

“Steadfast Part 2: Undefined” (1-29-23)

Introduction: Personal story of being unaware

1) Receptive

James 1:19-20 (ESV)

(19) Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger;
(20) for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

Note: I don't even need to explain this, it's the spirit of our age. So quick to react, speak out, and lash out in anger - even in the name of good! Guess what - that will never produce the righteousness of God!

- Instead - we need to develop of a quick reaction of listening!
- So what should I be quick to hear? . . .

James 1:21 (ESV)

Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

Note: James redirects us from an outward focus - quick to react and be angry - to an internal awareness!

Put away your sin (like changing your clothes in a hurry!) - it pollutes and corrupts

Instead - receive the Word with . . .

Meekness - does not mean weakness!

Praútēs (Greek word): according to **Aristotle**, is the middle standing between two extremes:

getting angry without reason / and not getting angry at all

Therefore, praútēs is getting angry at the right time, in the right measure, and for the right reason.

(Not aggressive or defensive / not passive & apathetic -resigned to failure)

Open to honest assessment, and willing to hear that which can produce real change - **the implanted word!**

Matthew 5:5 (ESV)

“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”

2) Responsive

James 1:22 (ESV)

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

Note: We have a generation of hearers & agreeers - don't be agreeers only and deceive yourself!

Often, We know the right things - and we know how others ought to be applying it in their lives. We know how it would change the world if people would just get on board with the truth.

We critique everyone & everything - the world is wrong, the church is wrong, boomers - wrong / millennials - wrong / Gen Z . . .

All too often, we hear & agree with truth, and deceive ourselves into thinking we are something we are not . . .

James 1:23-24 (ESV)

(23) For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. (24) For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like.

Note: We are being warned to have more self-awareness. In fact, more than that - not just self-awareness, but real reflection on the Word, that leads to real change of heart (implanted word) and therefore action . . .

James 1:25 (ESV)

But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

Note: Perseveres means: abide

- **Abide in the Word**

Jesus speaks on abiding . . .

John 8:31 (ESV)

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples,

John 15:5 (ESV)

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

- **Respond to the Word**

Jesus speaks on responding . . .

Matthew 7:24-25 (ESV)

(24) "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. (25) And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.

Matthew 7:26-27 (ESV)

(26) And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. (27) And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."

Alex's explanation - Sand vs. Rock building - The doing is the digging - how does this apply in a real way to what's going on.

Am I looking honestly in the mirror? Will I let the word reveal, will I receive that truth, & be responsive to it?

Conclusion: Having a receptive heart & responsive life produces real meaningful change . . .

James 1:26-27 (ESV)

(26) If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. (27) Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

Note: Religious means: Devout worship and service to God. The true form of this is . . .

- Keeping yourself unstained from the world
- Serving those afflicted by the world