

THE BIBLE-TRANSFORMATION

Text - James 1:19-25

Introduction: Someone has written:

I am the Bible. I am God's wonderful library.

I am always—and above all—the truth.

To the weary pilgrim, I am a good, strong staff.

To the one who sits in black gloom, I am glorious Light.

To those who stoop beneath heavy burdens, I am sweet Rest.

To him who has lost his way, I am a safe Guide.

To those who have been hurt by sin, I am a healing Balm.

To the discouraged, I whisper a glad message of Hope.

To those distressed by the storms of life, I am an Anchor, sure and steadfast.

To those who suffer in loneliness, I am a soft Hand resting on a fevered brow.

Oh, child of man, to best defend me, **just use me.**

The Bible is all that the writer described it to be. It is all that anyone can ever need. Yet, the way to experience all that the Bible can mean to you as a believer, is found in the words of the writer: "**Just use me.**" If I were to sum up all that James is saying in verses 19-25, it would be, "Just use me." One survey found that 27 percent of all Americans own at least five Bibles. Yet a poll in *USA Today* found that only 11 percent of Americans read the Bible every day. More than half read it less than once a month or not at all.

Even worse, George Barna conducted a survey of "born again" Christians and found that only 18 percent (2 out of 10) read the Bible every day, and even worse, 23 percent (1 in 4) professing Christians say they never read the Bible.

It is not enough to own a Bible. One must read the Bible and use the Bible. We see in verse 18, that the Word of God was the instrument of our new birth. We read, "*Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth.*" We were born again through the power of the Word of God. Verse 19 begins with the word "*Wherefore.*" The word indicates that the instructions that are about to be given are given in light of the place the Word of God had in our salvation.

7. **In a nutshell, the Bible is to be used in our life.** Let's look at these 7 verses and notice the place the Word of God is to have in our life as a believer.

1. OUR AFFECTION FOR THE WORD..... HEAR

1. In verses 19-21a, the emphasis seems to be on how we feel about the Bible. It speaks of our affection for the Bible. Luke 8:18 says, "*Take heed therefore how ye hear*" and Mark 4:24 says, "*Take heed what ye hear.*" We are to take heed "how" we hear and "what" we hear.

A. *Unlimited Hearing.*

When it comes to hearing the Word, we are to avail ourselves of every opportunity to do so. Our hearing should not be occasional or irregular.

B. *Unhindered Hearing*

1. In verse 21 we see "*Wherefore.*" In light this, we are instructed to, "lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness." There is a response and a removal.

2. OUR ACCEPTANCE OF THE WORD..... RECEIVE

We read in verse 21, "*and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.*"

A. *The Welcome We Are To Give*-Notice the word "receive." It simply means, "to welcome." Like a friend ...

B. *The Work We Are To Grant*- Verse 21 - the "engrafted word." It means, "to plant a seed in the ground." It speaks of allowing the Word to work in our lives.

3. OUR ABIDING IN THE WORD..... DO

In verse 22 - "*But be ye.*" The words speak of that which is "continual." It speaks of that which abides or is habitual in a person's life.

A. *The Picture That Explains Abiding*- verses 23-25, James sets in contrast the "doer" and "hearer only" of the Word. The picture is of each looking into a mirror. The word "glass" in verse 23 speaks of a mirror. In verses 23-24 we see one who is a hearer only:"

B. *The Promise That Encourages Abiding*- verse 25: "*this man shall be blessed in his deed.*" James says that God blesses the one who abides in the Word. Do you want to be blessed by God? Then hear His word, receive His word, and obey His word.

In light of all James says, I say: "The B-I-B-L-E: THAT'S THE BOOK FOR ME!"