

Series – Part 12: How to Live as a Christian:

Show Your Faith From Your Works!

Not Works Apart from Faith!

James 2:18-20, 25-26 NAS

Sunday, July 14 at 9:00; Monday, July 15 at 7 PM
8th Sunday After Pentecost / 7th After Trinity – 2013

Our Summer Schedule for July & August:

Sundays: DS 9; Refreshments 10:10; BC&SS 10:30; Mondays: DS 7 PM

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ, today's sermon brings us to the end of James chapter 2. Looking back, I hope you can see how the whole series **+**ties together and **+**is relevant for our daily Christian lives:

- Chapter 1 focused on our lives in Christ: God wants us to **♦benefit** from our trials, **♦avoid** temptation, **♦say** “yes” to His will for our lives, and **♦be** doers of His Word!
- Chapter 2 focused on how we interact with others: God wants us to avoid playing favorites; instead, *we are to love our neighbors as ourselves!* Then He calls us to demonstrate our love with our actions; **♦last** week we saw Abraham demonstrate his faith *by his willingness to sacrifice Isaac*; **♦today** we will see Rahab demonstrate her faith *by hiding and helping the spies*.

1. **Notice that the Context is Show and Tell:** ¹⁸ **But someone ~~may well~~ [will] say, “You have faith, and I have works; show me your faith without [apart from] the works, and I will show you my faith ~~by~~ [from] my**

works.” // James could have presented this scenario: show me your **invisible faith** *without using anything visible*, and I will show you my **invisible faith** *by using something visible*. Think about God; have you seen Him? No! But have you seen His works? Yes! We, *and the world in which we live*, are His works! So God's **visible** works point to His **invisible** reality! Therefore, our works do not save us, but, *in the words of Luke Timothy Johnson*, they are **“the demonstration of this faith...”** (243)

2. **Remember that Knowledge is Not Faith:**
 - a. An example of knowledge (believing) without works: ¹⁹ **You believe that God is one. You do well; [even] the demons ~~also~~ believe, and shudder.** // Their believing includes the first two parts of faith, *but their believing is NOT faith!* Faith includes:¹
 - i. Knowledge – about *my sin* and *God's salvation*.
 - ii. Acceptance – believing that such knowledge is *true*.
 - iii. Trust – having *faith / confidence* in Jesus alone as my Savior from sin.
 - b. An important reality to recognize: ²⁰ **But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow** [*lit. oh*]

¹ God takes action *by the Spirit through the Word* to unite sinners to the Christ (1 Cor. 1:30; 1 Pet. 1:23; 1 Cor. 12:3; John 6:44); to those who can understand, He imparts knowledge, agreement, and trust; to those who cannot yet understand – infants, young children, and the disabled, He imparts faith through baptism (Acts 2:38-39; Gal. 3:27) to unite such people to Jesus, the Savior, and His gift of eternal life.

senseless man], **that faith without works is useless?** // Lutheran Churches tend to be teaching churches; however, *knowledge and acceptance of certain facts do not equal faith!* Therefore, we should NOT ask: **What** do I know? BUT RATHER: **Who** do I know? God has brought us into a relationship with Jesus; now, THROUGH HIM, we have eternal life!

3. **Actions Speak Louder Than Words:**

a. An example of works which show (demonstrate, reveal) faith: ²⁵ **And in the same way was not Rahab the harlot also [shown to be** – *those words are implied by the context, see the show & tell theme in 2:18] **justified by [from] works, when she received the messengers [ἀγγέλους – angels] and sent them out by another way?** // Rahab confessed her faith: “...the LORD your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below” (Joshua 2:11). Then she showed her faith in many ways: by ✦ hiding them, ✦ not telling of their location, and ✦ helping them escape. With every action she risked her own life, *but she was moved to do so by her faith* – thus her actions spoke louder than her words!*

b. An important reality to recognize: ²⁶ **For just as the body without the spirit [breath – πνεύματος] is dead, so also faith without works is dead.** // Luke Timothy Johnson wrote: “The point is not that deeds give life, but that they express life, ‘demonstrate’ that life is present.” (245)

Conclusion: As we conclude this difficult *but important* section of James, here are two more pertinent comments from LTJ as he thinks about those who received this letter from James; these comments also apply to us: “...there were any number of those calling themselves Jews who were in need of vigorous reminding that ‘true Judaism’ meant obedience to the commandments. [Also] it is certainly possible for there to have been converts... who needed strong reminders of the need to translate identity [*as God’s forgiven children*] into action.” (249)

Let’s remember and apply God’s Word:

1. Name the three essential ingredients of faith:
K_____, A_____, T_____
2. Regarding salvation, what is more important?
What we know. OR **Who** we know.
3. Our works: Do they **save** OR **show our saving faith?**

The LSB adds: “God has given us a great gift—though Christ Jesus... A living faith leads us to gladly share with others what we have freely received in Christ.” (2140)

Let us pray together: Dear LORD, *by Your Spirit through Your Word*, confirm that I am Your forgiven child; then move me to consistently show my faith from my works! Amen.

Read, Understand, and Apply God’s Holy Word!		
Verse and Key Word – James 2 NAS	Greek and Transliteration	Meaning of Key Word
¹⁸ ... show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works.	δειξόν deixon	show: <i>point out, make known</i>

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