



## ACTIVE FAITH

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(Message preached @ CCA on Sunday, 5 September)

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Scripture references: James 1:27; James 2:14-26

### James 1:27 TPT

"True spirituality that is pure in the eyes of our Father God is to make a difference in the lives of the orphans, and widows in their troubles, and **to refuse to be corrupted by the world's values.**"

### James 1:27 NIV

"Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world."

#### 1) What is religion?

Definition: an outward expression of faith or a demonstration of something that is inwardly true.

Martin Luther said: the world does not need a definition of religion, but rather a demonstration.

And that's what the book of James is about – a call to put our faith in Jesus Christ into action.

#### 2) To make a difference/ to look after/ to care for

To look after or care for speaks to me of a physical activity – shelter, clothing, food.

To make a difference has a bit more depth and speaks of a change.

A better translation would be: to give intense attention to. This implies more than a periodic visit, but rather a consistent closeness and personal contact.

#### 3) Orphans and widows

In James's day a widow without children had no legacy, and orphans had nothing to contribute to society. James is using them as representatives of the most marginalised and most vulnerable groups of people in society.

He is saying that we should become the kind of people who move towards and give intense attention to those in our world who have been outcast and pushed aside by society.

This is how we demonstrate the heart of God.

4) Keep oneself from being corrupted or polluted

Stop being driven by our own selfish desires and goals as is acceptable in the world system. It is difficult to find the energy to be consumed with the affairs of the world when we're so immersed in the brokenness of others. It changes our perspective, our worldviews, our hopes and dreams. It changes everything... for the better.

5) James 2:14-26

This passage of scripture speaks about TRUE faith or SAVING faith. The Wikipedia definition of faith reads: belief in a god or in the doctrines of religion.

We know that true faith in the Living God produces fruit/works. James is very clear about faith without works – verse 17 reads: faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. There is no way to show we really believe in Christ, but by being diligent in good works, from gospel motives, and for gospel purposes.

6) The best works, without faith, are also dead.

Using the illustration of a tree; faith is the root and good works are the fruit. We must have both. We are saved by grace through faith, not by works, but saving faith will have works that accompany it.

## My story

(Watch the video or listen to the audio for the complete testimony)

My involvement at Daily Bread is a practical application of this Scripture.

Daily Bread is a Child and Youth Care Centre. Children are placed there by court.

1997 lost daughter Karin and received a prophecy – mother of many

2002 Wynand shared in church about Daily Bread – felt stirring in my spirit – visited the farm – my heart broke – I wanted to make a change- did not want to join the team – my own terms – independently – no connection with the kids – to scared to be hurt – no emotional contact – renovated 1<sup>st</sup> home

2004/5 joined as trustee – monthly meetings

2010 Erik did maintenance – wanted to live there – I said NO

2012 GLS – Matthew broken clay pot – wrote on shards – Feed the children

2013 ovarian cancer – home for 6 months

2014 Flat @ DB – see the need – feel the need – fill the need

Children re-unified – experienced healing

Very fulfilling – miracles of provision, healing. Love bridges the gap of language

Pause: preparation – banking – sewing – catering - business

2018 took over from Edmund – best job in the world – organize people – renovate homes – move furniture – always painting – play with the kids – minister to kids – shop until I drop

I get to be who God wants me to be..... A Mother of many

## Conclusion

We are all different, but the Scripture remains the same. Faith without works is dead. We are God's hands and feet. We are His children who must demonstrate His love to the world.

Ask God where you should be living out your faith. He WILL show you. And that's the perfect place to be.

Do what comes naturally to you – if you're into computers, don't volunteer to be a plumber! If you enjoy connecting with older people – don't volunteer at Daily Bread.

Remember that God will always equip you for the task at hand.

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## APPLICATION

1. Martin Luther said: the world does not need a definition of religion, but rather a demonstration. How can we/you demonstrate your religion (faith in Jesus)?
  2. What is James saying to us about the most vulnerable in our society? Do we have any responsibility toward them before God?
  3. What is God saying to you? Has He given you a prophetic word or put something in your heart, or have you been moved by these passages in James?
  4. Write it down and share it with your spouse, a friend or your community group.
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## Assistance:

If you need prayer or assistance, please contact our pastoral care line 072 986 4368 or one of our pastors directly.

To join a community group, contact Marli (072 986 4368) or Jen (084 308 5185) or one of our community group leaders directly. Link: <http://christiancentre.co.za/community.html#groups>

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