



Shoe Leather Christianity

A Study on the Book of James

Lesson 2B | May 21, 2015 | James 2:14 – 26

Lesson Overview

This week's passage is at the very center of Shoe Leather Christianity: *faith without works is dead*. For you and me it means that it is not enough for us to claim to be a follower of Jesus, we are expected to show the world who we are by what we do. At the same time, we need to be cautious in connecting good works with salvation. One concept that has helped me over the years in understanding the facets (or phases) of salvation is the following:

- JUSTIFICATION: Saved from the PENALTY of sin
- SANCTIFICATION: Saved from the POWER of sin
- GLORIFICATION: Saved from the PRESENCE of sin

Justification is God's gift to us; sanctification is our gift to Him. As an example in John 17 Jesus asked God that He too would be sanctified. Sanctification is being saved from the "power of sin" in that we are set apart for the work of God, or made holy.

Unfortunately, the modern church does more talking than doing. In other words, our SHOW exceeds our DO! As a whole we have not been generous with what we have been given and as a result have lost much of our influence in our society and the world. In the absence of our generosity we have seen the abundance of our government. As Christians we should have reputations for being generous people who act using whatever resources we have been given.

Series Overview

Success comes from training, not trying. As we study the book of James, we will find a cause and effect relationship with regards to the choices we make in life. There is always a pattern associated with success or failure. The key is to determine areas in our life where we are weak and seek the Lord's guidance in making lasting changes, not the temporary changes often associated with today's "boot strap" self-help approaches.

Throughout this series we are going to focus on the following flowchart that represents the "progressive" phases of our Christian life; each phase of the Christian life is associated with the previous phase. **Environment** leads to beliefs; **beliefs** lead to thoughts; **thoughts** lead to actions; **actions** lead to habits; and **habits** lead to **lifestyles**. A phrase to help us remember this progression is *Every Boy Thinks About Hunting Lions*. Try and commit this flowchart to memory as it will be useful throughout the series.



Figure 1: Progressive Phases of the Christian Life

1. Reread the opening paragraph of this lesson and complete the following sentences.

JUSTIFICATION is saved from the _____ of sin.

SANCTIFICATION is saved from the _____ of sin.

GLORIFICATION is saved from the _____ of sin.

2. Why is it easier to talk about being a Christian than act like one? If you can, provide a few examples of when Christians are better at talking than doing.

3. Provide an example in your life of a time when someone lived out their faith and did something significant for you.

4. If you had no limitations and could do anything to make a difference in another person's life, what would you do? Consider James' message in verses 14 through 19.