

Showing Our Faith!! (Slide 1)

Abounding in Utterance, Knowledge, Diligence and Love

Reading: 2 Corinthians 9:1-9

Apostle Paul's message to the Brethren at Corinth on giving, fits right in with our topic the last few weeks of: ***abounding in the work of the Lord!***

Because of our God's generosity, we should be compelled to be generous and work in His vineyard and to supply the needs of others as He has supplied them to us!!

Abounding in Utterance

Last week we focused on ***abounding in the work of the Lord*** by *abounding in faith*. *Abounding in faith* should be a lead into *showing our faith* in one way or another.

In **James 2**, he is talking about faith and works without partiality. He goes on to say:

James 2:18 (Slide 2)

But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works."

Emphasizing ***"show you my faith by works"*** is the authentic way the Christian shows the path to the mercy of God and our sincere concern for others.

This is not to be done in a contentious way, but with pure motives, reaching out to others as the *Gospel* and someone who shared it has reached out to us!!

No one has seen God, yet the explanation of God is evident by those things we do see. Nevertheless, many don't believe in God. So, either one believes in God or one does not.

But how can anyone believe unless they hear of Him?

Thus, ***“faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”***

“I’ll show you my faith by my works.” So then, the Christian is now to have an active role in making sure as many as can; hear and see!

Christians are to carry on in the ministry of Jesus Christ. Jesus' work hasn't ended, but His earthly mission has! Dying on the cross to offer salvation is complete. He now works to keep the saved saved!!

We ought to express our gratitude, if indeed that is our contention through faith, in carrying on with His ministry to reach the world.

We haven't personally laid our physical eyes on Jesus, yet we see Him throughout the Holy Scripture because God the Father sent Jesus, His only begotten and that is the central theme of the Bible.

After His resurrection Jesus explains that the message has always been about Him:

Luke 24:25-27, 44-45 (Slide 3)

25 Then He said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?” 27 And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

(Slide 4) ***44 Then He said to them, “These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.” 45 And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.***

If this is what we believe then we ought to *abound in utterance* concerning the message of Christ.

No one will ever be saved without the Gospel of Jesus Christ!! The Gospel message today is to be shared by the words of those who believe.

That fact is clarified in the explanation of the vision in **Acts 11** in which Peter gained knowledge concerning what was once considered common or

unclean to eat and was now made clean by God and should no longer be considered common.

Peter's Jewish Brethren couldn't believe he had eaten and had fellowship with the house of Cornelius a gentile. **(Acts 10)** So he explained the vision and why he was in his house. The message was that the word was to be taken to the gentiles. After seeing the vision for the third time he explains to his Jewish Brethren what happened:

Acts 11:11-14 (Slide 5)

11 At that very moment, three men stood before the house where I was, having been sent to me from Caesarea. 12 Then the Spirit told me to go with them, doubting nothing. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. (Slide 6) 13 And he told us how he had seen an angel standing in his house, who said to him, 'Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon whose surname is Peter, 14 who will tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved.' and that's exactly what Peter did!!

The message of salvation must be expressed in words and will be if we *abound in utterance*.

Abounding in Knowledge/ Understanding

One can with a great deal of work, memorize a lot of scripture and I think memorizing scripture is good. However, I feel that locating information and having the ability to understand it and explain it is much more significant.

Merely memorizing Bible verses isn't enough. One must gain knowledge of their meaning. Equally important, knowledge of the scripture that one gains must be shared. Knowledge for the sake of Knowledge simply ***"puffs up."***

1 Corinthians 8:1 (Slide 7)

We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies. That knowledge sometimes makes some feel superior and they show it which causes others to feel inferior, unworthy, insignificant.

Sometimes folks have a morbid curiosity when it comes to learning. I say morbid because it is often disturbing because truth is absent or twisted.

Such is the case in **2 Timothy** where Apostle Paul warns of the changing morality and the evil influence that will occur in the last days.

He says of these individuals that they will be **lovers of themselves** and possess many other negative and selfish attributes. He concludes that they will find gullible and vulnerable people (*in this case women loaded down with sin/ uncertainty*) who are always eager to hear something new to satisfy their immoral sense of curiosity because they are **always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. 2 Timothy 3:7** (Slide 8)

In fact, He goes on to say that these influencers cause others to **reject the truth**. I think so many people today are caught up in their own sense of morality and their own sense of intelligence *"that they wouldn't recognize the truth if it swatted them like a fly swatter strikes a fly."*

These people are actually guided by others that in the realm of social media are called *influencers*. Young and old alike need to be careful who we follow or who influences us because their knowledge can be and so often is; useless.

