

Run the Race – Follow the Leader

September 4-5, 2021

James 2:14-17 (NIV) – “What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and well fed’, but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead”.

I woke up this morning; saw a world full of trouble now, thought how'd we ever get so far down, and how's it ever gonna turn around? So I turned my eyes to Heaven; I thought, "God, why don't You do something?" Well, I just couldn't bear the thought of people living in poverty, children sold into slavery. The thought disgusted me, so, I shook my fist at Heaven, said, "God, why don't You do something?". He said, "I did, yeah, I created you!"
– **Matthew West, Do Something**

James 2:14-17 (MSG) – “Dear friends, do you think you’ll get anywhere in this if you learn all the right words but never do anything? Does merely talking about faith indicate that a person really has it? For instance, you come upon an old friend dressed in rags and half-starved and say, “Good morning, friend! Be clothed in Christ! Be filled with the Holy Spirit!” and walk off without providing so much as a coat or a cup of soup – where does that get you? Isn’t it obvious that God-talk without God-acts is outrageous nonsense”?

Hebrews 12:1-2 (NIV) – “Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before Him, He endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God”.

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“**witnesses**” = Greek *marturos* – English “martyrs”

Hebrews 11:39-40 (NIV) – “These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised, since God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect”.

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Hebrews 5:8 (NIV) – “Son though He was, He learned obedience from what He suffered”.

Matthew 3:15 (NIV) – Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness”. Then John consented.

“In baptism, He confessed, as His own, sins which He had not committed, and repented of them before God. He was numbered with the transgressors and bore the sins of many” – **G. Campbell Morgan**

Matthew 4:1-3 (NIV) – “Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting for forty days and forty nights, He was hungry. The tempter came to Him and said, ‘If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread’”.

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Matthew 4:18-22 (NIV) – “As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ‘Come, follow me’, Jesus said, ‘and I will send you out to fish for people’. At once they left their nets and followed Him. Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed Him”.

Mark 3:17 (NIV) – “James son of Zebedee and his brother John (to them He gave the name Boanerges, which means ‘sons of thunder’”).

“**Boanerges**” = Greek *ben* and *regaz* – from Aramaic words for “son” and “rage”

Luke 9:51-55 (NIV) – “As the time approached for Him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem. And He sent messengers on ahead, who went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for Him; but the people there did not welcome Him, because He was heading for Jerusalem. When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, ‘Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?’ But Jesus turned and rebuked them”.