

“Keep Faith Alive”

James 2:14-26

Introduction

As circumstances of today spiral out of control, Christians must keep faith alive. In chapter two of James’ letter, he urges believers to keep the faith despite the circumstances and trials he presents in chapter one (James 1:1-12). In a world of pandemic, economic and political trials, like James, we must ask: “What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but does not have works? Can such faith save him?” James 2:14 is not about sinners being saved for eternity, but about sanctification; the process in which saints are being delivered as they practice their faith through works.

When faith is real, it reaches and benefits others. We’ve missed biblical faith if we are more concerned about what God can do for us rather than what God can do through us. Far too often, people talk more about what they believe than actually living out what they believe. When faith orthodoxy (belief) is not married to faith orthopraxy (function), then faith is useless. When James writes about “being saved,” he is talking about heaven being available to us. With that said, justification by works means that God can see motion through ministry as His people intentionally walk in obedience to perfect their faith.

Until we step up and do God’s will according to our faith in His person and proclamation in Scripture, we won’t see God. We need to get to work activating our faith and remembering that God will only use us when we are in the posture of submission and obedience. Although today’s culture struggles in many ways (racially, socially, economically, politically and mentally), we can find solace in the fact that when we commit to a faith that is alive, active and useful, our foundation in Christ Jesus will not crumble under pressure.

Getting Started

1. After hearing this week’s sermon, discuss how you are personally putting motion to your ministry.
2. How do you feel about God using you to express the properties of biblical faith?

Let’s Get Personal

1. In what ways do you think the church should address the marriage of orthodoxy (what we believe) and orthopraxy (how we function) to reverse the current cultural trend?
2. What spiritual disciplines are you incorporating in your life to develop yourself spiritually?
3. In the Bible story about Abraham and Issac, Abraham demonstrated his faith by first agreeing on a matter and then later following through. What areas of your life has God been asking you to show faith by agreeing and acting?

Take the Next Step

1. Ephesians 2:10 reminds us that “We are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works” What good works has God been preparing you for?
2. How are recent events providing an opportunity for you to demonstrate faith through these works?
3. Want to go deeper? Take a look at the following passages: James 1:1-12, 19; Isaiah 55:8; 2 Corinthians 5:7; Genesis 22:1-19; Romans 3:28; Joshua 2.

Renew Your Mind

*“What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith, but he has no works?
Can that faith save him? . . . Even so, faith, if it has no works, is dead, . . .”
James 2:14, 17*
