

## Shrink Rap: Faith, Good Deeds, and Humility

“So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless.”  
(James 2:17)

Throughout my walk in the Christian faith I have heard this scripture be debated. Usually the debate is over the number of deeds that are displayed, to be readily seen, in order to prove your faith.

To some it means to give abundantly to the poor, and to serve on church committees or charities. Others believe it means to actively – sometimes intrusively – spread the gospel by going door to door, being pushy about their belief, leading revivals in the community and claiming to 'save your soul.'

There are those who have been turned away from the Christian faith because of over exuberant evangelicals, while there are those who are just starting to hear the Word when it is shouted and forced upon them.

When I read the Book of James, it speaks to me as a call to action. But it does not say the action has to be in a showy manner, announced, displayed, or loud in any way. In Chapter 1, verse 22, James says to be “doers of the word, and not hearers only.” Throughout, he addresses hypocrisy, in 'talking the talk, but not walking the walk,' going on to say to “look in the perfect law of liberty and continue in it” (vs 24). Another words, *do* as the Lord has taught.

But how do you go about being a doer of the word? James 3:13 says “Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom.” James 4:10 says “Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.” So this tells me to do your works in humility.

But I am also called not to judge my brother who may choose to be a doer of the Word in a different manner. (James 4:11-12) Not judging is also a call from God to act in liberty, understanding, compassion and love.

If we quietly pray for one another, is that doing a good deed in faith? If we tithe more to secure the well-being of the church and do it privately, is that a good deed in faith? If we have a strong faith that God is in control and wants us to prosper, and we quietly speak our faith in conversation to others, is that a good deed in faith? If we live a life that reflects peace, understanding, compassion and understanding, is that a good deed in faith?

I do not know who really wins the debate, but I do know God is the answer. If your heart is right, if your heart is just, if you act in humility and kindness, then you produce good deeds.

Linda Yearout,

Licensed Clinical Marriage & Family Therapist, Hope's Place, Wichita