



No: 06 James - Everyday Church Life

James 2:14-26

Today there is so much imbalance in our Church life.

1. We have thought that Religion is only for Sunday, we can do what we like the rest of the week.
2. The Minister is the one who is paid to do the work so we do not need to do anything.
3. Prayer is for the really spiritual ones, not for ordinary people.
4. The best people to look after the money are any bankers in

the Church.

5. Wealthy people should have the best seats.
6. Good works are for the religious 'do-gooders'

"And remember, it is a message to obey, not just to listen to. So don't fool yourselves". James 1:22

See-saw religion

Every time there is a new revelation to the Body of Christ, we all either latch onto it and go completely overboard, or we flatly reject it, speaking very boldly that it is from the devil and we will not be part of it. If we take the new revelation for our own we make a major doctrine out of it and box it for ourselves. We forget all we have learnt previously. We think we are superior Christians, as God has shared something close to His heart with us. All the time the Holy Spirit is just saying 'I was revealing more of Myself and all you want to do is box Me in'. The disciples did the same when Jesus was trying to explain to them that it was so good for them that He went away and sent the Holy Spirit (**John 14:16,28**)

When we are born again we want everyone to know and we think this is all there is to it, we are so excited. Then we are baptised in water, then the Holy Spirit and we think we have it made, no turning back. Like with all growing organs we go through a dry time when a lot of work is going on out of sight in our hearts. We then get a fresh revelation of more about the Word and Jesus and we move forward in leaps and bounds, then another plateau, but more revelation. Whole denominations have been built on one revelation. When the people in it get another fresh revelation of God, they want to move on, but they are so boxed in round this previous Truth that they feel bound and unable to appreciate the new truth that the Holy Spirit is showing them.

Balanced Christianity

James had the same problem and he was so convinced that the **balanced life** was the only Christian life. Here he is challenging all the people who have realised how important faith is, but do not put their faith into practical every day action. Today we can read all about faith, watch videos all about faith, be taught all about faith and watch Christian TV all about faith, but this scripture reminds us that **faith only becomes real when we act on it and practice it on a daily basis.**

"I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in Me will do what I have been doing, he will do even greater things than these....." John 14:12

Consider Noah, Abraham and Moses.

Noah heard God say, "There is going to be a flood." What did Noah do? He didn't say, "I've got faith. I am the greatest man in the world, and I can sit around and see what a flood looks like." Noah didn't worry about having faith.

Noah, just agreed with God, that there was a flood coming. He acted like it was so, and started building the ark. Noah did not just **say**, "I believe that a flood is coming." The very fact that he was hammering on the boat told everything.

Noah showed his faith by his works. A constant witness to his neighbours that God was going to do something and Noah believed Him. It was approximately one hundred and twenty years daily faith walk, before the flood came.

Abraham heard from God and he acted like God told him the truth. Abraham had faith.
James 2:21-23

Moses acted like God had told him the truth.

They heard God's Word and acted like it was so. So many of the people talked about in the Hall of Faith in **Hebrews 11** believed God exists, but that is only the beginning; even the demons believe that much and tremble, **James 2:19**. God will not settle for mere acknowledgement of His existence. He wants a personal dynamic relationship with us that will transform our life. Those who seek God will find that they are rewarded with His intimate Presence as the people in **Hebrews 11** were.

"Since we have such a huge crowd of men of faith watching us from the grandstands, let us **strip off anything that slows us down** or holds us back, and especially those sins that wrap themselves so tightly around our feet and trip us up; and let us run with patience the particular race that God has set before us. **Keep our eyes on Jesus**, our leader and instructor. He was willing to die a shameful death on the Cross because of the joy He knew would be His afterwards; and now He sits in the place of honour by the throne of God." **Hebrews 12:1-2**

Not only is it impossible to please God without faith, (**Hebrews 11:6**) but we need to understand that **faith is not a formula.**

"Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness, and he was called God's friend" **James 2:23; Romans 4:2**. Imagine being God's friend by acting on our faith.

