

The Effects of Receiving the Implanted Word

James 2

In our previous lesson, we learned that receiving “*the implanted word*” (from Jas.1:21) is **not** the same as being “*brought forth by the word of truth*” (from Jas.1:18); that the latter references our *initial obedience* to the truth- the “*first fruits*” or *surety* of the *second fruits* as a reference to our maturity as a “*doer of the word*” instead of just “*hearers who delude themselves.*” Thus, receiving the *implanted word* is predicated upon the requirements of Jas.1:19-25, and is illustrated by vv.25-26 (being *brethren, quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger, and putting off all filthiness, all that remains of wickedness, and in humility allowing the word to become implanted* in our hearts to the degree that dictates our thoughts, emotions, and actions). This, in turn, allows the *practice of religion* to be *pure and undefiled* instead of *vain and worthless* (Jas.1:26,25, respectively).

This clearer (in my case at least) understanding of the context of chapter 1 necessarily then influences our comprehension and applications of chapter 2 (read the chapter).

I. The Effects of Receiving the Implanted Word

A. Elimination of *Personal Favoritism*, vv.1-11

Jesus, as our example, did not manifest *personal favoritism*, v.1. Though *glorious*, He *humbled* Himself both in being *born as a man*, Phil.2:8a, and in *obedience*, Phil.2:8b. This *humble obedience* was evidence of the *implanted word*, and allowed Him to *think, feel, and act* toward His *fellowman*, Matt.9:36, 10-13. Therefore, and obviously, reaching the *second fruits* of spiritual maturity as a part of having the *word implanted* in our hearts will allow us to do likewise, Phil.2:3-4.

Otherwise:

- Our *motives* will continue to be *evil* (carnally based, vv.2-4 → 1Cor.3:1-3;
- We will continue to *dishonor* the *poor* based on those *evil* (carnal) *motives* and *judgments*, vv.5-7 → 1Cor.6:1-8;
- We will fail to “*love your neighbor as yourself,*” v.8 → 1Cor.13:1-13;
- We will, therefore, *show partiality*, v.9a → 1Cor.12:12-26; and
- We will be *convicted by the law as transgressors*, vv.9b-11 → 1Cor.1:10-11.

B. Allowance and Reception of *Mercy in Judgment*, vv.12-13

Having the *word implanted*- and thus allowing it to dictate our thoughts, feelings, and actions, enables us to be *recipients* of *mercy* in eternal *judgment* because we have been the *dispensers of mercy* in our earthly *judgments* and *interactions* with our fellowman, cf. Matt.5:7; 18:21-35; Prov.21:13.

C. Possession of *Living and Active Faith*, vv.14-26

Given these things (and understanding the context), do we now see that the discussion of *faith without works* in this section is not given as a tool to beat up *denominational* “salvation by faith only” people, but to manifest to those “*brought forth...by the word of truth*” (1:18) as *first fruits* that there is more work to do in order to have “*the word implanted*” (1:21) as *second fruits*?

The “*foolish fellow*” of v.20 is not (though it would certainly include) the denominational advocate of “faith only” salvation, it is the Christian who fails to have the word implanted in

his heart to the degree that it affects- even dictates his thoughts, feelings, and actions. This point is well-illustrated by:

- The failure to think, feel, and act properly toward a needy brother, vv.15-17; 1John3:17-18;
- The analogy to *demon faith* which acknowledges and confesses belief in God, but does not act accordingly, vv.18-20 → 1:18;
- Abraham's *obedient* faith (works), vv.21-24;
- Rahab's *obedient* faith (works), v.25; and
- The body, which is *dead* without the spirit (Greek, *pneuma*- breath), v.26.

II. Conclusion:

Unless we grow from the *first fruits* of initial obedience (being *brought forth by the word*) to the *second fruits* of having the *word implanted* in our hearts, our religion and faith is worthless.