

How to Prepare Your Heart for the Word

by Rolfe Barnard

Rolfe Barnard emphasizes the critical need for individuals to prepare their hearts to receive God's truth effectively.

Duration: 47:13

Scripture: Hosea 10:12, Matthew 13:1-9, James 1:19, James 1:21-25

Topics: "Heart Preparation", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of preparing one's heart to receive the word of God. He shares a tragic example of someone who initially shows enthusiasm for the faith but quickly loses interest and falls away because their heart was not rooted in the word. The speaker refers to James 1:19-21, where James advises believers to prepare their hearts to receive the word. He also mentions the book of Hosea, where God instructs sinners to sow righteousness and break up the hardened ground of their hearts. The speaker concludes by praying for the Holy Spirit to prepare the hearts of the listeners to receive the truth of the gospel.

Transcript

What I finally decided on is the mind of the Lord. At any rate, I want to speak very carefully as I can tonight on the subject of preparing one's heart to receive God's truth. Preparing your own heart to receive the engrafted word which is able to save the soul.

Let's begin reading in the first chapter of James at, well, we'll begin with verse 16 of James chapter 1. Do not fear, my beloved brethren, every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no favorableness. Be the shadow of turning, of his own will, beget he us with the word truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. Wherefore, now listen to this carefully, it be true that of God's own will, by the use and means of truth, we were born into the kingdom of God.

How desperately we need to hear if we value our souls. This is the 19th verse. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath, for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

Wherefore, he's adoring now, he's advising now, he's speaking to us now. Wherefore, lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to

save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

Now, today, I'm sure, that we would not address someone whom we, using what means we have about us, and what spiritual discernment we have about us, we would say that person is not one of God's children yet, he's not been brought by faith in the Lord to God. We wouldn't address him as a brother, beloved brethren. But I'm persuaded that the early Jewish preachers, and James was the Jewish preacher, my sole address to fellow Hebrews in these times, because they didn't mean that they believed they were in Christ, but they were fellow Jews.

Well, whether that be true or not, you know, it says in verse 16, he addresses them as my beloved brethren. And he's talking to somebody that he loves, he calls them brother. I do believe, whether that's the right interpretation of this or not, that the words of James, here in verse 19, wherefore my beloved brethren, for excellent advice, form these words, from 19 down through verse 21, three verses, in which we find some excellent advice from James to anyone who is not yet united to the Lord Jesus.

Here are three, by way of advice, here are three things in these verses that are addressed to unsaved men and women who would prepare their hearts to receive what he calls in verse 21, the engrafted word. And he says that this engrafted word is able to save your soul. Now, it may seem strange that a preacher would say that if anybody wishes to become vitally united to Christ, not just stand afar off and claim to believe in his atoning word, but to be united to Christ, for we definitely hold that you cannot have the merits of Christ's blood unless you have him, that you cannot separate him from what he did.

We believe with all of our hearts that multitudes of people, honestly and earnestly, are doing what they say, trusting in the shed blood of Christ, but they're not saved. Because we do not believe that unless you have regenerated, you can participate in the merits of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. And thus we say to men and women that if you would, in these days of religious confusion, where everybody has a gospel and everybody has a doctrine and everybody has six interpretations of those individual doctrines, what I say is just what I say, and there's not much respect for what anybody says, that if you value your soul's welfare, you'll take seriously the injunction of the prophet James here, the apostle James, to prepare your heart.

Did you get it? You'll spend all the days of your life talking about how you believe in the word, how you trust him in the blood, but an unprepared heart cannot perceive the word of truth, and the only way to be born of the spirit is by the incorruptible word of the living God. That introduces me to the biggest tragedy of my ministry as I go from place to place. I wonder if anybody gets saved, because nobody's got time to prepare his heart.

You didn't prepare your heart for whatever message the Lord would have for you tonight. You didn't have time, did you? Did you? So it'll just bounce off of you, and it'll go in one ear and out the other. Won't be my fault.

