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### A Doer of the Word—Not Just a Hearer

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A DOER OF THE WORD---NOT JUST A HEARER

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF JAMES  
NUMBER 11  
JAMES 1:22

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Little Rock, Arkansas

JAMES 1:22 "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

In order to understand this verse, we must go back to the doctrine of grace perception. The grace of God is the most important doctrine of Christianity and possibly the most misunderstood doctrine.

THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE PERCEPTION

1. WE MUST MAKE THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN HUMAN AND SPIRITUAL I.Q.  
Many of us are impressed by the brilliance of great minds. But God is not thus impressed. Grace is a great leveler when we come to perception and understanding. Many so called "great minds" miss the whole thrust of spirituality and faith in Christ, while many minds with just "average mentality" understand the whole meaning of grace. Christianity is a great leveler. This doesn't mean that if you have a great mind, you should not use it. To have a great mind and fail to use it is a curse against God. (Excessive drinking and the taking of drugs has destroyed many fine minds.)  
But the point is this--God has endowed both the brilliant and the simple minds with the ability to understand grace. Spiritual I.Q. is the result of Bible doctrine stored in your human spirit. Spiritual I.Q. can greatly influence your human I.Q. But remember this, your human I.Q., I care not how high it may be, can never lift your spiritual I.Q. Human I.Q. is works and spiritual I.Q. is grace.
2. HUMAN I.Q. IS EXCLUDED FROM GRACE PERCEPTION.  
1 CORINTHIANS 1:18 "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."  
Through grace, in eternity past, God found a way whereby every believer, be he brilliant or stupid, could have the capacity to learn doctrine and come to a knowledge of God's ways of doing things.
3. THE MIND CAN ONLY LEARN DOCTRINE, NOT APPLY IT.  
The mind is the place where we learn, but it is from the human spirit where we apply the doctrine we have learned.
4. GOD'S PROVISION FOR OUR LEARNING DOCTRINE HAS BEEN AMPLY AND GRACIOUSLY CARED FOR BY GOD'S ABUNDANT GRACE.  
He has done this in the following ways.
  - a. By giving us the Canon of Scripture.  
REVELATION 22:18-19 "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

- b. By giving us a classroom where we can learn this doctrine, which is the local church.
- c. By giving us a pastor-teacher who communicates doctrine. The method used by the pastor-teacher is monologue and not dialogue. The authority for teaching is invested by God in the pastor-teacher.
- d. By placing the Holy Spirit within every believer. The Holy Spirit within the Christian helps him understand doctrine when it is taught.  
JOHN 16:13 "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."  
  
1 CORINTHIANS 6:19-20 "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."  
  
1 JOHN 2:27 "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."
- e. By the breathing apparatus God has given the soul and he has designed the soul for inhale and exhale of truth.
- f. By designing rebound and confession so when we sin we have a way whereby we can confess our sins, get back in fellowship, and thus be in the frame of mind whereby we can learn doctrine.
- g. By establishing the priesthood of every believer. Every believer is an important somebody to God, and God has given each believer his privacy so he can take in doctrine into his mind.
- h. By giving each one of us mentality whereby we can think and understand truth. The mind for thinking is a grace gift from God.

All of these things, and many more not listed here, are things God in his grace has done for us so we can become his intelligent and obedient children.

5. THE MECHANICS GOD HAS ESTABLISHED FOR US SO WE CAN UNDERSTAND GRACE.

- a. The pastor-teacher is to teach doctrine to the believer. The verb is "didasko" and it means to teach doctrine. This includes teaching doctrine in its historical setting. The Bible must be interpreted in the light of the time in which it was written. One Scripture must be compared and correlated with another Scripture so the whole truth can be understood. The exegesis of the original languages is necessary so we can understand the exact meaning of words and the exact shade of meaning God gave to each truth.

b. Receptive comprehension.

EPHESIANS 3:18 "May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;" At first it is just head knowledge, but when it is just head knowledge, it cannot be applied to life. However, the first step is knowing the facts. The believer is then in the position to either believe or reject what has been comprehended and understood. The mind stores up the truth and deposits it in the human spirit and from this reservoir we can draw the knowledge we need.

c. The storage area.

Once doctrine is learned in the mind, it must now be transferred to the human spirit. First, we say--"I believe it!" Next, we say--"Now I will transfer what I believe in my mind over into my human spirit so I can use it. Positive volition and faith makes it possible to take what you know and transfer it so you have it in storage ready for your use.

d. The frame of reference.

We will pick up this truth in our verse here, James 1:22. The hearer is the man who hears the Word of God and understands it in his mind. The doer is the one who transfers it to his spirit and is able to use what he knows. EPHESIANS 3:19 "And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." The Word of God is now applied. The doer is the one who understands and can apply what he understands. This is the divine viewpoint for living.

6. THE FUNCTION OF THIS FRAME OF REFERENCE.

Look what it means to have the reservoir filled with truth. The winter of life is coming, and if you have filled the spirit with "spiritual hay," you will have provision for your soul in time of need.