The basis of knowledge then is to be motivated to seek the truth, to share truth and to implement it in our own lives to obtain salvation and to please God.

1 Peter 2:2 (Slide 9)

as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby

Christians should *abound in knowledge* so that we can walk in this life more like Him and to please Him:

Ephesians 5:8-10 (Slide 10)

8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light 9 (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), 10 finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.

The Apostle Paul through statements he made to the Brethren at *Corinth* signifies that ***abounding in the work of the Lord*** works *hand in hand* with striving to please God:

2 Corinthians 5:9 (Slide 11)

6 So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. 7 For we walk by faith, not by sight. (Slide 12)
8 We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. 9 Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.

The more knowledge we gain the more confident we should become in sharing Christ Jesus.

Abounding in Diligence

Walking with Christ takes perseverance/ diligence. Gaining more knowledge is a lifetime pursuit that requires a diligent student:

2 Timothy 2:15 (Slide 13)

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Jesus said that if one wishes to follow Him that they must take up their cross daily. To do anything on a daily basis and to do it right with all of our ability takes extreme diligence/ commitment. Yet, that is a requirement of discipleship. Someone who does not do this on a daily basis Jesus says this about them:

Luke 14:27 (Slide 14)

And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.

One cannot be in between. Having a desire for the world and for Christ. The *lukewarm* individual He will ***spit you out of my mouth.*** **Revelation 3:16**
The admonition is to *abound in diligence.*

Abound in Love

Love is the summation of the Christian walk. Jesus says that love is the greatest command of all. **Matthew 22:36-37** Every good work hinges on the Love we have for God.

The *Apostle Paul* states this about Love:

Romans 13:10 (Slide 15)

Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

That command of the Law prompts people to do those things that are neighborly. We should be constant vessels of support when there is a need. Jesus looked in the eyes of the rich young ruler and thought what He told him He knew would be upsetting, the Bible says *He looked at him and loved him.*

"It was wonderful, wonderful Love that brought Jesus down from Heaven above!"

The bedrock of our identification as Jesus disciples is Love:

1 Peter 1:22 (Slide 16)

Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart

Fervently means intensely!!

1 Peter 4:8 (Slide 17)

And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins."

John 13:35 (Slide 18)

By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

Abound in Love! Christian Love is our identity if we are true disciples!!

1 Corinthians 15:58 (Slide 19)

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

What are those works that we must abound in: that is; to be more than enough, to overflow in?!!

(Slide 20) We are to:

Be steadfast-immovable, yet, not standing still!

Abound in faith: Show our faith by our works!

Abound in Utterance: speaking the word to others!

Abound in knowledge: Know where to find the Biblical information and have the ability to explain it!

(Slide 21) *Abound in diligence: take up our cross daily and follow Christ!*

Abound in Love: be fervent, being filled with Love for all for our walk with Him is a Labor of Love!!

Invitation

The invitation is given by Christ Jesus Himself because He loves all. We share that message of Hope because we want all to hear and because of our Love for God and His Creation. Hear the invitation. If you haven't done so, put on Christ through Baptism and prepare to take up your cross daily to please Him.

I understand personally that the cross of Christ gets heavy and that we struggle to bear it but the invitation is for all who feel they bear it alone. You don't! Your support system surrounds you. If you need the prayers of your Brethren for whatever reason please let us know.....

Let us know how we may serve you.....

Reading:

2 Corinthians 9:1-9

1 Now concerning the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you; 2 for I know your willingness, about which I boast of you to the Macedonians, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal has stirred up the majority. 3 Yet I have sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this respect, that, as I said, you may be ready; 4 lest if some Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we (not to mention you!) should be ashamed of this confident boasting. 5 Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren to go to you ahead of time, and prepare your generous gift beforehand, which you had previously promised, that it may be ready as a matter of generosity and not as a grudging obligation. 6 But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. 9 As it is written:

***"He has dispersed abroad,
He has given to the poor;
His righteousness endures forever."***

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