

INTRODUCTION: The Balance of Faith and Works

(Acts 3:7 & 8)

7 And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. 8 So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them—walking, leaping, and praising God.

Extremism makes people ineffective.

Two Extremes

- Extremely spiritual – heavenly minded and no earthly good
 - A wrong perception of faith – faith without works
God does all the work, you only believe

(James 2:22)

“... by works faith was made perfect”

(James 2:17)

“... faith, if it does not have works, is dead”

(James 2:21 & 22)

21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? 22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?

(James 2:17)

17 Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

- A wrong perception of grace
 - You can live in sin because grace abounds
 - Grace is bigger and stronger than sin

(Romans 5:20 to 6:2)
²⁰ Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, ²¹ so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. 6 ¹ What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? ² Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?
- Extremely Practical – Seeing is believing
 - It has to be logical and reasonable to be believable
 - The Bible calls this “carnal” and “walking after the flesh”

(1 Corinthians 1:21)
“For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe”

(1 Corinthians 3:18-19)
¹⁸ Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. ¹⁹ For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, “*He catches the wise in their own craftiness*”

- What is the foolishness of God?

(1 Corinthians 1:25)

“Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.”

- They deny their spiritual ability to know God and to have faith in God.
 - They act superior to others.
 - They only hear from God and no others
 - Such doctrines and beliefs create heresy and heretics
- God has blessed us with healthy bodies to do what we can
- God has given us a mind to act wisely when it has nothing to do with our destiny
- God has given us gifts and talents to be a blessing – use them or lose them

- What is Godly wisdom?

(James 3:17)

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

(Acts 3:1-11)

Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. 2 And a certain man lame from his mother’s womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms from those who entered the temple; 3 who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms. 4 And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, “Look at us.” 5 So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. 6 Then Peter said, “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.” 7 And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. 8 So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them—walking, leaping, and praising God. 9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God. 10 Then they knew that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. 11 Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch which is called Solomon’s, greatly amazed.

- **A lame man at the temple Beautiful**
 - He was at a beautiful place but he was lame
 - He had limitations that affected his potential
 - It pays to be in the right place at the right time with the right people
 - He was at the gate of the temple Beautiful expecting to receive
 - You can expect more when you act in faith
- **The lame man was outside the temple Beautiful**

The mission of the church is to reach the lost and the hurting humanity and bring them into the church to become part of God’s family.

- It is not enough to only witness but to lead people to accept Christ

The parable of the great supper

(Luke 14:23)

Then the master said to the servant, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled

- The Great Commission

(Mark 16:15)

Jesus said, And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature

- **How did the lame man get into the temple Beautiful?**

- There was human cooperation
Peter and John – unity and respect

- There was divine relationship- they gave Jesus
You need to have Jesus to be a witness and fulfill the Great Commission

(Acts 3:6)

Then Peter said, “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk

- There was divine cooperation – Jesus and you

(John 15:7)

If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you

- There was faith and action
The balance that is needed for miracles to happen

(Acts 3:8)

So he, leaping up, stood and walked [*physical*] and entered the temple with them [*faith*] —walking, leaping, and praising God [*worship*]

- He jumped to his feet and began to walk (*personal act*)
- Then he went with them into the temple courts (*faith*)
- Walking, jumping and praising God (*expression of his faith – worship*)

CONCLUSION

- The local church is spiritual
 - It belongs to God and is for worship
 - It is an apostolic church - called and sent to the world and to live for Christ

(2 Timothy 3:12-17)

¹² Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. ¹³ But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. ¹⁴ But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*, ¹⁵ and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

- Members are empowered with ministry gifts to save the lost and build the Kingdom of God.