

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

“HE THAT HEARETH, AND DOETH NOT”

By John Edwards

A reading of Luke 6:46-49 reveals two different people: The individual who hears the Lord’s sayings *“and doeth them”* (vv. 47-48) and *“he that heareth, and doeth not”* (v. 49). This brief writing takes a look at the individual who hears, but does not do what the Lord says.

HE IS LIKE A FOOLISH MAN. The Lord said, *“And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it”* (Matt. 7:26-27). Wise men hear and do (vv. 24-25)!

HE IS BAD SOIL. In the parable of the sower, as recorded in Luke 8:4-15, the only place the seed produced was *“on good ground”* (v. 8). This represents *“...they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience”* (v. 15). The other three places the seed fell (by the way side, upon a rock, and among thorns) were bad soil. Those with *“an honest and good heart”*, represented by the good ground, hear and do. To hear and not do is to be bad soil!

HE WILL DIE IN HIS INIQUITY. God tasked Ezekiel with being *“a watchman unto the house of Israel”* to *“hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me”* (Ezek. 33:7-9). The Lord said, *“Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul”* (v. 9). How sad for the wicked to have been warned, but not turn from his way! Such a one who hears, but does not do *“shall die in his iniquity”*.

HE IS NOT JUST BEFORE GOD. It is written in Romans 2:13, *“For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.”*

HE IS DECEIVING HIMSELF. James taught, *“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was”* (Jas. 1:22-24).

HE IS NOT BLESSED. The *“doer of the work”* is the man who *“shall be blessed”* (Jas. 1:25). When giving instruction to His people the Lord said, *“Blessed is the man that doeth this...”* (Is. 56:2). The blessed man of Revelation 1:3 is *“...he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein...”*

HE DOES NOT LOVE THE LORD. A man who loves the Lord does what the Lord says do. Jesus said, *“If ye love me, keep my commandments”* (Jn. 14:15). Again, *“If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings...”* (Jn. 14:23-24). Show me the man who hears and does what the Lord says, and I’ll show you the man who truly loves the Lord. ■

“Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it” (Matt. 7:24-27 KJV).

“Doing” Leads to “Understanding”

By Heath Rogers

Christians are to **“be doers of the word, and not hearers only,”** deceiving ourselves (Jas. 1:22). The word of God is able to save our souls (v. 21), but only when we respond to it in faithful obedience. We have great incentive to obey God’s commands; we want to be saved.

Another benefit of obedience is found in the closing verse of Psalm 111. **“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever.”** (v. 10, emphasis mine – HR). The most obvious thing we can do to learn more about God’s word is to read the Bible. However, good understanding also comes from applying what we read to our lives by obeying God’s commandments.

God’s ways are high above our own. We gain valuable insight into God’s character, righteousness, wisdom, and love when we step off the sidelines and decide to become a faithful doer of His word. Having the desire to do something drives us to learn more about it. Jesus said, **“If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority”** (John 7:17).

Consider this illustration: I can listen as someone gives my wife a recipe. I hear the same instructions she does, but they mean more to her. She understands and retains the information better because she intends to do it.

Joshua was told, **“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success”** (Josh. 1:8). Notice the order given to Joshua. First he was to meditate day and night, then he would be equipped to observe to do all that is written in God’s law. This is by God’s design. In preparing ourselves to obey, God is granted access to our hearts and minds. His words now have special meaning to us because we intend to follow them.

An important part of our spiritual transformation is the renewing of our minds (Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:23). God is powerless to do this without our cooperation. The best candidates He has for this renewal are those who intend to obey His word in every aspect of their lives. **“Doers of the word”** listen differently. We don’t successfully perform God’s commandments by accident. They are contrary to the ways of this world. Obedience is rendered from those who care enough to listen and learn God’s will.

Sometimes, after doing God’s will, we can see the end results and truly understand that God’s commands are for our good (Deut. 6:24). We can have questions and doubts when we look ahead to the task of obeying a specific command, but when it is accomplished, we have the perspective of experience, which gives us clarity and understanding. Much of this understanding comes from the pages of Scripture. We can read and see the blessings enjoyed by those who obeyed God’s commands. We can also learn this lesson from those around us today. However, if we want to understand the word of God even more, we must commit ourselves to doing what the Bible tells us to do in every part of our lives. ■

“Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:37-42 KJV).

Service Times — Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM — Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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