



Application is Everything
James 1:22-25; Matthew 7:24-25
Message from Pastor Martin Hawley
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Idea: Application makes all the difference.

Introduction:

We are launching a new series today: *Life Apps*. We are going to talk about five specific life applications or practices that Christians are instructed to embrace as part of their lifestyles.

If you are not a Christian, these are optional. You may try them if you want to, but you are certainly not expected or required to do them. You might be surprised that some of these are mentioned in the Bible and expected of Christians – not because you haven't read the Bible, but because you know some "Christians" who don't do these things!

The New Testament authors assumed a relationship. They assumed their audience had a personal relationship with God; therefore, they submitted to his rule in their lives. They began their letters with statements like, "To the saints ..."

The church often loses sight of this. We start with obey instead of follow. We have a tendency of putting obey in front of believe. Then, the church starts telling non-church people what they should do, how they should live, how they should conduct relationships...even though the Apostle Paul told us not to judge those outside the church!

Truth:

The new Testament teaches followers of Jesus that application makes all the difference.

“Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves (James 1:22 TNIV).”

We give ourselves credit for just being here.

We assume there’s some good in hearing.

Church attendance is a “religious experience” for some.

Feeling guilty is a “religious experience” for others.

James just shakes his head and says, “Do what it says (James 1:22 TNIV).”

“Those who listen to the word but do not do what it says are like people who look at their faces in a mirror and after looking at themselves, go away and immediately forget what they look like (James 1:23-24 TNIV).”

James is speaking of that “Oh, Wow!” thing we feel in the morning when we first see ourselves in the mirror. We believe something needs to be done, and we do something about what we see. In contrast, when our behavior is exposed, we just go, “Oh wow, I really ought to…” and do nothing.

“But those who look intently into the perfect law that gives freedom... (James 1:25 TNIV).”

Freedom? Really? Feels like restriction to me...

The Bible teaches...

- Give, Save, Live.
- Sexual purity paves the way to intimacy.
- God works through authority, so obey your parents and the law.
- Forgive.
- My body is a temple, so honor God with my body.

None of these seem very liberating at the time, but later, all of these provide amazing liberty!

“But those who look intently into the perfect law that gives freedom and continue in it – not forgetting what they have heard but doing it – they will be blessed in what they do (James 1:25 TNIV).”

Application makes all the difference!

Conclusion:

Here's Jesus version: "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock (Matthew 7:24-25 TNIV)."

Application makes all the difference.

Lane Jones said, "Unapplied truth is like unapplied paint. It doesn't do anybody any good. The value is in the application."

I hope you will be a doer, not just a hearer. Application makes all the difference.

NEXT STEPS:

- Memorize: James 1:22.**
- Meditate on James 1:22-25 and Matthew 7:24-25**
- What are your "Oh Wow!" behaviors?**
- What are you going to DO about them?**
- Join Us Next Week for Life Apps-Part 2: The Forgiveness App.**