

Your Church Name Here

## ***ACTION 18: FAITH IN ACTION***

### Lesson 1

**TEXT:** James 2:14-26 - *What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*

**INTRODUCTION:** The theme is based upon Acts 1:8, *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.* However, our lessons will center around Hebrews 11 and 12 which deal with faith leading to action. As we introduce this theme today to our students, we will all discover that faith always leads to action. The purpose of faith is not merely to have faith. The purpose of faith is to bring us to action. In our memory verse for today's lesson, we see James, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, pointing out the fact that faith is always followed by works. This can bring confusion into the minds of some Christians. The difference between Christianity and all other religions is the fact that there are no works of our own involved in our salvation. Today, we will explain, however, that faith and works always go hand in hand. There are three truths taught in this passage regarding faith and action.

- I. **FAITH WITHOUT WORKS HAS NO PROFIT.** (James 2:14-16) James explains that there is no profit to faith if that faith does not lead to works. He uses the illustration of a person's physical needs to teach this lesson. If someone comes to us without clothes, food, or other things needful to his body and we do not provide those to him, then our faith has no profit or value. Faith brings value. It brings value to the lives of others, not necessarily ourselves. Much is said in our day and age by prosperity teachers that faith leads to us getting all the things we want and need. However, that is not what the Bible teaches. The

Bible teaches that faith brings profit or value to others. The faith of God's children only has value if that faith adds value with works by providing the needs of others. Selfish “faith” is not faith at all.

**II. FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD.** (James 2:17-20) Here James isolates faith from works. He stands faith all by itself and when it is examined without the accompanying works, James says that *...it ...is dead, being alone*. It is interesting that he refers to Satan as one who has faith in God. What kind of faith does Satan possess? He possesses the faith of knowledge. He knows that there is only one God. All the demons and devils in Hell believe there is one God, and it causes them to tremble. Yet, they do not act upon that faith with trust in that one God. We see that the result is a faith that has no life to it. Works brings faith to life. The purpose of strengthening our faith is to allow us to increase our works. Where faith is growing stronger, works are being performed more abundantly. Faith without action leads to pride and self-edification.

**III. FAITH WITHOUT WORKS DOES NOT JUSTIFY.** (James 2:21-26) Here we enter what can be a slippery slope if we are not careful to understand exactly what the Scripture is teaching. In this portion of the Scripture, we see that Abraham was justified by works. The works mentioned was the offering of his son Isaac upon the altar. How could this be true salvation if it is based upon works? Keep in mind that Jesus had not yet come in the form of man to atone for our sins. Abraham, however, believed in the resurrection. When he offered Isaac upon that altar, he believed that God would raise Isaac from the dead. This was faith in the work of God, not the work of Abraham. We are not justified by our works. We are justified when we place our faith in the finished work of Calvary. To believe **in** the Lord Jesus Christ is not enough for salvation. False Christian religions believe in Him. We must believe **on** the Lord Jesus Christ, which means we not only believe in who He is but we place our faith and trust in what He did for us. To believe a chair will hold us is faith without works. To sit in the chair and let it hold us is what perfects that faith. To believe that Jesus is the Saviour will not get us to Heaven. To trust Him as our Saviour will. That is what is being taught in this passage.

**CONCLUSION:** Throughout these lessons, our goal is to teach that Christians of faith are Christians of action. Week by week, we will look at the lives of the heroes of the faith found in Hebrews 11 and see how their faith always led them to action. As we go through this year, our goal is to be Christians of faith who understand that faith always leads to action.

**MEMORY VERSE:** James 2:26 - *For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*