

James 1:22

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

I would like to start off today's devotional with a quote from Billy Graham:

"The greatest sin in America is just listening to sermons."

With that, let me also added today's verse from the Message bible:

† **James 1:22 (MSG) *Don't fool yourself into thinking that you are a listener when you are anything but, letting the Word go in one ear and out the other. Act on what you hear!***

How many times do we (I include myself here) sit in church and just "listen" to a sermon "***letting the Word go in one ear and out the other***"? Sometimes we do because we are not into what the pastor is teaching on, or things are going on in our lives and we don't think we have time to hear what God has to say (Yes, we can say ouch here) or it could be that we have the mind set of "*Heard that one already, and I even read it for myself several times, so I don't need to listen.*" So, we just tune out the message that God gave to the pastor to speak to each and every one of us.

I shared this story before, but I will again, because it applies to today's devotional.

There was a church that was looking for a new pastor, so they had different pastor come in and teach. Well, this one pastor came and preached a great message, and the people knew right away that this was the pastor for their church. So, they asked him if he would be their pastor, which he agreed to.

The following Sunday, the church was packed with standing room only, as the people waited in anticipation for what else the pastor would be teaching about. But to their surprise, he taught the same message again, in fact he did for several weeks. Final the congregation talk to him and said, "*That's a great message, but we heard that already, is that all you got?*"

His reply was, "*Yes I have the entire bible to teach you, but until you start doing what I have taught you in this one message, we can't go on to other things in the bible.*"

That's what happens when we have the "*heard that already*" or "*it doesn't apply to me*" mind set.

Another reason that people don't pay attention in the church, is that they feel that going to church is a duty and that's what God wants them to do. So they do it out of obligation, kind of like our

kids thinking of, *“If I clean my room, then I can play my video games”* They really don’t want to clean their room, they just want to play video games, but they do it because they think they have to. Some sit in church that way, wanting to go out and play, as their minds daydream about what they will do as soon as they get out of there (Church) or where they will go for lunch once this is over.

Others are just downright lazy, they hear the word of God and know what to do as God speaks to them, yet they say in a sense, *“Thanks God, but I’m not interested in doing that or changing my life like that.”* Whereas others will think that the message is for someone else, and even think, *“I wish so and so were here, they really need to hear this message”* But you know what? God has us there, He has the ones He wants there to hear His message. So, let’s stop tuning out the word of God being taught thinking it’s not for me, and start treating it like it was just for us and us alone... which it is in a sense.

† **1 Corinthians 7:17 (MSG)** *And don't be wishing you were someplace else or with someone else. Where you are right now is God's place for you. Live and obey and love and believe right there. God, not your marital status, defines your life. Don't think I'm being harder on you than on the others. I give this same counsel in all the churches.*

† **2 Corinthians 1:4 (MSG)** *He comes alongside us when we go through hard times, and before you know it, he brings us alongside someone else who is going through hard times so that we can be there for that person just as God was there for us.*