

sermon study guide

June 12/13, 2021

(see next page for Sermon Summary)

“How Then Shall We Live?” Part 8: Hearing and Doing

Dr. Henry Schorr

IN - PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. Would you consider yourself someone who loves learning new things just to learn or someone who only learns new things for a specific purpose? Explain.
2. What is something you tend to put off getting done? What is your best strategy for crossing items off your ‘to do’ list?

UP - PURSUE GOD

Read Ephesians 2:8-10 and James 2:17

3. What do these scriptures tell us about the close relationship between faith and works? How would you describe a life lived by faith *and* works? Why is it easy to slip into one or the other?

Read Matthew 7:24-27, James 1:22-24, Ezekiel 33:31, 1 Corinthians 8:1

4. We can be tempted to substitute Bible knowledge for spiritual growth. Why is it easy to be deceived by only “hearing” God’s word and not “doing”? What are the dangers of knowledge without action?

OUT - PURSUE MISSION

5. Pastor Henry mentioned three obstacles that may hinder us from carrying out what we have heard (refer to the summary). Which one do you struggle with the most? What is one step you can take to help overcome this obstacle?
6. How does your trust in Jesus’ death and resurrection remove any doubts that you’re “not doing enough” to earn your salvation?

For Personal Reflection/Prayer:

Pastor Henry said that numbering our days (Psalm 90:12) helps us decide on the one thing we’re giving our lives to. What changes might the Lord be calling you to make? Ask the Lord to help you determine what you need to do more of and what you need to do less of.

THE WORD (NIV)

Ephesians 2:8-10

8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

James 2:17

In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

Matthew 7:24-27

24 “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. 25 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. 26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

James 1:22-24

22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. 23 Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror 24 and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.

Ezekiel 33:31

My people come to you, as they usually do, and sit before you to hear your words, but they do not put them into practice. Their mouths speak of love, but their hearts are greedy for unjust gain.

1 Corinthians 8:1

Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that “We all possess knowledge.” But knowledge puffs up while love builds up.

sermon study summary

“How Then Shall We Live?” Part 8: Hearing and Doing

Dr. Henry Schorr

Over the past few weeks, we have listened to the sermon series “How Then Shall We Live?” We need to pursue relationship with God, pursue relationships with others, pursue mission, pursue generosity, and pursue simplicity. But how many of us have yet to act on what we have heard and made changes to our priorities? Have we been like the wise man who hears God’s words and puts them into practice, or like the foolish man who does not (Matthew 7:24-27)?

Listening and doing should go together. If we merely listen to the Word and not do what it says, we deceive ourselves (James 1:22). There are at least three ways we deceive ourselves. First, we deceive ourselves when we substitute Bible knowledge for spiritual growth. Second, we deceive ourselves when we think that we are already good Christians, and so the sermon applies to others more. Third, we deceive ourselves when after listening to a sermon, we feel convicted or emotionally motivated but do not take any concrete action. The Bible describes listening but not doing as someone who looks at himself in a mirror and immediately forgets what he looks like (James 1:23-24).

Some of us desire to act upon what we hear, but are hindered by the following obstacles which can be overcome:

We are unsure whether acting upon what we hear is enough to please God, so we do nothing. James 2:17 tells us that “faith without works is dead” which means that doing good works is an evidence of faith. Good works naturally flow from a heart that loves God and is grateful for His saving grace. As we are saved by God’s grace alone through our faith and not by works (Ephesians 2: 8-9) we can be confident that we already have God’s acceptance.

We feel inadequate to do what God calls us to do. It is natural to feel inadequate or unqualified. As Elizabeth Elliott puts it, “Nobody is ever adequate for any job that God has assigned”. Even Moses felt inadequate, but God reminded him that He will be with him (Exodus 3-4). Our faith in Him grows when we trust that He will enable us to do what we cannot in our own strength.

We feel overwhelmed with the busy-ness of life and have no time for God’s mission. As our time in this world is limited, let us ask God to “teach us to number our days” (Psalm 90:12). Since the only things we can take to heaven are our friendship with Jesus and the people we have introduced to Him, how then shall we invest our time and resources now? When we decide on what is most important, we will be able to remove the lesser things in life to focus on that which matters.

Are we ready to experience God’s blessings (James 1:25) as we live the faith-filled adventure He has set in store for us? May we out of response to God’s love, be not only listeners but doers of His Word. May we come to Him in humble dependence as He equips us with the strength to carry out His Mission. May we ask Him to teach us to number our days as we make room in our lives for what truly counts. May what is most important toward our life’s end be most important to us now.