

THE PATH OF FAITHFUL LIVING

LIVING AS A CHRIST FOLLOWER

JOURNEY WITH US AS WE EXPLORE THE BOOK OF JAMES

22 June 2025 - 27 July 2025



WEEK 3 - SUNDAY 6 JULY

Welcome to the study of the Book of James

It is suggested by scholars that this letter (Epistle) was written by James who is thought to be the brother of Jesus. According to John 7:3-5 James was not a believer. He only became a true follower after the Resurrection. According to the Galatians he headed up the Jerusalem Church. The Book of James outlines the faith walk through *genuine religion* (1:1-27), *genuine faith* (2:1-3:12) and *genuine wisdom* (3:13-5:20). We will even pick up in our readings the discourse on faith in action..... hence our theme LIVING AS A CHRIST FOLLOWER. It is about “Walking the Talk.”

Week 1. Trails and Temptations – 22 June.

Week 2. Listening and doing – 29 June.

Week 3. Faith and works – 6 July.

Week 4. Taming the Tongue – 13 July

Week 5. Two types of Wisdom – 20 July.

Week 6. Worldliness and Riches – 27 July.

FAITH AND WORKS

There is a significant connection between FAITH AND WORKS in as far as Christianity is concerned. They go hand in hand. But we shouldn't think that WORKS alone secure our eternity. WORKS are the evidence of our FAITH.

Worship Song: I, he Lord of see and sky – Chet valley churches:

https://youtu.be/2zr9SMm1gll?si=n9_2EcVwliVaA18t&t=9

Readings: Psalm 128:1-6 / James 2:14-26 / Luke 10:29-37 / Psalm 128

Psalm 128

¹Blessed are all who fear the Lord, who walk in obedience to him. ²You will eat the fruit of your labour blessings and prosperity will be yours. ³Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your children will be like olive shoots round your table. ⁴Yes, this will be the blessing for the man who fears the Lord. ⁵May the Lord bless you from Zion; may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life. ⁶May you live to see your children's children – peace be on Israel.

James 2:14-26

Faith and deeds

¹⁴What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? ¹⁵Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. ¹⁶If 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? ¹⁷In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. ¹⁸But someone will say, 'You have faith; I have deeds.' Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. ¹⁹You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that – and shudder. ²⁰You

foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? ²¹ Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? ²² You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. 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. ²⁴ You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone. ²⁵ In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? ²⁶ As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

Luke 10:29-37

²⁹ But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?' ³⁰ In reply Jesus said: 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half-dead. ³¹ A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. ³² So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. "Look after him," he said, "and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have." ³⁶ 'Which of these three do you think was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?' ³⁷ The expert in the law replied, 'The one who had mercy on him.' Jesus told him, 'Go and do likewise.'

REFLECTION ON THE READINGS: REV HILTON VOLKWYN

When Jesus was challenged by an 'expert in the law' as to what the greatest commandment was, He said **"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'** (Mt. 22:37-39)

The parable of the Good Samaritan gives us a clear view of what God expects of you and me..... It emphasises that love and compassion should be what you and I do if we say we love the Lord our God. It is a love that transcends our personal preferences of who to care for. This parable also highlights what true neighbourliness is. It is about selfless acts and assistance to anyone who may be in need. Jesus' teaching encourages us as believers to follow the Samaritan's example especially to those in need. Showing compassion and care could be considered as WORKS OF FAITH.

However loving God or saying that we have FAITH IN GOD; which we are called to do; does not in itself suffice as proof thereof. The stories of Abraham and Rahab; in the James reading; are illustrations of how genuine faith leads to corresponding actions that validate one's FAITH.

James 2:14-26 makes the point that FAITH in God is not just an intellectual exercise. He argues that FAITH without WORKS is not saving FAITH.... His analogy to FAITH without works is that a body without breath is dead. It cannot produce true action.

James is at pains to demonstrate that when FAITH and WORKS are disassociated or disconnected, we don't understand God's love. He suggests that real FAITH is actively demonstrated through GOOD WORKS as in the parable. It is not that good WORKS are wrong.... but rather that when our good deeds are an extension of our FAITH, then only are we on the right track.

All too often we tend to get it wrong by leaning to one of the sides of the commandment. We either go out of way to worship God and neglect loving neighbour or we go all out serving our neighbour in love and think that will get us into eternity.

While the two go in hand in hand, WORKS FLOW FROM FAITH.

