

CLASS: SS1
SUBJECT: CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS STUDIES
TOPIC: FAITH AND WORKS
WEEK: 3
TERM: SECOND

JAMES' TEACHING ON FAITH AND WORK

(James 1:22-27; 2:14-26)

Faith means trust or belief, and work means action or being practical toward what one believes. According to James, Christians must combine their faith with work. This means that any Christian who does not practice the moral principles of Christianity is not a good Christian. James puts it this way:

“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who observes his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like.”

A doer of the word is one who looks into the **perfect law of Jesus Christ**, which is the law of liberty; and with perseverance, does not forget easily but acts on it. Such a person receives God's blessing. James went further to say that a truly religious man **controls his tongue**. Anyone who does not control his tongue **deceives himself and his religion is in vain**. For one to practice an acceptable religion before God, one should be able to visit the orphans and widows in their afflictions and keep his or herself undefiled by the world.

James said it is useless for any man to say he has faith whereas he is not doing any work to show for his faith. He gave an **analogy** of one who needed food and clothing and approached his fellow Christian for help. Instead of getting what he needed, the Christian says, go in peace; be warmed and filled”.

James remarked that those who have the belief in God without expressing action to justify their faith are not different from the devil that believes in God but does not do the work of God. To support his points, James cited the case of Abraham and Rahab (the Harlot), who were justified by the faith, as Abraham offered Isaac on the altar, and Rahab when she protected the messengers sent to spy Jericho.

James concluded by saying that, just as the physical body without the spirit is dead, so is faith without works is dead.

Ways By Which Christian Can Demonstrate Their Faith

1. Christian should help the unemployed to be employed by establishing vocational/technical institute for training of the unemployed.
2. They should ensure good governance by participating in government and putting their faith into practice.
3. They should help the poor and the needy around, either within or outside the Church.
4. All Christians are expected to participate in Church activities in accordance with the level of ability God have given them.
5. Wealthy Christians should establish orphanages, mental homes and vocational institutions to take care of less privileged.
6. A good Christian should make the work of charity and justice his/her watch word.

Behaviours Not Expected Of A Christian

A good Christian is expected to control his/her tongues. Christians must not involve themselves in slanderous remarks, lying, perjury, speaking indecently, or using of abusive language.

ASSIGNMENT

How can a student display faith and works in his or her studies?