

22nd Sunday of Ordinary Time - Year B

September 2, 2018

BE DOERS OF THE WORD AND NOT HEARERS ONLY

James calls on all Christians to be less resistant of the gospel message, “Humbly welcome the word that has been planted in you” because it “is able to save your souls. Be doers of the word and not hearers only” (James 3-4).

To appreciate the premise of James’ ‘word’ we need to understand the first chapter of John’s gospel: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God... the Word was life and the life was light, and the light shines in the world but the world did not comprehend him. Even his own people rejected him. But to those who accepted him, who believed in him, he gave the power to become the children of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us – full of grace and truths. We have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father (John 1:1-5). The word is Emmanuel.

So, what James wants us to do or to become is Christ Jesus the voice of the Father, the light of the earth and the life of the world. We become not only doers of the word of God, but the word of God itself. We become the word of God by being less external, less hypocritical, but truer to the reality of our relationship with the Lord.

The Jews want signs and they want to wash their hands, feet and face; we seek faith because we want to be Eucharistic, we want to be Godlike, we want to share eternity with Him. We want to see Him face to face.

Our effort is to worship God with sincerity of heart. This we can do by loving God and all his children and care for those who He, the Lord, entrusts to us.

A case of study is marriage and spousal relationship – and family life. These institutions are established on practical doings, not just on exceptional passivity. They grow on each person outdoing others in the acts of goodness. Acts of goodness include selflessness, compassion, forgiveness, sharing joys and sorrows, and loving beyond personal interests. All these virtues are opposed to unchastity, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, envy, arrogance, folly and godlessness.

To be doers of the word, we must be less external and live true to our relationship with Christ visibly in those He has planted around us.

Be doers of the word.