



# PV Household Worship

February 5-10, 2018

## ❖ Daily Memory Verse:

James 2:26 For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.

## ❖ Song: Jesus Shall Reign Where'er The Sun

### **Monday, February 5, "Both Oars in The Water"** Read James 2:19-26

James 2:20 says, *"Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless?"* If we think we have a saving faith that is not accompanied by action, we are spiritual fools. There was a Christian who transported passengers with a rowboat. He propelled the little boat with one oar labeled "Faith" and the other labeled "Works." One day a passenger asked him to explain why he had done this. The old man said, *"Let me show you."* Letting go of the oar called "FAITH," he used only the "WORKS" oar. So, the boat just went around in circles! He repeated the exercise using only the "faith" oar. The little boat again spun the other direction around in circles. Then he picked up both oars and began to quickly ply them in the water. He said, *"I do this to remind myself as a Christian that faith without works is dead it gets you nowhere. Likewise, works without faith gets you nowhere. When living, moving faith goes in first it is quickly followed by works and you can move ahead smoothly towards the glorious purposes of God."* It's not faith plus works but rather faith that produces works that moves us in the kingdom purposes of God.

- Why would James say that faith apart from works is useless and foolish to believe?
- Do you agree that faith and works are like the two oars of a rowboat? Why or why not?
- Memory Verse James 2:26
- Prayer - Father guard me from the foolishness that I can claim a faith that is not active and living. Help my works to demonstrate my trust in You.

### **Tuesday, February 6, "Faith is the motivation of works, and works is the embodiment of faith."**

Read James 2:19-26

James 2:21, 22 says, *"Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works."* So was Abraham justified by faith or by works? Yes! Abraham was justified by faith alone in the promise of God. His actions justified that his faith in God's promise was real. Abraham's faith in God's promise to bless all the nations through him was demonstrated when he agreed to put his son Isaac to death. He knew full well that God's promises to him were supposed to come true through Isaac. He believed that God could raise the dead, and that He would raise Isaac if that's what it took to keep His word. It was his faith that prompted him to obey and that faith was made obvious (completed) by his actions. Faith was the motive behind his actions and his actions were the embodiment of his faith. James was writing to believers and his point was that true faith will always result in active, willful, obedience. A friend of mine used to say, *"If what you say you believe doesn't result in action then it's doubtful that you really believe it."*

- How was Abraham justified before God? (by faith in God's promise)

- How was the faith of Abraham justified as being real? (by his obedient actions)
- Memory Verse James 2:26
- Prayer - Jesus, help my faith to be made obvious to God and others by my actions. May God be glorified through me.

### **Wednesday, February 7, "Our actions show evidence of our salvation and faith in Christ."**

Read James 2:19-26

James 2:23 says, *"And the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"—and he was called a friend of God"*. An older couple told about a blessing they received when returning home from a day of shopping. They walked through their door and into their kitchen to find a plate of brownies on the kitchen counter. Accompanying the treats was a note from their 12-year-old granddaughter Melissa. *"Dear Grandma and Grandpa, I made these for you. Love, Melissa."* No one told her to do this. They didn't have to. She just did it. But why? Did Melissa do this work to gain their favor? Was she trying to make sure that they loved her? Was she trying to win *"brownie points"* with her grandparents? No, she did it to show her grandparents she loves them. It was evidence of their close intimate relationship. She did it because she is their granddaughter, not to somehow earn the right to be their granddaughter. That's how it is with the good works we do as followers of Jesus Christ. We don't do good works so we can earn His love and forgiveness. Rather, our actions show evidence of our salvation and faith in Christ. Jesus did all the work of providing salvation. But we still work. Why? Not to win His favor but to show our love as evidence of His love. We were made His friend and our actions are an outpouring of a grateful heart.

- What does it mean, *"Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness?"*
- Can you find any other scriptures that talk about this? What does it mean to be a friend of God?
- Memory Verse James 2:26
- Prayer - Father, thank You that You adopted me into Your family and made me Your child. Thank You for changing the desire of my heart to bring you glory.

### **Thursday, February 8, "Does James disagree with Paul?"** Read James 2:19-26

James 2:24, 25 says, *"You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way?"* After years of struggle a young Catholic Priest by the name of Martin Luther was wrestling with Paul's words in Romans 1:17, that in the gospel *"the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'But the righteous man shall live by faith.'" He read in Romans 3:28, "For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law."* Luther moved from viewing righteousness as something he had to achieve, to viewing it as something Christ achieved on his behalf, apprehended not by our merits but by faith alone. The Reformation truth of *sola fide*, faith alone, was born, and Luther was born again. So coming out of his struggles of trying to work his way to a right standing with God, Luther stumbled over the Epistle of James. He called James *"an epistle of straw."* Although he did not reject James from the canon of Scripture, he once remarked *"that he would give his doctor's*

beret to anyone who could reconcile James and Paul.” Justification is both a declaration and a demonstration. In salvation we believe God that Christ bore the condemnation for our sin and we are declared not guilty because Jesus paid our debt. As His child we now walk by faith and that faith is justified or demonstrated by our actions. What God has declared in us is demonstrated through us and Abraham, Rahab, and every believer in Christ. James and Paul agree!

- Why is it important to establish that the issue is not adding works to faith, but rather the nature and evidence of genuine faith?
- Do you agree with this statement: We show our righteous standing before God by our actions? Why or why not?
- Memory Verse James 2:26
- Prayer - Father, thank you for declaring me “not guilty!” Help me to demonstrate to the world around me that I am Yours by my actions.

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**Friday, February 9, “Faith without works is like a dead body without life.”** Read James 2:19-26

James 2:26 says, *“For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.”* Faith without works is like a dead body without a human spirit. That kind of faith has no practical worth. A body has no life without a spirit. This is what we call physical death. James says our faith is dead when actions do not flow from the truth we know. Have you ever been fooled by someone pretending to be dead? You watch them for movement. Their chest is not moving, their eyes are not twitching. You have to walk over to them and check for a pulse. Finally some sort of movement happens and you know they are alive. We know a body is alive because of its actions; we know faith is alive by its actions. Faith is the root and works are the fruit. Faith and works are as close as the body and spirit. In both cases, the union displays life. Separation of the two is death. Life consists of energy and movement. Thus, there is no dynamic faith without works. Death has no movement. Faith without works has no movement; it is destitute of dynamic. It is useless. Faith without works is like a dead body without life.

- What would you say James’ theme is in chapter 2?
- Name some characteristics of a dead body? How do these apply to faith without works?
- Memory Verse James 2:26
- Prayer - Father thank you for the spiritual life you have given me. Help me to display Your life to others.

**Saturday, February 10, Read James 3:1-5**

**Review memory verse.**

**Prayer:** Father, make us ready to hear your Word. Reveal your truth to our hearts. Give us grace to listen and obey. Bind the enemy of our souls and fill us with Your Holy Spirit. Give us joy as we meet with your people for doctrine, prayer, and worship.