bite after another, slowly, step by step.

- “Just as we don't change all at once, we don't swallow all truth in one gulp. We are simple people.” (David Powlison)
- We are simple people who can get distracted from persevering:
  - Life is too busy. Laziness. Discouraged easily – fall one time and give up
- We are simple people, therefore we need a plan.

#### A) **Be specific**

- Being doers of the word means being specific in how we want to change. It won't help you to be general.
  - Instead of saying “I want to grow in receiving correction,” think about how will I grow in receiving correction more humbly... so you think through who it is that you are most tempted to NOT love correction from (mom/dad), and then you apply it by going after their correction and inviting input into your life regularly.
  - Here's where you get aggressive! You see the sin, you want to change, and you go after it like you're in a war! Ask your parents on a weekly basis – at least!
  - Instead of “I want to be a better leader in my school”...think how will I be a better leader in my school? So at lunch or free time, when the conversation turns towards gossip or complaining, I want to stop the conversation and remind people of Eph 4:29 (“let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up...that it may give grace to those who hear”).
- Have a plan! If you're really serious about this – if you really want the grace and blessings that God promises – attack your sin in a diligent way! Plan it out. Write it down. Show your plan to others and get more ideas! That's humility! And it's a way of meditating on things that will help you grow.
- Roman 12:1-2 says “... be transformed by the renewal of your mind...” What Scriptures will you meditate on in order to renew your mind? “Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly... with thankfulness in your hearts...” - Colossians 3:16-17
- Be specific! Have a plan!

#### B) **Be realistic**

- If you walked away from the Youth Retreat trying to create a plan to address 15 different areas in your life, you've probably ended up addressing none of them. Be realistic! Pick one area! Just one!

- **Bad news:** You'll be fighting that indwelling sin until the day you die.
- **Good news:** You'll be fighting indwelling sin until the day you die.
  - The alternative is: you're not fighting – you don't care about your sin, you're not a Christian, and you're not going to change. Thank God that's He's changed your heart and is giving you a desire to fight!
- Growth is not an event...it's a process...it is gradual. Slow. We're simple people! And for teens this season of life is confusing! Lots of change! And your growth during this time might be hindered because of that.
- Parents, that should inform how you help your son or daughter... we should be MOST patient with them (as God is with us)! First be sure you've talked with them about whether or not there is fruit in their lives that demonstrates genuine conversion. If the gospel has changed your teen's heart, then it should be observable to some degree in their lives.
- You can't ask your teen to start putting to death sin and growing in righteousness if they aren't even saved! Instead of helping, you could seem to validate what is really a false conversion.

**Closing/Application:** Here are some practical things you can do to be aggressive in your doing of God's Word:

**Teens:** James says "Be doers, not hearers only." But it doesn't say not to be hearers! You can't do God's Word until you hear it. So here are some things to consider:

1. Download and re-listen to Chris Silard's message from the Youth Retreat.
2. Download and re-listen to the messages from our last two monthly meeting here on Accountability and Humility
3. Take notes as you listen: What are the one or two things God is asking you to focus on?
4. Are you putting yourself under God's Word each day in a devotional time?
  - a. If that time is dry for you, seek help! Be aggressive with this! This is critical to your growth.
  - b. Go back to the website and download Mike Bullmore's seminar message from last January on how to grow in your love for God's Word. Listen to that at least once a year!
5. Find good books that help you grow in understanding what God loves – especially as it relates to the areas He's convicting you about.
6. We would love to help you find these resources. Ask for help! Be aggressive about this!

**Parents:**

1. Talk to your teens about these messages! Be aggressive about making sure they're paying attention and thinking about the messages after they leave and help them apply!
  - a. Ask them specific questions about how they could apply what they heard.
2. Start with the question we asked earlier. Are you even sure they are believers? You have to first answer the question of genuine conversion before talking with your son or daughter about growing to be more like Christ.
  - a. Parents, if there is ANY question in your mind about your teen's salvation, please use humility in asking others to help you evaluate that. Listen to what others observe, and let God's Word speak to the state of your son or daughter's soul
    - "How can I be sure I'm a Christian"
    - "10 Questions to Diagnose your Spiritual Health"
    - "The Discipline of Grace"
    - Talk to your pastor. We would LOVE to talk with you about these things!