

# The St. John's Pulpit

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## SHOW AND TELL

James 2:14-20 and Mark 8:34-36

September 16, 2018 - Rev. Dennis W. Foust, PhD, Senior Minister - Message 3 of 5 in Series Entitled,  
*'Actively Faithful Faithfully Active Living:  
Learning to Live by Characteristics of God's Spirit of Love'*

*Pay attention to your desires – what you want – for people believe what they want to believe.  
The hand of wanting holds the pen of believing to write the human story.  
Pay attention to your desires – what you want – for the ink in your pen matters.*

By wanting God's vision of love to be the story of your life, you believe in the message and example of Jesus.

You use the pen of living obediently in relationship with God, learning the mind of Christ. You believe in Jesus by living in the way of Jesus and this is the story you are writing.

In education, 'Show and Tell' involves showing the group an item and telling them about it. Your life is a daily 'Show and Tell.'

You show your active faith every day and tell others who is Lord of your living.

James, the brother of Jesus, was the leader of the early Church in Jerusalem. He echoes the words of the prophet, Habakkuk, who wrote, "...the righteous live by their faith." (2:4)

James taught, "...faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead."

God's gift of faith works in you shaping the mind of Jesus Christ in your character.

Jesus gave us a pivot point in his teaching in these words of Mark 8: "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me."

Jesus gave us clarity about Christian living. He obeyed the will of God.

When you deny selfish desires and take up your cross of discipleship or learning of Jesus, you express obedience.

Why did the cross become such an important symbol in the early Church. It was a cultural symbol of scandal, criminality and suffering. Through history, it has been misused as a symbol of power; but this was not its message.

The cross is what we show and tell the world because it proclaims God's way of life for us. Christian living is the way of life through death. We find our life by losing our life.

As a seed becomes alive by dying in the soil – so it is with Actively Faithful Faithfully Active Living. In show and tell, active faith is expressed as cross-shaped service.

As a community of Active Faith, we do more than offer a ministry based on our best. We learn of the cross, tell of the cross and share the life of the cross radically; for to do so only in moderation is a mockery of God. We invest our lives in ministries which show and tell cross-shaped living.

Please stand if you currently serve or have served through the following ministries and remain standing until the full list is read. Some of you could stand several times.

- Hope Chapel
- Men's Shelter
- Charlotte Family Housing
- Room in The Inn
- Circles of Hope
- Community Transitions
- South Sudanese
- Immigration and Refugees
- Habitat for Humanity
- Pride Parade and Interfaith Service
- Highland Back Packs
- Friendship Trays
- Sandwich Ministry
- CROP Walk
- Loaves & Fishes
- Brotherhood of the Biscuit
- Women of the Church

Thank you; please be seated.

In his book, *Journey to the East*, Hermann Hesse tells a parable of great nobles, princes, and leaders riding horses and camels on a sacred quest. One person in the party was named Leo, who at the end of each day brought out his guitar to sing. He gave attention to details, reminded them of the importance of their journey, built the first fire and told stories. One morning they awoke to find Leo gone. They looked everywhere for him but to no avail. A few weeks later, the company disbanded because it was too difficult without Leo. Later, one of the travelers found Leo and learned he was actually the leader of their spiritual order. He did not ride on the front camel shouting marching orders and directives. He lived among them to support, affirm, encourage serve.

Beloved, your ministry in daily life matters. Through your obedience of God, as followers of Jesus, you are changing the world. You are showing and telling the spirit of God's love by your cross-shaped living. Amen and AMEN!