

Doing what we know!

Living Truth - Charles Price

„James 1:23“

There are two problems we have when reading Scripture. One is a mental problem in which we do not understand it, and the other is a volitional problem in that we do understand it, but fail to do anything about it.

Mark Twain once said, “It ain't those parts of the Bible that I can't understand that bother me; it is the parts that I do understand”. Why? Because much of what we do understand places demands on us. The Book of James addresses this issue like no other. A theme that could run through it is “Just do it.” In James 1:22 he says, “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive ourselves listening to sermons, reading the Bible, underlining this part, making notes on the part, but then close it up and do nothing about it.

On the other hand, James tells us, “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” (1:25). In other words, we are not blessed on what we know, but on what we do. Have we ever thought about this? What environment can we put ourselves in that is likely to create a capacity for the most sin in our lives? We could go to nightclub, for instance, and get caught up in all kinds of sin, but is that where we would increase our capacity of sin? The answer is “no”.

The place where we are more likely to increase our capacity for sin is in church, because as James says, “If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them” (4:17). He teaches that all the things we hear when we stand before God are not addressing a theological examination – what do you know – but is addressing what do you do? Alan Redpath has said the biggest need of most Christians is not to know more, but to start doing what they know. Christian doctrine is the basis of action, but detached from action, the doctrine is dead, as is our faith. James writes: “If one of you says to them 'Go in peace; keep warm and well fed', but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead” (2:16-16).

Therefore, the reality of Christ in our lives will not be seen in what we know, but in doing what we know.

Prayer: Dear Lord, help me to first have a correct understanding of your word, and then adhere to it and act upon it. Thank You, Lord.