



Pastor's Corner

Dear friends,

This week in worship we'll be taking a look at the epistle of James. We don't spend a lot of time in this book, but it has a very important message: don't just talk the talk of faith...walk the walk. In other words, we have to act upon what we believe, if we truly want to share the love of Christ with the world. It takes both an internal faith of study/prayer/pondering/praising as well as an external faith of

loving/acting/speaking to do what Christ did. We can't get scared by Christ's words to the Pharisees in Mark 7, when they accused Jesus' followers of not

following the religious laws of washing their hands before they ate (although I strongly encourage us to do this for entirely different reasons). Jesus said to the Pharisees, "Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines.'" What Jesus accused them of was flaunting their beliefs publicly without having the internal reverence for God.

There are many ways we can do what Jesus is asking us. First, we come to worship to learn/listen/and praise God. This strengthens and equips us to go out into the world to love and care for one another and to share the Good News with a world desperately in need of hope. One opportunity for action is what I lifted up this past Sunday when I spoke about our need for food for our pantry here at First Christian, as we sometimes have individuals/families come to our back door needing assistance. Sadly, last week when a mom and her young son came we had no food to give them (but we did have one last gift card). Check out the list in this issue of the Messenger with some suggested items. I also invited you to consider buying some gift cards to various grocery stores or restaurants that are close to the church (again, see list), as many people don't have cars to get to other parts of town readily. This is part of what we are now calling our Back-Door Blessings ministry.

Your hearts are filled with kindness, love and generosity. I see it every time I'm with you, and it's a blessing to witness that. Thank you for making a difference in this world. Have a blessed week, and Peace be with you all, *Kara*

p.s. No pressure, but I wanted to remind you that if you buy the gift cards through our SCRIP program it gives a percentage back to our church!