

FAITH WITHOUT WORDS IS DEAD



TEXT: 2 Cor. 4:13-15

INTRO.: A. James declared "*faith without works is dead.*" Paul here declares "**FAITH WITHOUT WORDS IS DEAD.**" Both are true. Those who have faith will produce proof in the form of works. They will also find it next to impossible not to wish to share their faith with others through words, i.e., witnessing.

Acts 1:8 *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

B. Paul states his thesis clearly in v.13: "*I believed and therefore have I spoken...*"

I. THE WRITTEN AND THE SPOKEN: v.13 **(FAITH PRODUCES A WITNESS)**

A. Faith Results in Words:

1. Paul quotes David here from Ps. 116:10.

Psalms 116:3-4 *The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.*

Psalms 116:9-10

I will walk before the LORD in the land of the living. I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted:

2. David had been delivered from death and could not help but speak of it.

ILLUS.: If you have been miraculously healed could you keep quiet about it? David had been protected by God again and again and healed when he was dying. When God delivered him, he couldn't keep quiet about it.

In Jn. 9 the man born blind is healed by Jesus and even though he received threats from the Pharisees he told them again & again how he had been healed. (See passage)

Yesterday I went to visit John H _____ in the hospital. He was diagnosed with heart, kidney and arterial blockages in his legs. He was given a death sentence. When the Drs. Went in to do what they could they found the blockages in his kidneys and legs were gone. John couldn't keep from telling me what God had done for him. Then he said I am going to tell everyone about this whether they want to hear it or not. (He asked me to thank any and all who have prayed for him over the years.)

3. Living faith produces a living witness. "*...we also believe and therefore speak.*"

4. Our words are based on His Words! "*It is written...*"

ILLUS.: The world is full of words. There are talk shows, "talking heads" all over the place, words on TV, the radio, words among friends, kind words, harsh words; even the air we breathe is full of words! Someone divided all speech into 3 categories: **1) Speech without faith.** Vapid & volatile talk. (Yada, yada, yada...) **2) Speech with wrong faith.** Faith in wrong subjects (cults, etc.) & improper faith in right subjects (Catholicism, etc.). **3) Speech with true faith.** It's object is Christ, not creeds; in the Savior, not salvation; in the Lord, not in the liar (Satan) with all his distortions. True faith rests on true speech which is found in God's Word.

II. THE PAST AND THE PRESENT: V.14 **(HOPE PRODUCES ENCOURAGEMENT)**

A. Our Words Must Speak Sound Doctrine:

1. Jesus' resurrection.

- a. His resurrection is the one doctrine which gives hope to every believer.
- b. We know that apart from the rapture we will all die, but we also know that because of the resurrection no one will be left behind: neither the dead in Christ nor the living at His return!
- c. What a bleak future is presented by all the false religions – even those who have a promise of some glorious state beyond the grave based on the words of some dead religious leader (like Mohammed in Islam).
- d. Our hope is based on the promise of One Who died and then rose to **"lead captivity captive"** and to move Paradise to Heaven! (Paul will deal with this specific hope in ch. 5 in detail! Stay tuned.)

2. Our resurrection: **"...shall raise up us also..."**

1. We have a living hope based on the promise of a living Savior.
2. We don't have to wait till we die and are raised, like Lazarus, to be able to get excited and tell others about our glorious hope – we have His Word on it NOW!

Mark 7:32-36 *And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him. And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue; And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain. And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it;*

3. Our presentation: **"...and shall present us with you"**

1. I am not sure about the details of this presentation.
2. We know that to be **"absent from the body is to be present with the Lord."**
3. We also know that at the rapture the **"dead in Christ shall be raised first"** and **"then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air...!"**
4. Then, I believe, when we all have our glorified bodies we will be officially & formally be presented to Him.

III. GOD'S GRACE & OUR THANKSGIVING: V.15
(GRACE PRODUCES THANKSGIVING)

A. Our Words & Works Honor the Lord:

1. These words that glorify Him are not just those we speak in witnessing, but also in praise and thanksgiving.
2. Instead of complaining about what wealth, health and resources we don't have, we ought to thank Him for what we do have!
 - a. Why? **"For all things are for your sakes..."**
 - b. This is the same promise in a different form we find in Romans 8:28: **"all things"**.
 - c. Everything God does in our lives He does for **"(our) sakes."**

ILLUS.: Your poor health is a part of that "all things" – maybe you will get home to heaven quicker! Your job loss is a part of that **"all things"** - there is something better for you down the road. Your Prodigal child is a part of that **"all things"** – maybe you can't see the glad reunion day yet, but the party day is coming. Get the robe ready, get the ring polished, fatten up that calf!!! God's grace to us is designed to produce our thanksgiving to Him!

CONCL.: **"Faith without works is dead."** But **"FAITH WITHOUT WORDS IS DEAD"** also! **"Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy."**

Don't be an ungrateful recipient of God's grace. Be vocal about it. Let others know you are a child of the King, a redeemed sinner, a citizen of heaven and a son of God! Let your voice of praise **"redound to the glory of God."** Silence may be golden in the world at times, but not for the believer.