And even though the Psalmist reminds us that our priority is to “*walk in obedience to our God*” I get the idea that we should be doing what God desires of us..... and Micah reminds us “**Act justly, Love mercy and Walk humbly with your God**”. (Micah 6:8)

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1. When did I last show compassion and to whom?
2. Was my love toward my neighbour for self-gratification or was it borne out of my faith in God my Saviour?
3. What do I need to do to change in my attitude of FAITH AND WORKS if at all necessary?

DAILY MEMORY VERSE AND PRAYER

Monday	MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 128:1 “ <i>Blessed are all who fear the Lord, who walk in obedience to him.</i> ” PRAYER: Dear God teach me Your ways for they lead me to doing Your Holy will. Amen
Tuesday	MEMORY VERSE: James 2:14 “ <i>What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them?</i> ” PRAYER: Gracious Father God save me from not acting on my faith in You. Amen
Wednesday	MEMORY VERSE: James 2:17 “ <i>In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.</i> ” PRAYER: Lord God may my works always reflect Your glory. My desire is to honour You only. Amen
Thursday	MEMORY VERSE: Luke 10: 37 “ <i>The expert in the law replied, ‘The one who had mercy on him.’ Jesus told him, ‘Go and do likewise.</i> ” PRAYER: Lord, I love You and all that You have created. Teach me to love without holding back on loving the way You do. Amen
Friday	MEMORY VERSE: Micah 6:8 “ <i>He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.</i> ” PRAYER: Lord that my heart aches for what aches Yours is my desire. And I know that will show my faith in you and my love for my neighbour. Amen

FOR THE KIDS:

Written by Jenny Blake: Children’s Pastor.

Week 3 — Faith and Works

Opening Thought

Faith is trusting and believing in God. But true faith doesn’t stop at believing - it moves us to action. James reminds us of that faith without works is dead. Our good works don’t save us - only Jesus does - but when we truly follow Him, our actions will show it. Works are the *fruit* of real faith.

Bible Readings

- **Psalm 128:1-6:** The blessings of walking in God’s ways.
- **James 2:14-26:** Faith without works is dead.
- **Luke 10:29-37:** The Parable of the Good Samaritan.

Family Discussion (with questions for all ages)

1 Faith That Moves Us

James challenges us: what good is faith if it doesn’t lead to action? Faith is more than just believing in our minds; it changes how we live every day.

For Everyone:

👉 Why is it not enough just to say we believe?

For Young Children:

👧 *If you say you love Mommy or Daddy, how do you show it?*

👧 *How can we show God that we love Him?*

For Teens:

👧 *Why do you think some people say they believe but don't live like it?*

👧 *How can your faith show in your choices at school or with friends?*

2 Helping Others Is Part of Our Faith

The Good Samaritan showed love by helping someone in need. His actions showed his heart. Real faith leads us to care for others, even when it's not easy or convenient.

For Everyone:

👉 *What can we do this week to help someone?*

For Young Children:

👧 *Who can you be kind to at school or church?*

👧 *What kind things can you do at home?*

For Teens:

👧 *Why is it sometimes hard to stop and help others when they need us?*

👧 *How can small acts of kindness make a big difference in someone's life?*

3 Works Do Not Save Us — But They Prove Our Faith

James teaches that our good works are evidence that our faith is real. We don't do good to earn God's love, we do good because we have already received His love.

For Everyone:

👉 *How do our actions show others that we follow Jesus?*

For Young Children:

👧 *Does Jesus love us even when we make mistakes?*

👧 *How can we try again to do what's right?*

For Teens:

👧 *How would you explain to a friend that we are saved by faith but still called to do good works?*

👧 *What is one area where God might be calling you to show your faith in action right now?*

Family Object Lesson

The Plant and Fruit Example:

- Show a plant or a picture of a fruit tree.
- Explain: The plant (faith) must be alive to grow fruit (works).
- Without life, no fruit will grow.
- In the same way, living faith naturally produces good works.

Key Verse to Memorize

"As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead." James 2:26 (NIV)

Prayer

Lord, thank You that we are saved by Your grace and not by anything we do. But help us to live out our faith by showing love and kindness to others. Help our actions to reflect Your love so others may see You in us. Amen.

This Week's Challenge

- As a family, pick one person you can help this week, maybe a neighbour, classmate, or church member.
- At the end of the week, share how it felt to put your faith into action.