

Rick Warren: Passive Faith Is Not True Faith

“When will you ever learn that ‘believing’ is useless without doing what God wants you to? Faith that does not result in good deeds is not real faith” (James 2:20, TLB).

Is faith simply a frame of mind? Some see it that way—a passive attribute of a Christian waiting to see what God has in store for you: a promotion, cancer, depression, betrayal, blessing, wealth or injustice. They might say, “I’ll just wait to see what God is going to do for me and go with the flow.” But that’s foolish talk.

Faith is active. It’s not passive. It’s a commitment. Look at your lifestyle and see what kinds of actions follow as a result of it. If you’ve got a faith that’s real, it can be demonstrated.

If you’ve been baptized, you made a statement to God and the people around you. You said, “I’m in!” But it doesn’t stop at baptism—not by a long shot! What else do you do? You start following the pattern of Jesus. Faith is proven by how we live. And don’t misinterpret this. Your salvation is not based on your works. The things you do—your walking-around, everyday life—won’t get you into heaven. Your actions don’t make you a Christian; they *show* you’re a Christian.

Here are some next steps you can take in your faith:

- **Celebrate the lavish gift of grace.** You were saved because Jesus absolutely loves you and wants you to be with him in heaven. Celebrate that!
- **Show your faith.** Wedding rings don’t make people married, but they declare it in a visible way. In the same way, baptism isn’t the thing that will get you into heaven, but it’s an act of obedience. (Jesus commanded

us to be baptized and to baptize others.)

- **Share your faith with the people around you.** If you are excited about what God has done in your life, why not share it? There are lots of ways to do that. Get plugged in to serving God. There are literally millions of possibilities. Point people to Jesus and love them like Jesus did. It's a choice that will bring eternal joy—to you and to the people you helped bring to Christ.

Talk It Over

- What are some specific ways you can *show* your faith to others?
 - Consider your response to this analogy of faith: Wedding rings don't make people married, but they declare it in a visible way.
 - What are some ways you can share your faith with others? What people come to mind when you think about this?
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Rick Warren *is the founding pastor of Saddleback Church. His book, The Purpose Driven Church, was named one of the 100 Christian books that changed the 20th century. He is also founder of , a global internet community for pastors.*

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