Won't be the fault of the word. Your heart cannot perceive truth unless it's been plowed, unless it's been prepared. Do you see it? That's so.

I don't care if you're a Christian. You don't get a thing out of anybody's divine service. Now, God's time of service is these days, because we don't have time.

Nor do we feel the necessity of plowing our own hearts and preparing our own hearts, so that if the seed were to drop, it'd fall on good ground. We're reminded, of course, in the book of Proverbs, at chapter 16, verse 1, and you can turn to it later if you want to, that the preparation of the heart's the work of God. I'll turn to that at Mark.

The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue is where? It's from the Lord. But we're also told in the word of God, in Hosea, I also got that mark. No one takes long to find it.

Soul to yourselves in righteousness. Now, this is something that the sinner's addressed. He said, now, God said, you.

Over in Proverbs, it said, this is the work of God. That's so. In Hosea, God tells the sinner to soul to yourselves in righteousness.

And if you do, you'll reap in mercy. Break up your power now. For it is time to seek the Lord.

And you seek him till he comes, and reign righteousness upon you. Now, any spiritual truth that falls on bad ground doesn't bear fruit, does it? Isn't that right? In the 13th chapter of the book of Matthew, we are told plainly over and over again in those different parables. I'll not time seven, but you remember them.

The parable of the sower and the seed. He went out and he sowed seed, and the seed was good. Nothing on earth wrong with the seed, or the sowing of the seed.

The trouble was that he sowed it on four kinds of ground, and only one ground was prepared. And so the seed fell on some ground, and the fellow was gloriously converted. You remember how old Bill got gloriously converted? You remember about that, you know.

And he shouted, and he just knocked the home run, and he went down on the streets, and he told everybody about how God had saved him. And two weeks later, he folded up his tent, taken down the flag, and taken out. You see, there was no root there, the Scriptures say.

And he flashed for a little while, but because the seed didn't take root, is that right? First time a little windstorm, but as much as he came, he played out. He played out and on and on. But there was one type of ground and one type of owner that had been thoroughly prepared.

And this is interesting in view of the fact that James is inviting men and women, is giving some advice about how we are here, how we are to hear the word of God. And the book of Hosea will advise us to sow for our self-righteousness, and to break up the sour ground in our own hearts. And somebody says, explain that.

I don't have to. I didn't write them. I'm not the author of the Bible.

They say, well, I can't understand that. Well, that makes two of us. There's very little in the life of ours that we can understand, but thank God we can believe.

Now, if any kind of spiritual truth comes your way, unless your heart has been prepared to receive truth, you can't receive it. You can't receive it. It just can't be done.

The truth just bounces off. Bounces off. I talked to a preacher in Texas the other day, and he said, Brother Martin, I can't understand.

I went through college, Baptist college. I went through seminary for three years. I taught in one of our Baptist schools.

I passed the Baptist churches and held evangelistic campaigns all over the West two years ago. I had never seen anything in the word of God about salvation by grace. He said, now pick up my Bible.

It's on every page. But until two and a half years ago, I'd read the same verses. I'd study the same chapters.

I'd preach out the same books. And I'd read the verses. And what the verses said just went in one ear and out the other.

And he was not able to receive truth, even that preacher, until God had brought this thing and that thing and that thing and the other thing on his life, until he was at a prepared heart. Now, that's true of an unsaved person. You can't serve this until you're blue in the face and do what you call a listen, but until you take seriously the fact that only by receiving the words, especially until it takes root in you, is any salvation produced, and that no seed will take root unless the heart is prepared.

You ought to say, that's a tragedy. My tragedy now is I go up and down the country. I get one person in the service one night.

People go out and visit and ring doorbells, and finally they get rid of some importunate church member. That old unsaved fellow will do them a favor, and he'll attend the meeting one night. But the next night he goes to the picture show or bowling or something, you see.

And the next night he goes somewhere else. And it doesn't happen. It's hard.

It's not planned. This is fundamental. This is fundamental.

