



bits from bob....

How is your faith? (James 1-2)

February 1, 2021

I am committed to the Word of God. The key is exposure, consistency, constancy. I often have several Bible reading plans in progress at the same time. For Jan and me, one of our 2021 commitments involves “Dwelling in the Word.”

In the past week, we have contemplating faith, trying to understand. (We are currently working through James, thinking about the shape of faith in the first decades of Christianity.) Is our faith weak or strong? Normal answers usually reflect how firmly we believe. Weak faith is associated with doubt. Strong faith is associated with confidence. We betray ourselves. We show how easily we consider faith a mental exercise.

James writes about faith-testing: faith is tested by doubt, poverty and riches, temptation, anger, evil, forgetfulness, lack of action, speech. Faith is seen in perseverance and endurance, conviction and action.

Here’s the challenge! How is your faith? Is your faith weak or strong? While it is not incorrect to answer based on our level of mental confidence or conviction, it is equally accurate (perhaps more accurate) to evaluate our actions.

My faith is strong when I act. I see an opportunity and seize it—I am not hesitant, I do not shrink back, I do not fail to act only to later regret it.

My faith is strong when I commit to God’s Word, my faith is strong when I commit to God’s will.

A typical definition of faithfulness is the contemporary church is “become a Christian” and “attend church.” While those are important, they are quite inadequate when it comes to evaluating faithfulness!

My faith is not most visible in what I believe. My faith is most visible in what I do, my faithfulness.

A final point – faith is not meritorious, it earns nothing. A faithful dog is the result of a faithful master (and vice versa). When I am faithful, I do not declare my own worth – I declare the worthiness of my Master. I imitate the faithfulness of Jesus.

How is your faith in Jesus? Yes, you can describe to me what you believe. But you will be more convincing if you tell me what you are doing daily for the one you call Master. You don’t have to recite your creed book – show me your calendar of activities! I will know. So does your family, your children, your neighbors, your co-workers....and your God.