

Talk It Over

SMALL TALK

1. Which best describes your temper: Short fuse, big bomb? Long fuse, little fizz? Long fuse, nuclear explosion? Explain.

VIEWPOINT

2. **READ James 1:19-27.** What do verses 19-20 have to do with verse 21?
3. This section talks about “hearing” and “doing” God’s word; what other words were used by James to explain what needs to happen between “hearing” and “doing” (see 1:21, 25)?
4. What happens when one becomes a hearer of the word of God but not a doer? (1:22, 24, 26)

GETTING PERSONAL

5. From **1 Timothy 4:15-16** (ESV) we learn we must make time to think about our “life” and our “doctrine” (how we really live and what we say we believe). Hearers of God’s word are only dabblers in it. Doers of God’s word have an immersive practice of training in God’s word to be able to live it. Rank yourself on a scale of 0 to 10. 0 being very little to no input from God’s word, and very little self reflection. 10 is an “immersive” “practice” of daily training in God’s word which includes memorizing scripture and meditating on it, the process of making God’s will your will, God’s thoughts your thoughts. Where do you land on this scale and why?

PRACTICE!

6. How would you like to improve your training in the Word? Ask the group to pray for you in this.

October 31, 2021

Training In The Word (Week 4) Live It Out

Which best describes your temper: Short fuse, big bomb? Long fuse, little fizz? Long fuse, nuclear explosion? Explain.

I'm normally a "Long fuse, little fizz" kind of guy. But lately... I've been surprising myself, and others, and I don't like it. Can you relate?

This is just another example of why I need this series! I'm guessing you do too. This series had four parts.

1. "Why Bother"
2. "Take It In"
3. "Process It",
4. "Live it out."

Let's jump right in.

James 1:19–20 (NIV) My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, ²⁰ because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.

Where I should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry. Lately, I've done the opposite: I'm slow to listen, quick to speak, and quick to be angry... but I fool myself sometimes justifying myself saying, "I'm not angry, I'm just hurt, or frustrated."

The smoke detectors in my house are hardwired with battery backup. They are interconnected. When a battery is low it chirps. When one goes off it is hard to locate which one it is. One night in the middle of the night, one began to chirp. When I finally located it to put new batteries in, I did something wrong. So I took the smoke detector out and waited till morning. I'm glad I did. While trying to figure out the problem, they all started going off, first with a voice saying, warning warning...., then the obnoxious alarm. It took me a while to figure out that I put the new batteries in wrong.

My emotions also seem to be hardwired as warning systems. They also seem to be interconnected. My “hurt feelings” warning system seems to be connected to my “frustrated” warning system, which is connected to my “Anger” warning system! It only takes a nanosecond for me to get all of these confused. When I do, and I might bring anger from one room to another, and I start mouthing off in the wrong room!!! I’m SLOW to listen, QUICK to speak, and QUICK to get angry!

“Human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires”.

In my jumbled emotions I try to fix the problem and I make it worse!

I’m not alone in this. It's happening all across America, and it's happening with devastating effects on churches all across America!

I need help. You need help. All God’s children need help! What’s the solution for this?!

STEP 1: Humbly ACCEPT the word

*James 1:21 (NIV) 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.*

James is using a metaphor here that Jesus used. It is a planting metaphor. And the Word of God is the Seed. To receive the seed effectively, there needs to be some plowing. We see this teaching of Jesus in Mark 4 and Matthew 13. It takes prepared soil to receive the seed; hard ground must be plowed and the hard rocks removed. The weeds are removed; then the soil is ready to accept the seed.

James says all that in his blunt and clear way! You will never have the WORD make a difference if your soil is hardened, or preoccupied with weeds. Humbly accept the Word planted in you!

“Humbly accepting the word planted in you”

- requires confession.

- admit that what I did was wrong.
- What God says is right.
- What I thought about what I did was wrong.
- What God thinks is right about what I thought and did.
- With Confession the grace of the cross comes rushing in to help.

Then James switches his metaphor to explain how this works.

James 1:22–24 (NIV) 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 someone who looks at his face in a mirror ²⁴ and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.

The point is that “*the Word*” is a *mirror* for us. We learn about ourselves when we study God’s word.

I thought about showing up here today with my hair going every which way as if I forgot what I saw in the mirror this morning, but I knew that would be too distracting. It might be funny, but you wouldn’t be able to take me seriously.

Here is something I have learned about myself. I’m going to put it into an equation.

Active mind + Overactive Forgetter =

As it relates to the quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry it has become obvious I have an overactive forgetter! What’s the answer?

James 1:25–26 (NIV) But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do. ²⁶ Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless.

Now let's finish the equation the way James does.

Active mind + Overactive Forgetter = Overactive Emotions & Overactive Mouth (a worthless kind of “faith”)

Ok. So James very bluntly and clearly describes my problem. Apparently what I say I believe and what I actually believe in the moment don't match! Can you relate? So what are we to do about that?

Now we are ready for step 2.

STEP 2: Everyday, make time to THINK about TWO things

*1 Timothy 4:16 (NIV) Watch **your life** and **doctrine** closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.*

You must know the **word**.
You must know **yourself**.
Then you must **connect the two**.

People of our culture are being shaped by the world more than the word. Are you busy every waking hour without being intentional about making time to think and reflect in these two directions! You can't afford to do that. This is a formula for anxiety, anger, and all kinds of harmful attitudes and actions.

What you say you believe is your doctrine. If you say you believe Jesus, but you do not DO what Jesus says, do you really believe Jesus, or do you actually believe you will be happier doing life your way? One of the things Jesus said was abide in me, and abide in my Word, and have my Words abide in you! Where are you abiding?

When you say you believe one thing but you live something else, you need to be more serious about your everyday think time! You need to be **MORE SERIOUS ABOUT WHERE YOU ARE ABIDING**.

STEP 3: Immerse Yourself In God's Word

1 Timothy 4:15 (ESV) Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress.

Every Jesus follower needs to make training in the word an *immersive practice*.

Do you just come for a sprinkling of God's word occasionally? Or is your training in the Word more immersive? Are you just a dabbler? Or do you immerse yourself in God's Word?

If you are dabbler in the Word, you are most likely immersed in the World. If you are immersed in the World, you are only a dabbler in the Word. Too many of us have received hours of catechism training from our culture. And we can't compete with that with a little dab here and there in the Word.

You are either shaped by the world or the word. You actually have been choosing your shape by what you do and what you don't do.

Question 5 in the "Talk It Over" section of the notes today, mentions the most NEGLECTED TRAINING DISCIPLINE:

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6. How would you like to improve your training in the Word? Ask the group to pray for you in this.