Now, James says in these verses, verses 19 through 21, he lays down three things that men who were interested in preparing their hearts so that it was seen, being grafted, or the word that we'd understand a little better, especially if you're a farmer, the root it was. The seed was sown, and it took root. Is that right? You plant a grain of corn in the dirt, and that's why it takes root.

Is that right? You plant a little sapling, and it takes root. If you have a tree, it's got to go down first before it goes up. Isn't that right? And that's true in this business.

Salvation service is not saved accidentally. And the fellows say, well, now, the preacher tells me that the sinner can't save himself. That's right.

And the preacher tells him, the sinner is helpless. That's right. But the last thing the lost man could do, he could look at himself through God's law.

There's not a lost man this side of hell that could be prevented, if he wanted to, from buying him a Bible. He can get at least a New Testament for a quarter, I guess, down at Woolworth's. I don't guess it costs any more than that.

He used to get one for a nickel or a dime. And nothing could keep a man from reading carefully what God says about him. A man could do that, couldn't he? And a man could set himself to get him to pick him a shovel and start plowing his own hearth.

Nothing could keep a lost man from doing that, is there? Now, that wouldn't save him. But unless the sinner's heart becomes so that the seed will take root. Now, he may make a confession.

He may have some kind of experience. But unless the seed of the gospel takes root, he'll not bear fruit. And if you're not bearing fruit, you're not God's child.

Is that all right? All right. So I'm interested, as I've woken down from preaching to men, in telling them what James says. He says there are three things that an unsaved man ought to do.

If that unsaved man is interested in having a heart that can receive, the truth don't bounce off it. Some of it gets down in there. See what I'm talking about? And these three things are first.

The sinner must cease from rebelling against the word of truth. Look again at verse 18. Of his own will, beget us with the what? Not apart from, but with the word of truth.

And that which is told truth must be killed. And there's no power on earth that could keep the vilest sinner out of hell from making all the effort that a man can make. That's all a man can do.

Whatever's the best a man can do, that's the best he can do. But he couldn't do that, couldn't he? And he couldn't make an effort to cease by spiritual truth. Look what James says about it.

In view of the fact, did you get it here? Of his own will, beget he us with the word of truth. Nor that we should be a kind of first fruits of his preachers. Wherefore? In view of the fact that men are born again of the Holy Spirit for the use of the truth of the gospel.

Wherefore, my beloved brethren? Let every man be swift in his act. Let him clean out his hair. Let him get the wax out of his hair.

Let him spit on his hands. Let him roll up his sleeves. Let him become a winner.

Let him be swift to hear. And cut out all this business of bucking the truth. Guys, those, when the gospel's preached, they're not swift to hear.

They don't make an effort to hear. Make an effort to hear. Most everywhere I go, a problem of order in a church service is something.

Most everywhere I go, most Sunday school teachers cannot get their youngsters quiet long enough. To quote a verse of scripture, I'm telling you the truth. Men are not keen to hear now.

But in view of the fact that of his own will he began us with the word of truth. James says, wherefore? Let every man be swift to hear. Be swift to hear.

And nothing keep you from hearing, is it? Except you don't want to. Is it? And this word must be heard. And it must be heard.

And not bought and received until it takes root. That's right. If it don't, we'll just have another floated-back conversion went on to him.

It's got to take root. It's got to take root. People are swift, but they, to now, they inherit nothings against the truth of God.

And to do it was a good ego of inmates, it looks like. A lady rushed up to me the other day down in Texas. She was shaking.

Her eyes were full of tears. Her voice was choked. And she was in terrible shape.

I didn't know who she was. It turned out later that a preacher had warned her about what a terrible fellow I am and about my terrible doctrine. And warned and told her not to come down to preach.

But she was a Sunday school teacher and a member of the church. And she came on in. But she was set back.

Not to hear. Not to hear. She wasn't swift to hear.

She came to resist whatever was said. Now, when I'm saying man wants to be dead, sure he goes to hell. Instead of being swift to listen.

