

TENSION and TRIUMPH

Sermon Study - 2.15.2026

Leader's Corner

Faithful Obedience

James 1:22-25; 2:14-20

Main Idea: Faithful obedience is the product of a prioritized relationship with Jesus. Genuine faith does not stay internal—it produces visible action. The question is not “Do I believe?” but “What are my actions revealing?”

Main Scriptures: James 1:22–25 & 2:14–20

Core Truths:

Faith without works... what good is it? (James 2)

Genuine faith in God produces faithful obedience in action.

Our good works are not the cause of our salvation—they are the evidence.

Before we do, we must be (abide, love, know Him).

We love through what we do.

Main Practice: Take Inventory — Did my actions match my faith? Where have I not prioritized Jesus?

Leader Framing Tip: This week is not about shame or performance. It’s about alignment. The goal is not to “try harder” but to examine whether our lives reflect a prioritized relationship with Jesus.

Prayer and Praise

Opening Liturgical Prayer (Read Together):

Father,
You have called us not only to hear Your Word,
but to live it.

Create in us a desire to know You and be with You.
Let our faith be genuine—not hollow, not performative.

Shape our hearts before You shape our actions.
Transform us from the inside out,
so that what we do reflects who we belong to.

Teach us faithful obedience—
not to earn Your love,
but because we have received it.

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Worship Focus (Theme: Surrendered, Active Faith):

“Build My Life” theme (foundation on Christ)

“Lord, I Need You” theme (dependence before action)

Encourage participants to sing as a response of surrender, not emotion only.

Group Discussion

Recall any thoughts, impressions, key moments from your Sunday experience.

Read: James 1:22–25

1. What does it mean to be a “hearer” but not a “doer?”

2. Why does James compare this to looking in a mirror?

Read: James 2:14–20

3. What does James mean when he says faith without works is dead?

4. How is living faith different from intellectual agreement?

Broader Biblical Principle:

5. According to 1 John 2:3–6, how do we know we truly know Him?

6. Why is Matthew 22:37–40 foundational to faithful obedience?

7. How does Colossians 1:9–10 connect knowledge of God with fruitful living?

8. Where is the tension between grace and works?

Practice

Group Exercise (15–20 Minutes)

Step 1: Quiet Reflection (5 minutes)

Ask everyone to silently consider:

- Did my actions match my faith this week?
- Where did obedience cost me something?
- Where did convenience override conviction?
- Where have I not prioritized Jesus?

Step 2: Write It Down

Have participants list:

- One area of obedience they walked in.
- One area where they avoided obedience.
- One relationship that reveals their current spiritual priorities.

Step 3: Small Group Sharing (Optional, Safe Environment)

In groups of 2–3:

- Share one growth area.
- Share one area needing alignment.
- Pray for one another.

Individual Practice for the Week: Daily 5-Minute Inventory

At the end of each day ask:

- Where did I reflect Christ today?
- Where did I ignore conviction?
- Did I prioritize time with Jesus?
- What step of obedience is He inviting me into tomorrow?

Closing Leader Prayer:

Lord,

We don't want a faith that only speaks.

We want a faith that moves.

Align our hearts with Yours.

Where we have drifted, draw us back.

Where we have resisted obedience, soften us.

Let our relationship with You be our highest priority,
so that our obedience flows naturally and joyfully.

Make our faith visible.

In Jesus' name, Amen

Further Study

Additional Scriptures:

- Gospel of John 15:1–8 – Abiding produces fruit
- Ephesians 2:8–10 – Saved by grace, created for good works
- Romans 12:1–2 – Living sacrifices

Theological Reflection:

Faith and obedience are inseparable in biblical theology. Reformers summarized it this way: "We are saved by faith alone, but the faith that saves is never alone." Grace produces gratitude. Gratitude produces obedience. Obedience reveals love.

Reflection Quotes:

- "Before we do, we must be."
- "We love through what we do."
- "Your calendar and your reactions often reveal your real theology."