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Go and make disciples!

E-votional 99

Faith Without Works

James 2:26 (ESV)

For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.

Let me first begin by saying that we are in no way saved by our works, for the Apostle Paul has already said, *“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God. (Eph. 2:8)”*

I say it like this because there was surely a time in my walk with Christ where I thought that maybe this was a contradiction. Let me explain further. I already knew in my heart of hearts that the Word of God was the final authority on all matters and also that it was the most accurate writing of anything in the history of the world. For this reason, I knew in my heart that this was no contradiction yet at the same time this didn't seem to make sense if we were saved by grace through faith. And also there must be a reason for the seeming contradiction. So I endeavored to seek it out in prayer and study with the help of the Holy Spirit. What I found was remarkable and really illustrative of the entirety of our salvation in Christ Jesus.

In short, we are saved by faith alone and not of works. The reason being is so that we would be left no room for self-righteousness in God's Kingdom. The entirety of the work is God alone. However, in light of this work, it produces in us all sorts of truth, righteousness, and justice. Truth, righteousness, and justice invariably produce action much like when John said this, *“If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. (1 John 4:20)”*

There it is the testimony of one saying they love God, in this case, must also show this same love by loving their brother. It is, as you say, the proof in the pudding. The main reason I shared this was to bring it out and in the open that true faith and love expresses itself in true obedience to God's will. The reason

we can do this is that God has done His work in us to produce in us His righteousness. For this reason, one that says they believe in God must also be steadfast in keeping with the heart, mind, and will of God in their life as found in the Word of God and the life of the Spirit of God from within.

True belief in Christ Jesus for salvation will always produce His life in and through the one believing. Make no mistake about it brothers and sisters, the one who confesses Christ in their life will be put to the test when their works expose it. I like the first part of the verse in James 2:26 where it says, *“For as the body apart from the spirit is dead.”*

These are strong words for us to hear. True faith is likened to a body with the spirit in it, for a body without the spirit is dead the Scripture says. This is a true statement and one worth reflecting on. I say that because somehow in today’s version of Christianity people do not seem to speak in this way. It seems that the grace of God has been somewhat reduced to mere forgiveness apart from action and accountability before God. I wonder what our faith would look like if more of us lived up to this standard. For this, we will have to have an honest reflection on ourselves and also our brothers and sisters around us. Faith without works is dead as the body without the spirit is dead.

We pray that this word has encouraged you in the faith and hope that are in Christ Jesus and also pray that God would magnify His grace and love to you in a very special way, in Jesus name. Amen

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