Let him voice his ignorant mouthings. And be ungrateful. And show his wrath and his rebellion and his enmity against the truth of God.

This woman came and she was torn all to pieces. I didn't know who she was. Later I learned.

And because I didn't know who she was, I think the Lord helped me deal with it. Otherwise, the flesh might have got in. Very gently.

She was half-stuffed up. And said, Brother, I'm just torn all to pieces. And you're telling everything that I've ever heard.

That all I've ever heard is against what you're preaching. And I said, well, I'm sorry to hear that. I didn't know who she was.

I said, what was it about the message tonight that disgusted you so much? She said, well, it was this morning and tonight. I said, I've just walked the floor all day since the morning service. And a little hand thing like that got torn all to pieces.

And said, my boy. She had an 18-year-old boy. I said, he asked me to explain it.

And said, I can't. And he was in desperate condition. And I said, well, tell me.

Tell me what it is. Maybe I'm wrong. I'll listen.

God knows I will. And she said, well, so and so. And I said, well, you didn't quote all the verse.

Well, she said, what is it? I said, you're the one that started it. You pulled it from. She said, I don't know.

I don't even know where it's found in the Bible. See, she had all but well informed to be so torn up and to be certain that what she was hearing was not so. See, she prepared not to believe the things she heard.

She couldn't help it. She'd been warned. Now, if there's a person here tonight that's not a Christian, and you want to be dead sure, you go to hell.

You keep all closed in your mind and refusing to be swift to hear the truth of God. I don't care if I may come from a donkey. You be swift not to rebel, but to listen to God's truth.

See what I mean? Well, it turned out it was the woman that she began to quote part of the Scriptures. And I said, yes, that's how and so and so. But she didn't quote all of it.

And we turned to her and read. She said, well, I never saw that. And then she said some of the things you said.

I said, well, do I have Bible? She said, I don't know. And I said, well, let's turn to some of the Scriptures. And we'll reread them again that I quoted.

And you tell me what you've got to find fault with what the Scriptures say. And we turned and read some of them. She said, I've never seen them in the Scriptures.

I'm using that as an illustration. Don't be in such a big hurry to go crawling in the mouth if you can't even quote all the Scriptures you've heard from somebody. Be swift to hear and a little slower to rebel.

James says, therefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to give. In view of what? You have heard 18, that we have forgotten the bond of the Spirit through the word of truth. Now, I think that if you'll allow me, I think you will.

I want to mention five great teachings of the word of God about which men rebel. Unsaved men will rebel against all five of these things, or they'll rebel against any of them, unless your heart's prepared. You'll keep on beckoning.

Keep on going. You had some preacher make fun of. You'll keep on bugging.

You'll take a profession. You'll go through the motions. And you'll split hell wide open.

For only a prepared heart can take these five, five of these. You cannot but help rebel against what the Bible says about the kind of person you are. I'm telling you, when you pick up the word of God and start to trust, just find out what it says about you and me.

Just stick out your tongue. Let all those snakes come out. Look at your feet.

They're swift to shed blood. Just look at you from your mother's womb. You went about full of lies and hypocrisy.

From the whole top of your head to the bottom of your feet. Isaiah says you're just one mass of putrefying soil. He says you're dumb.

He says you haven't got as much sense as a donkey. He says the ass knows his master's crib. And you don't even know it.

That's what it says. Oh, if the Bible don't say some terrible things about us folks. And you can't take it.

You rebel against it. And you're going to keep on rebelling against it until you wind up in hell. Unless you make up your mind.

You value your eternity by himself. And you get you a block of paper or a picture and start preparing your heart. Asking God to enable some of the truth about yourself to sink in here.

And take root until you get a little alarmed. And you get desperate to find out whether there's any hope for a fellow to the biggest sinner you are. You just can't take that.

Really on this apart from a prepared heart. Says your best righteousness is a filthy right. Says you drink iniquity like water.

You get a lack of something. Says you're very plowing. You're sad.

