

When Your Attitude Stinks So Badly That It Affects Everyone Around You!

Excerpt from Sparkling Gems of the Greek: Rick Renner

Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. [James 1:21]

Today I want to speak to you from James 1:21. I want you to particularly look at the Two words "filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness." Since James tells us that we must remove and discard from our lives whatever is meant by these two concepts, it is imperative that we understand exactly what he is talking about.

The Greek word for "filthiness" is the word 'raparian'. This Greek word describes filth that is obnoxiously filthy. The man pictured in James 2:2 is described in this same way. In this verse, James described two categories of people who attended the Early Church - those who were nice in appearance and those who were filthy dirty.

About these categories, James wrote, **"For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, and in goodly apparel, and there come also a man in vile raiment."** That word "vile" at the end of this verse and the word filthiness in James 1:21 come from the same Greek word.

In James 2:2, the Greek word 'raparian' portrays a man whose body and clothes are so encrusted with filth that he emits a disgusting odor to everyone nearby. Have you ever smelled a person who stank that badly? Take just one whiff of that kind of stench, and you'll never want to smell it again!

This is the same Greek word James uses in James 1:21 when he describes believers who have bad attitudes! In other words, when a believer is being pessimistic, downbeat, negative, uncooperative, gloomy, cynical, or indifferent, it just flat stinks! Whew! Nothing stinks worse than an attitude of a grumpy and pessimistic person. In fact, a person with a bad attitude emits such a distasteful aroma that it will literally drive people away from him!

This person has to make the decision to "lay apart all filthiness" - which in this case is not referring to dirty clothes, but the stinking and repulsive attitudes he carries in his life.

Because James uses the word 'raparian' in James 1:21, the verse could be translated: **"In light of what I've told you, it's time for you to remove those stinking, foul-smelling, putrid, rank garments.... "**

A certain minister tells the story of a man that attended their church who never learned proper hygiene when he was growing up. His hair was dirty; his face was unshaved; his skin was encrusted with dirt; and his clothes smelled like something had died in them.

Because they loved this man, they decided to take him into their home to teach him hygiene. They grabbed their noses, held their breath, and took him to their house so he could get cleaned up. They coaxed him into the shower, and afterwards he came out looking nice and clean. But then he reached over, picked up his same old, dirty clothes, and put them back on again!

As they watched this newly cleaned man put on his filthy clothes, he thought: "That's just what a lot of Christians do!"

Jesus' blood washes and cleanses us, and God gives us a new robe of righteousness. But many people were reared in negative, faithless environments and were never taught God's Word. These Christians have walked in these negative attitudes for so long that it has become a part of their thinking.

Yes, Jesus has washed and cleansed them by His blood and showered them with His grace and power. But those wrong attitudes have been a part of their lives for so long that they are still tempted to reach down, pick them up again, put them on, snap them back in place, and keep acting the same old way they did before they were saved.

These people are inwardly changed, but their old thinking patterns have become a bad habit. Therefore, they still wear those old, filthy attitudes, even though those negative attitudes are no longer consistent with the clean, new condition of their inner man.

For people who fit this description, it will take a strong act of determination for them to stay free of those old encumbrances. That's why it's so important to understand the words "lay apart" (see January 6). In Greek, these words describe someone deliberately laying down wrong attitudes and then pushing them so far out of range that he isn't able to reach down to pick them up again.

Before you get too busy today, why don't you take a few minutes to ask the Holy Spirit to show you if there are any stinking attitudes from the past that you're still carrying around in your life? I guarantee you that He will reveal them to you - and then He will give you the power to remove these foul-smelling, negative attitudes from your life!

Prayer for Today

Lord, I thank you for washing me with the blood of Jesus and for making me brand new. Forgive me for clinging to my old ways of thinking and of doing things. Today I ask you to help me drop those old habits and attitudes and to never pick them up again. By myself this would be almost impossible, but I know that by your power, I can walk free. Right now, I release those old habits and attitudes that I have been carrying around with me for so long. I ask you to help me to think and behave in a way that is consistent with the new creature that I am in Jesus Christ. I pray this in Jesus name and receive it now by faith.