

## WALK THE TALK!

### Part Two James 1:21-27

## WHAT WE **DO** SPEAKS LOUDER THAN WORDS

Where do we get our standards for speech, actions, and attitudes? Turn to the book of Romans chapter 12 and read the warning in verse 2- *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

The book of Romans is commonly considered the greatest exposition of Christian doctrine anywhere in Scripture. Paul gives us great principles of the gospel that he preached. It is filled with the great themes of redemption: it walks us through the guilt of all mankind; it shows our inability to earn favor with God, reveals the truth of the redeeming death of Christ, and the free gift of salvation to be received by faith alone. It teaches us so many helpful truths. It gives us hope in future glory and trust that God will bring good out of present sufferings, and we even learn to walk out our faith; letting our actions speak louder than our words as we walk out our deep personal care for others.

The book of Romans helps us to walk out our faith as doers of the Word and not just hearers only. We learn to give the Holy Spirit power and control in our lives that helps us obey God's Word and overcome sin. Romans also give us a pattern of holiness to follow and guides us into it. The Holy Spirit pours God's love into our heart, along with joy, peace, and hope by His power. He teaches and enables us to pray rightly and is continually giving inward spiritual assurance that we are God's children. I don't know about you, but that is something that I need; especially when walking in the dark valleys. Therefore, we are able to set our minds on the things of the Spirit—to become pleasing to God. *For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*

So we see again that we must walk the talk by living according to the Bible, by living according to the guidance and presence of Christ in your life. Simply put—one's character is made up of what one does when no one is looking. It reveals the real you. It reminds me of the story about the little boy who when asked by his mother if he had eaten a piece of the chocolate cake that she had baked for his little sister's birthday—strongly denied being the culprit. When his mother handed him the mirror and told him to look, he saw the tell-tell signs of evidence—his face covered with chocolate icing. He knew he was busted and confessed what he had done. Truly, actions speak louder than words!

We can then see as we study the book of Romans that we have choices. We can serve God and bring honor and glory to His name or we can bring reproach and blasphemy against His name. We can learn to say, "NO!" to sin whenever it appears in our lives and tries to take over. Remember, the work that Christ accomplished upon the Cross as he gave His life for all mankind can free us from Satan's demands. We can walk out our talk, and we are able to choose righteousness rather than being bound by our old nature. In Christ we are given a new nature. We can choose to live according to the leading of the Holy Spirit and put to death fleshly attitudes and actions. Acknowledge your position in Christ and walk therein.

A neighbor had the right idea when he wrote this in our monthly newsletter. He was talking about a fire in our Mobile park and how a neighbor saw it and alerted the older lady that lived there. As a result of his actions the lady's life was saved, however her little dog was not so lucky and was lost to the fire. Without the good neighbors actions it could have been the loss of two lives. Having this example in mind, always try and be respectful and friendly to your neighbor and remember *that a word is like a rock thrown in to the middle of a very deep and raging river. Once said or thrown, you cannot get it back.* We must all watch out for each other and sometime look out for those among us and those that have bad intentions against us and our neighbors. Never be afraid to give a warm word of greeting, a friendly wave and most of all a friendly smile. Naturally we have to use common sense in whom we show kindness too. In most cases, if you smile, wave, or say a kind word, it will come right back to you.

See the opportunity to do good AND DO IT! James confronts the unethical practice of his readers with well-chosen words, head-on. Christianity must not only be believed, it must be lived. "What is the use of saying that you have faith and are a Christian if you aren't proving it by helping other?" Will that kind of selfishness and isolation save anyone? We are not to accept the patterns of today's age whose god is the devil. It would be fatal to the Christian life. James is saying that the fundamental emphases are personal growth in the spiritual sensitivity in social life and relationships, and faith that does not deal with both is a dead faith. I once heard a pastor say that the message of James speaks especially to those who are inclined to talk their way into heaven, instead of walk their way there.

In James 4:17 NKJV *Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.* In order to love others, we must root out our own selfishness. A story was told of a woman on a bridge that was attacked, beaten and left to die while 40 people stood by doing nothing and watched. No one came to her aid and her attacker just walked away; leaving the woman broken and dying on the ground. One man even refused to call 911 on his cell phone. He didn't want to get involved. How that must have grieved the Father's heart. And I thought, *Oh God, out of 40 people watching, there had to be some who were Christians. Why didn't they step forward to help her? That is something I will never understand.* When you see what needs to be done, DO IT!

Dr. James Dobson's new book, *When God Doesn't Make Sense*, tells this story. A few months ago, I received a phone call here at Focus On the Family, from a Mr. Greg Krebs. He wanted to get a message through to me; this is what he told our telephone representative.

Mr. Krebs and his wife have a 21 year old son named Chris, whom they had been advised to abort, while still in the womb. They chose to give him life, and he was born with cerebral palsy. He is also profoundly retarded. His parents do not regret their decision to bring him into the world, because they believe that all life is precious. They are thankful for their son, who has touched their lives in warm and wonderful ways.

'God has used him as he is,' said Mr. Krebs. Then he describes something that happened when Chris was just seven years old. He said, "My wife worked in a hospital at the time, and I had taken Chris with me to pick her up. She was late getting off, so Chris and I waited for her in one of the family rooms. Another man was there who was not well dressed and, in fact, was a little smelly. I went to the nurse's station to ask how much longer my wife would be, and when I returned, I saw Christ sitting by the man. 'I'm sorry if my son offended you.' I said.

The man replied, '*Offended me? Offended me?*' *Your son is the only person who has hugged me in the last 20 yrs.* I realized at that moment that Chris had a more Christ-like love for that man than I did.

God desires to use each one of us to touch the broken and hurting lives of others. May we value people as God values them. May we stop yielding to discrimination and show God's love first and foremost. May we work at making "*home*" (heart) improvements and may our hearts always be willing to help the less fortunate. May we have thankful hearts that see the best part of every situation, and may our prayer be that we fix our minds on those things above (Col. 3:1) and walk in Philippians 4:5-9(NKJV).

*Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

*Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these DO, and the God of peace will be with you.*

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