Says your imagination is evil. Your thoughts are rotten. And if it could open up you now, it would cover all of these filthy things.

The Bible talks that way about men. And unto a tired heart above that's yours. You put on it.

Yet you'll have to see. Unless it's brought home to you. What kind of person you are.

Because being a human being from Adam's fallen race. You'll never be interested in a doctor as long as you've just got a headache. You're going to have to get drunk sick.

Before you start screaming for a doctor. Be swift to hear what God says about God. And if I'm preaching to nice people it's a different thing.

But I'm not preaching to nice people. I'm preaching to people who are born in sin, conceived in iniquity. And you're a cesspool in a hotbed of rebellion against God.

You hate everything that's high and holy. You are not for the restraining power of the spirit of God. In the influence of the gospel.

And oh well, this will be a madhouse tonight. And you know it. You're not nice people.

You're ruined people. You're rebellious people. You're stiff necked people.

And you don't like to be told it. And you're going to go to hell fighting it. Unless your heart is prepared to receive God's truth about yourself.

Then there's another teaching of the word of God that's wrapped up in this business of the need of a prepared heart. And men do not get saved apart from being confronted with the strictness and the severity of God's holy law. Where no law is preached, there's no gospel preached.

Because the gospel can only be preached in the context of the holy law of God. And where men and women are not awakened by the utter strictness and the terrible severity of God's holy law, they'll never be interested, rarely, in having a part in the merits of the shed blood of the redeemer dying on the cross. I know that's so.

And yet, I'm not talking to nice people tonight. All on God's earth, I've got to do to an unsaved man is in the name of God, tell him not to do something and he'll split hell wide open to do it. It's his nature.

All you've got to do with that little child sitting by you is say, you be damned if you don't do so and so. And they'll do it if you kill them. It's in their nature.

They hate law. They hate restriction. That's right, isn't it? And yet, unless a man is confronted with and becomes swift to hear how terribly strict God's holy law is and how unutterably, horribly severe His law is,

they'll never be interested in the Lord Jesus Christ and only a prepared heart can receive that truth.

The rest of it will bounce off of you. It bounced off of me, brother, and I made out of the same piece of cloth you are. It'll bounce off of you.

And yet, you've got to face it. You better become swift to hear how strict God's law is, how severe God's law is. If it's as strict as the Bible says it is, youth, death, joy, needless age.

If it's as severe as the Bible says it is, my, how terrible it'll be to go out and meet God in whose hand will be the penalty, and He'll bring its flash upon the backs of men and women who've broken His holy law. There's a third Bible truth that cannot be received except by a prepared heart, and that's the absoluteness of the sovereignty of God. I don't mean the sovereignty of God.

Everybody's believing the sovereignty of God now, but the absoluteness. We live in a day now when everybody accepts the Lord. You know that? The wickedest man in town will brag on the Lord.

That's right. Everybody accepts the Lord. But the Lord they accept has been strict with His laws.

You take Khrushchev, who was premier of whatever he was, I don't know what the title was, secretary of the Communist Party, whatever it was. If you take him out of his office, he's pretty likeable sort of a fellow. And if you take Christ out of his office, people take him as a buddy-buddy.

All the Hollywood actors and the Lord, they buddy-buddy. I don't know what your eschatology is. That's a big word.

That's all the truth I've heard in school. I don't know what your views of the Second Coming are, but I have to read the sports page every morning when I get a paper. You tell a man a character, when he gets a paper, what he turns to first, real brilliant smart people turn to the sports page.

The reason I do this is I've got to find out whether last year's taking place or not. If the Christians are still playing ball on Sunday, I know the rats are having a great time. This fall I'll have to watch the football games on Sunday to see if the Christians are playing.

Yeah, I know the rats are having a great time. See what I mean? Everybody's done got buddy-buddy with this little Lord that everybody likes to be, but it's the Lord's script of the absoluteness of his operation, and you can't take it. I don't care how big a profession you make.

