

2026-02-15 Points

Title: Faith That Works: Moving Beyond Belief to Action

Sermon Summary: This sermon challenges the common misconception that salvation by faith means faith alone requires no action. The pastor emphasizes that genuine faith naturally produces works and transformation. Drawing from Hebrews 11 and James 1-2, the message stresses that while we cannot earn salvation through works, authentic faith inevitably leads to obedience, lifestyle change, and active service. The sermon calls believers to examine whether their faith is merely intellectual assent or a living, working faith that demonstrates Christ's transformative power. True faith involves surrender, obedience to God's Word, and a continual process of change and growth, not a one-time decision followed by complacency.

Key Points:

- Faith is not just believing in God, but believing God and acting on His Word
- Salvation occurred after Jesus died and His will (testament) went into effect; the thief on the cross received salvation while Jesus was still alive
- Faith involves trusting what we cannot see or fully understand, like believing God created everything from nothing
- God speaks creation into existence, and similarly speaks transformation into our lives when we surrender
- Real faith produces action - every biblical example of faith (Abel, Noah, Abraham) involved obedient action
- We cannot claim to have faith while living unchanged lives; this is self-deception
- Being blessed comes from looking into God's Word and doing what it says, not just hearing it
- Pure religion involves caring for orphans and widows and keeping oneself unpolluted by the world
- Christians should live for Christ, not just live with Christ - moving from coexistence to devoted service
- The world is looking for authentic Christians whose transformed lives demonstrate Jesus is real

### Scripture Reference:

- Hebrews 11:1-6 (Faith and the Hall of Faith)
- Genesis 1 (God's creative word and "God said" repeated nine times)
- James 1:16-27 (Don't be deceived; be doers of the Word)
- James 2 (Faith without works is dead)
- Romans 10 (Faith comes by hearing the Word of Christ)

### Stories:

- The thief on the cross receiving salvation while Jesus was still alive
- Personal story of jumping from a hay wagon as a child, trusting his father to catch him every time
- The alphabet factory illustration: believing the Big Bang created order is like believing you can throw TNT into an alphabet factory and get an encyclopedia
- Sitting in college chapel pretending to be attentive while actually sleeping
- Growing up on a farm where the land produces harvest from seeds planted in dirt
- Personal commitment to spend life thanking Jesus for salvation rather than seeking minimal requirements
- The man who looks in a mirror and immediately forgets what he looks like (from James)
- Childhood discipline of not getting dessert until chores and homework were completed
- Hospital workers who risk their jobs to pray with patients and share Jesus