



The Mar Thoma Church
Diocese of North America & Europe
Christian Education Forum

Lenten Meditations

RENEWAL – LIVE THE FAITH

James 2. 12-25

Lent season is a precious occasion to evaluate our lives in the light of the Word of God. This will renew our thoughts and life. It will enable us to grow in genuine faith that demonstrates the ways of witness.

“As the body without the spirit
is dead, so faith without deeds
is dead”
James 2 :26

The Epistle of James is an ethical application of theology. James writes this letter to strengthen his readers for practical victory over adversity. This letter can be seen as the moral application of our Lord Jesus Christ's teachings for our daily lives. Here James says that good works are the inherent and expected expressions of faith.

Faith and Deeds

The work in this epistle is not done apart from faith, but it is done in faith. It is not done instead of faith, but because of faith. James is certainly not opposed to faith. But he is critical of faith not accompanied by deeds. This epistle emphasizes the theological unity of faith and action in order to confront the false ideology of separating faith from actions. It is because of faith that we act for the wellbeing of others. Therefore, our deeds demonstrate and authenticate our faith. This genuine faith includes works.

Faith without Deeds

James gives us an appropriate example of faith without deeds in Chapter 2: 15-17. It is easy to say 'Go in peace', to the poor and needy. 'Go in peace' can be understood as 'God will provide for you'. Often we forget that God stipulates our partnership and participation to provide for the poor and needy. He provides for them through us. Therefore, the faith without deeds is of no good (v 14). Such faith does not save you (v 14). Such faith is in essence dead (v 17, 26).

“Faith that does not result in deeds is a faith that is utterly useless, ineffectual for salvation and in fact dead” (George M Stulac)

Through the Epistle, James reminds us to live our faith. Faith is trusting and believing in God through all circumstances, situations and experiences of life. It is also a working faith. Deeds, in this context, can be understood as obedience to God's commandments. Jesus Christ commanded us to love each other; so deeds are acts of love commanded by Christ, our Lord. Moral actions flow naturally from genuine faith. Therefore faith and actions are not two, but one. James encourages us to live as a doer of the Word. Genuine faith is manifested through trusting Christ as our Savior as well as following Christ as our Lord.

Prayer: Abba, Father, help us to grow in perfect faith which is perfect love in action. Amen.

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