If you buck it, you rebel it, you turn Tom's back on the absoluteness, the totalitarian rule and reign and craze of Jesus, you can't take it, brother, except with a prepared heart. Now, shoot, there wouldn't be a bit of trouble on Earth in getting America converted for midnight if everybody in this country would do like most of the preachers have done, preach at Jesus, who has been stripped of his glory. There's no trouble getting people to accept Jesus, this high-spirited Jesus that buddy-buddies with people and lets them go on living for days.

But the difference is this Jesus, who has no rivals, he's absolute. He has the reins of every man's heart in his hands when he exercises those reins. Now, you need to take some time off.

If I speak to somebody here that don't know my Lord, you better take this seriously. You will never get saved if you haven't gone and get serious about this. All this fool stuff they call evangelism now, you will bow your head and lift your hand if you want to be prayed for.

I'm trying to slip up on you and get you and the kings out, you and nobody else knowing it. It don't happen that way. No, sir.

You're going to have to take this thing seriously. The word of the truth of the gospel's got to take root in you. See? And it'll take root in your heart.

Only your heart has been able to suss out the rebellion that's in it, is born with it, against these great truths. That is another truth that men cannot take unless it's with a bad heart. That's the way of salvation and the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Self-righteous people will go to hell saying, I think I'm as good as the other fellow. Isn't that right? I think if that fellow makes it, I'll make it. I'm not such a bad fellow.

You hear those things? And you'll keep talking about these. You'll never care anything about the blood of Christ. You'll never have any interest in the truth that you're in such a desperate condition.

Another, that one with God, has to die or you have to go to hell. You can't take that. You aren't built that way.

And that's not going to branch off of you and save you. That's just going to have to take root. Your heart needs to be prepared.

Now, as I am preaching these thirty-eight years, I've found out some people, at least in their heads, they'll say, well, brother Mark, I can take the sickness and severity of God's law. I can take the fact that the only way I can save is by Jesus dying. I take this harmony of the Lord and so forth.

But when I come to this last truth of the Bible, that all of these are involved in this matter of salvation, that saving faith is not simply the act of the will of a natural man. It's not a moral persuasion, but it's a grace and an inward and spiritual view of Christ in his sweetness and glory. And while you have to exercise faith, God has to work it in you before you can work it out.

And that's the most offensive thing in the Bible. That's what stirs up people in my meetings more than anything. They've heard all their life.

I've said, you'll just take Jesus and you'll save him. Well, that'd be fine if you could do it. And unless you do do it, you're going to hell.

But the most offensive thing in the teaching of the Word of God is God requires faith. And you ain't got it unless he gives it to you. You can make all the decisions you want to.

You'll never be joined to Christ. Now, that's offensive, isn't it? If you don't quit rebelling against it, and start preparing your heart to ask God to break up your whole heart You have to throw your rebellion down and become a swift-to-hear person, praying that the truth may be buried in there, rooted in there, where we're born for the will of God through the Word of truth. Men just can't take that.

And therefore it's left out of what's called preaching today. But God bless you. Your heart needs to be prepared.

Unless it is, you'll rebel at every one of these fights. You just can't take them with a heart that hasn't been plowed. James says you'd be swift to hear.

Now, I've spent most of the time, I want to mention two other things without preaching on them except to just mention them. James also says, and there's another thing, lay aside sin in your life. Now, who's to do this? The man that wants a prepared heart.

The man that wants to be saved. James says that's what you do. You be swift to hear.

You cease your rebellion against truth. And second, you lay aside sin, verse 21. Therefore, lay apart all filthiness and superfluity, of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the invested worth, which is able to save your own self.

Now, I'm not going into that or take up too much time. You can work it out if you're interested. But here, James is not teaching that a man must become sinless and perfect in order to be saved.

For if that's so, nobody's saved. But what James is saying here is that you've got to come to have the heart in mind and being to be willing to lay aside any and all sin, which keeps you from receiving God's truth. Let me repeat that.

God commands you through this man, James, you won't go to heaven when you die. You want to be saved. You better listen to me now.

