

JAMES

A Faith That Works

Study 4

Introduction

The Christian and the Word (Part 1)

James 1:18-21

A. New Birth By the Word

James 1:18

He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

1) a) Discussion question. “He chose to give us birth through the word of truth” is quite a complex sentence, we’ll break it down:

i) What does “Give us birth” mean?

It means being born again as new humans/humans with a new nature/Christians or Spiritual birth, i.e., regeneration (John 3:3, 5, 7)

ii) Who initiated the process of “giving birth”?

God.

iii) What’s another term for “word of truth”?

The gospel, “the power of God that brings salvation” (Rom 1:16; see 2 Cor 6:7; Eph 1:13; Col 1:5; 2 Tim 2:15).

b) Discussion question. Why is it important to know that we Christians are “firstfruits” ?

Because we are the good harvest and God won’t pollute or torture the harvest.

B. Implications of the New Birth

James 1:19-21

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

2) a) Objective question. Choose the most appropriate. In verse 21, which of the following can “save you”:

- A. Getting rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent
- B. Accepting the word planted in you in a humble manner

b) Discussion question. What happens to seeds that are planted in an environment that is constantly toxic and polluted? Can it grow and bear fruit?

c) Fill in the blanks. According to the video lecture and Verse 19, what does it mean to “humbly accept the word”/being receptive to the word?

d) Objective question. Select all that apply. According to the lecture, how we receive the word is critical. How should a receptive person receive the word?

- A. Received with meekness.
- B. Slow to hear.
- C. Quick to speak.
- D. Slow to anger.
- E. Refuse to listen
- F. Slow to speak
- G. Quick to listen

e) Fill in the blanks on what being receptive looks like and write the opposite in the “non-receptive” column.

| “humbly accept the word”/being receptive | Not humbly accepting the word/ non-receptive |
|--|---|
| receive with meekness | Rejective with arrogance |
| quick to listen | Slow to listen |
| slow to speak | quick to speak |
| slow to become angry, | quick to angry |

f) Discussion question. Verse 20 says “human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.” Does it mean that humans are not allowed to be angry at all?

Can, for righteous reasons, verse 19 says “slow to anger” not “cannot anger”.

g) Reflection question. Out of 1000 times you got angry in your life, how many times is it because you are: defending the poor or standing up to bullies for a vulnerable person?

Takeaway

Christians being born-again under God’s will are able to grow and mature to be more like Christ through the seed of gospel planted in us. They are receptive to the word by being quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to anger.

Case Study

Case 1 – Anger and Spiritual Growth

Ang Ger Ree is a man in his sixties and has been a Christian for 20 years. He works in a construction setting manages a team of construction workers.

One day, Ger Ree got into a heated argument with another member of his church because he was double-parked and had to wait a whole hour because the driver blocking his car didn’t pick up his phone. The whole car park could hear him scolding the apologetic member who quietly accepted the yelling before quickly reparking his car.

1) a) Discussion question. You attend the same lifegroup as Ger Ree and witnessed this situation, what would you do?

Case 1.1

Ger Ree’s lifegroup leader approached him and gently reminded him to be not quick to anger as in James 1:19 says.

Ger Ree dismissed that and said: "I'm like this for many years already, cannot change one lah."

b) Discussion question. Is the gospel seed planted (which has God's power) limited by age?

c) Reflection question. In your life, do you think you will advice a person with anger management issues or would you avoid them and leave them in their toxic environment?

d) Reflection question. What are the situations that tend to cause you to erupt in anger?

e) Reflection question. What are some truths you can remind yourself the next time you face a challenging situation?