

Faith That Works

Pt.3 – Faith and Works

Mt.7:16 By their fruit you will recognize them...¹⁷every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. ¹⁹Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

Actions make my faith alive.

Jam. 2:17 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

Actions make my faith visible.

Jam. 2:18 But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do.

Actions make my faith complete.

Jam. 2:19 You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that - and shudder. ²⁰You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? ²¹Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? ²²You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did.

Actions make my faith real.

Jam. 2:23 And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend. ²⁴You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone.

Characteristics of faith that works:

I know and Obey God's Word.

Jam. 1:22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

I care for the needy.

Jam. 1:27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress

I live a holy life.

Jam. 1:27 ...and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

Holiness is not:

Following a lot of rules

A manner of speech or a title

Living in a cave

Extremism

Holiness is:

Choices determined by relationship, not rules.

Identifying the weak links in my life.

Making right choices for the right reasons.

Ten questions to help make tough decisions:

1. What does the Bible say?

I Thess. 5:2 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

Phil. 4:8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

II Tim. 2:22 Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

2. What do my spiritual authorities say?

3. What does my conscience tell me?

4. What are the other people like who are involved in the activity?

5. Would I do this in front of my parents / pastor / spouse?

6. What does this activity lead to? What's the logical next step?

7. What kind of influence will this have on my Christian friends?

I Cor. 8:9 But be careful not to use your freedom to eat it, lest you cause some Christian brother to sin whose conscience is weaker than yours.

8. How will this affect my testimony before non-believers?

9. What are the consequences of this activity?

10. Have I prayed about it?

Doing what Jesus would do.

I do more than just talk; I act.

Jam. 2:14 What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? ¹⁵Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. ¹⁶If one of you says to him, “Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it?

Key Question: Is my faith alive?

Jam. 2:26 As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.