You better not keep on talking sin. You better lay it aside. You say, well, that saves you? No.

Well, it's a matter of heart preparation. What saves you is the truth taking root in you. Well, it's not going to take root in there as long as there's sin that you hold and you're clean.

Do you see what I mean? And you say, well, what can I do about it? James says, lay it aside. Well, you say, that'd be hard to do. That's right.

That's the reason this man's salvations are negative. That's the reason the scripture says we enter the kingdom through what? Much tribulation. Much tribulation.

Lay aside. Now, I don't know the heart of anybody here. I suppose this part's meant to say, if there's anything, anything that's keeping you from becoming a devoted disciple of my blessed Lord, lay it aside.

That won't save you. But it's heart preparation. It's going to take place before God saves you, and you ought to do that.

Lay aside. Lay aside. And then the last thing that James says is, be like a little bit of child with meekness.

The singing is with what? Meekness. The rooted word. What about this rooted word? The word gets in here.

What happens? That saves the soul. Perceive that rooted, in fact, as we understand, I think it makes more sense to us, rooted. That's a little error of a Greek.

Farmer. Perceive it how? With meekness. That suggests a little child, doesn't it? Not arguing about anything, but in simple, just meekness.

You know one characteristic of a little child that I think James is talking about here, and I know my Lord talked about in his ministry. You know what a little child will do? He'll believe what you tell him. Of course, he gets a little old, and his life is bad, but once he's a little fella, he'll believe what you tell him.

James says, now you want to plant this open seed of the gospel, Paul, and then take root, said his pastor, see. He said, you be like a little child. God says something.

Say amen. That's fine, isn't it? I believe that. God says it in a place.

Amen. Just like a little bit child. But don't argue about it.

Don't argue about it. Don't argue about it. My little girl was a little tiger, and I was on the road.

I never made a trip. Well, that's the end of it. Making her a promise that I'd bring her a present.

I brought her some kind of 10 cent present or something. Every time I came home, she never doubted. She just knew when Daddy came home, and I never failed her.

Why it never occurred to her to argue about it, the wonder whether or not she going to get that gift. She did what I told her. Now James says, you be swift to hear.

Quit bucking truth. Quit rebelling against truth. Hit the waxhouse ears and become a listener.

Be swift to hear. Lay aside whatever sin or sheds. Your trouble's not that you don't understand.

The trouble is this iron sin in you. That's it. You're not going to go to hell because you don't understand the doctrines of the Bible.

If you go to hell, it'll be to pay for your S.I. in sin. You lay aside anything you know about in your life that's keeping you from receiving God's truth, see. And then it's like a little bit of chow.

God says that you just bleed. Amen? You'll have to come to the assurance of God's wonderful salvation. You keep on just breathing what God tells you.

Take time, James would say, to prepare your heart. How can I prepare it? By being swift to hear and slow to avail. By laying aside sin.

By being like a little bit of chow. With meekness, thank you. Meekness, thank you.

Receiving the word, being grafted to the rooted word, which is able to save the soul. May God bless you. I don't know what kind of ground this little folk has fallen on.

I don't know who's here tonight. I can't look inside people's hearts. I don't know how it is with a single person here.

You do, and God does. Let us have a word of prayer. Our Father, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we commit this little message into Thy good, loving, tender, merciful hands.

Commit these people to Thy grace and mercy. And we pray that the Spirit of God might be pleased to speak to every heart in just the way they need to be dealt with by a Christ holy and wonderful and merciful God. Lord, speak to Fudge right now.

And bring men and women face to face with the truth, whatever that be of it, in the message tonight. If it could please thee, those here, if that be those strangers to my Lord, may the Spirit begin within them tonight the preparation of hearts that the truth of the gospel may in time, before it's too late, fall on hearts

that have been prepared, ready to receive the truth of God. For it's by that truth that we're born again, and that's the way we're saved.

Thus we pray, our Father, for Jesus, dear Satan, in His name. Amen.

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