What is faith?

"Being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we don't see" **Hebrews 11:1**.

"Faith by itself if it is not accompanied by action is dead". **James 2:17**. Faith sees the battle won not lost, however long that may be. It is just plain **BELIEVING!**

Now that you know what faith is; and you know that you have been given the measure of faith, (**Romans 12:3**) and since you know that without faith it is impossible for you to please God, **Hebrews 11:6**. Agree with the Word of God and start **doing** the good works that He has laid down for you to walk in, **Colossians 1:10; Ephesians 2:10**.

Why Have Faith?

- 1.** Faith assures success. **2 Chronicles 20:20**.
- 2.** Faith is our basic duty. **John 6:28-29**.
- 3.** Faith is a defensive weapon. **Ephesians 6:16**.
- 4.** Faith pleases God. **Matthew 5:16; Hebrews 11:6**.
- 5.** Faith is essential in prayer. **John 1:5-6; Matthew 21:22; 1 John 5:14**.
- 6.** Faith is powerful with love. **1 John 3:23; John 14:12**.
- 7.** Faith gives peace with God. **Romans 5:1. Philippians 3:9**.

Do not worry about having faith. Don't look around trying to find your faith. There is no point in trying to make faith complicated. Faith is not a strange or mysterious thing. If we make it so mechanical we miss it. **Like love, you cannot analyse faith.**

How to have Faith

- 1.** God plants the measure of faith in our hearts at Salvation. **Ephesians 2:8**.
- 2.** Faith comes from hearing and hearing from the Word of God. **Romans 10:17**.
- 3.** Surround yourself with faith-filled believers. **1 Timothy 4:6**.
- 4.** Speak only God's Word and you will receive all you believe for. **Mark 11:22-24**.

5. Surround yourself with the Word of God as Jesus is the author and developer of our faith.
Hebrews 12:2.
6. Don't look at the problem, look at God's answer in His Word. **2 Corinthians 5:7.**

Like everything in the Christian life we do not have faith for our benefit, (**Romans 12:1-2**) but in order that we can give it away to others in good works daily, that is always God's way,
Matthew 6:19-21.

Faith and deeds cannot exist independently, **James 2:18** .“Let your light shine, before men that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven”. **Matthew 5:16**
The world should be able to see the Body of Christ daily as our faith is so obvious to all those round us in our actions, then they know who is our God.

Jesus is the light of the world (John 8:12) and we are His reflection

The Real Church Home Challenges 06

- 1.** Looking at the faith that you have, is it just a head faith or is it a heart faith worked out in actions? Give testimony.

Read the notes 'Everyday Church Life' including the references.

- 2.** What do you think about 'See-saw religion' Do you recognise it in your own life?
- 3.** What do you think about 'Balanced Christianity'? Is there anything that you find challenging? What are you going to change?
- 4.** From the notes on faith what are you going to hold onto and put into practice?

Read James 3:1-12.

- 5.** Which gift does James mention which is one of the five-fold ministry? (**Ephesians 4:11-13**) What is the responsibility of people with this gift? Why were the gifts given?
- 6.** What is the test of a person who has control over his whole body?
- 7.** What two examples does James give to show forced obedience? **James 3:3-4**
- 8.** How is the tongue similar to these two examples?
- 9.** What example does James give to show an 'out-of-control' situation? **James 3:6**

- 10.** What points about a bush fire can you liken to a tongue out of control?
- 11.** What does this sort of fire do to the whole person? Where does the trouble originate from?
- 12.** What is an untamed tongue like according to James? **James 3:7-8.**
- 13.** What two things do we do with our tongue? Is this right or wrong? **James 3:9-12.**
- 14.** Again James gives two examples from nature to describe problems of the tongue. Can you put them into your own words?
- 15.** What do these two examples show us about our basic human nature?
- 16.** Evaluate your own speech habits. In view of this section what would you like to change?
- 17.** What can you do to make your speech valuable to others and acceptable to God?
- 18.** Sum up in one short sentence what you have learnt from this study.