You will have these things.

a. You will be able to understand doctrine when it is taught.

b. You will develop norms and standards in your conscience and these norms and standards will come to conform to the norms and standards of the Word of God. This means your spiritual life is now growing, your engine is operating on full power, you are developing according to the plan of God and the will of God for your life. You have become a "doer" and not just a "hearer."

c. You now have a divine viewpoint for your life.

d. You now have the content of truth in your human spirit which makes it possible for you to have effective prayer in your life. Remember, you pray from your human spirit, not from your soul. Prayer is exhale.

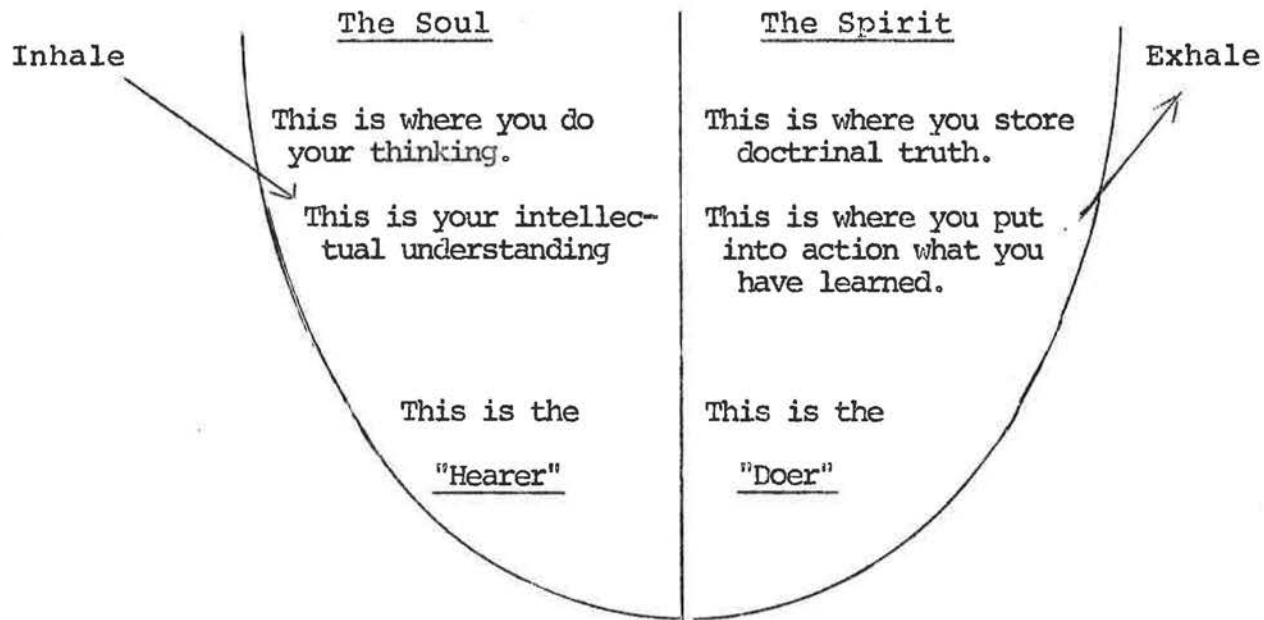
- e. You also witness from your human spirit. That's why so many people flunk out when it comes to witnessing. They try to witness from the soul, but you have to witness from your spirit as an exhale.
- f. In this way you become able to distinguish between false and true doctrine.
- g. This is the only way you can develop a capacity for love. But if love comes from your human spirit, then it is true, genuine, abiding love.
- h. It is in the realm where God is now free to share with the believer his perfect happiness.

Now look again at JAMES 1:22 "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." The words "Be ye" are a present, middle, imperative of "ginomai." The present tense means you are to keep on doing this. The middle voice means you must do this with your own volition through your own free will. The imperative mood means that God commands this and it is the only way you will grow spiritually. This means you are to become something you have not been before.

Now the minute many people read the word "Doer" they begin to think of big programs and overt activity-- Ring more doorbells, agonize more in prayer, really get in high with activity and production. But the word for doer here is "poietaes" and it refers to Bible doctrine in your human spirit, for it is from that reservoir that you use the doctrine you know. You are not a doer by your overt activity, but by the doctrine you have learned and transferred to your human spirit so you can use it every day.

Notice this verse says we are to be doers "of the word" and this is a genitive of "logos." You cannot know doctrine until you know the meaning of the words. It is a matter of accuracy. Then it says "not hearers only" and the word for hearers is a nominative plural of "akoates" and this refers to Bible doctrine as it is learned in the mind. You learn it in the soul and are a hearer, before you transfer it over into the human spirit and become a doer. The hearer is the one who knows doctrine intellectually. That's the "hearer only." It must move into the human spirit so you who were just once a hearer, can now become a doer.

Look again at a diagram of the soul as it applies to this verse.



But you can't have one without the other. Many people hear it, understand it, but never transfer it over into the human spirit so they can "do it." There are millions who are trying to "do great things for God" but they are not willing to sit down and hear things first. James goes on to say "deceiving your own selves." That's what people are doing who try to become "doers" but they haven't been "hearers" first.

The word for "deceiving" here is a present, middle, participle of the word "paralogizomai." It means to defraud or deceive. The believer who takes doctrine into his mind and lets it stop there is deceiving himself. You are depriving yourself a great blessing. A doer of the word is a progressive believer.

Please notice it is a "DOER OF THE WORD." It is not a doer of the good deeds. Are you a doer of the Word?