

FAITH IN ACTION

DATE: SUNDAY, 17TH OF MAY 2020 | SERIES: NATION CHANGERS - PART 1

JAMES 2:17-18

In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds."

Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds.

ISAIAH 58:10-11

and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry

and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.

The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame.

NOTE TO LEADERS:

1. Please remind your group of the prayer meeting on Tuesday, 26 May at 6pm (We will share a YouTube link via email and SMS)
2. Steve will also be hosting some live online interviews at 7pm on Tuesday nights during our Nation Changers series:
 - This week - Nadine, Cat & Sanele from Nation Changers and CityHope Disaster Relief
 - 2 June - Rob Hoatson, Founder of Thirsty Water
 - 9 June - Russ Eales, a church planter

START TALKING

1. Was there something in Sunday's message that challenged you?
2. Are you more likely to act without thinking, or think without acting?

START THINKING

1. What does living generously look like?
2. Read Isaiah 58:10-11. God gives us some great promises for when we show kindness, but there is also a cost to kindness - you generally have to sacrifice something.
 - a). What prevents us from reaching out to others?
 - b). Which of the promises in these verses speak to you?
 - c). Are you aware of anyone in your circle of friends, family, acquaintances, co-workers, or your greater community that might be considered 'hungry or oppressed'? What are some of the ways that you might reach out to them?

START SHARING

1. Steve spoke of three actions on Sunday:
 1. Look out for others
 2. Follow His nudges
 3. Live generously
 Which of these three comes easiest to you? Which is the most difficult of the three actions for you? What can you do this week to express your faith through action?
2. Have you ever been prompted to action through the nudges of God? How did you know that it was a nudge from God, and what did He prompt you to do? How has acting on that nudge impacted your life?

START PRAYING

Thank you, Lord, for Your mercy and grace. We pray that our choices will be driven by our faith and that we would be intentional in our actions and deeds.

START DOING

1. When you budget for groceries this week, consider including a Nation Changers relief voucher to help feed the needy. As little as R50 will feed one person for 10 days. Find the Nation Changers banking details and Zapper code [here](#).
2. Steve put a challenge out to reach out to 10 people per day for 7 days with a message of encouragement. For most of us, this would mean going wider than our "inner circle" of friends and family. Go through the contacts in your phone and make a list of who you're going to send messages of encouragement to. Mark the names off your list when the message is sent.

SUMMARY

OF SUNDAY'S MESSAGE

This Sunday, Steve shared an inspiring message to start our Nation Changers series. Our Nation Changers series gives us a great opportunity to celebrate all that God is doing, and provides us with an opportunity to look outwards and to do something for others.

In James 2:17-18, we read: *In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds.* Good deeds don't make us Christ-followers, but being Christ-followers should produce good deeds. Faith and action are like roots and fruits - if the roots are strong and healthy, the tree produces good fruits!

Three actions we should be taking as people of faith to impact our nation:

Action #1: Look out for others

"Love is a choice to reach beyond myself not once, but twice. First, I reach out to God to grant me the love that I don't possess, and then I reach out to others to give them that love." (Craig D. Lounsbrough)

Steve invited us to take up a challenge to reach out beyond ourselves - to reach out to 10 people in a meaningful way, each day for the next seven days.

Action #2: Follow His nudges

"...He will guide you..." John 16:13

This Sunday, if we had been meeting in our building, we would have celebrated "Founders Day" - Curro HCA was opened in Jan 1994 with 60 learners with 7 staff because some of the members of CityHill Church followed the nudges of God. At present, the enrolment is 1247 and 160 staff (Curro HCA, Curro High and Curro Castle). None of this would have happened if some faith-filled pioneers had not followed the nudges of the Holy Spirit.

Action #3: Live generously

To properly understand the Scripture in James 2:17-18, we need context. If we go back to verses 15 and 16, James says: *Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it?*

Steve shared a video message from Nehneh Shange - an amazing lady, who is a qualified teacher and saw a need in her own community and decided to do something about it. Through Nation Changers and CityHope Disaster Relief (2 different organisations), we are also attempting to do something about meeting a need in the community.

It was encouraging to hear feedback and see all God is doing through Nation Changers and CityHope Disaster Relief, and the generosity of people and companies, to provide for the needy. It is definitely something worth celebrating!

Combined income for the two organisations from the end of March to date was R2,7 million in cash and "goods in kind" to the value of R2 million have also been donated making a total of R4,7 million! This includes 242 tons of food, 34 000 toilet rolls, 34 000 soap bars and 40 000 bottles of sanitiser. Through this generosity, an estimated 48 000 people have been impacted. This is phenomenal!

At the beginning of this year, we shared a word that CityHill received about moving into a season of being like an Aircraft Carrier. One of the key tasks of an aircraft carrier is humanitarian aid. We are doing this more than ever during this lockdown.

Something else worth celebrating is that during this lockdown period, our funding for our Above & Beyond building project has grown by R503 000 - we are a quarter of the way there! We are incredibly grateful to those who are giving into this in line with what they pledged to give. We may not be in a position to build right now, but we see the need for it more than ever.

So back to Action ("*faith without action is dead*"). In previous years, we've run our "Nation Changers Month" off the back of our Nation Changers series, and we've had the privilege of getting involved in various projects through giving our time and/or our finances. This year is different in that due to the nature of the coronavirus; we can't get involved in projects. We are however able to still help meet a need by giving financially to Nation Changers to help support the work that they are doing with distributing food parcels and food vouchers in the communities that need it most:

- R400 will feed 4 people for 21 days
- R200 will feed 2 people for 21 days
- R100 will feed 1 person for 21 days
- R50 will feed 1 person for 10 days

God has entrusted our personal income to us to be a blessing to others. Our challenge to you for Nation Changers Month is that when you're budgeting for your groceries, to include an amount to give to Nation Changers which will help feed the hungry. All funds received in the Nation Changers bank account with the reference NC2020 will be equally split between Nation Changers and CityHope Disaster Relief, and every cent goes to food relief - there are no admin costs.

Finally, God gives us some very special promises for when we spend ourselves in behalf of the hungry:

...if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness (1), and your night will become like the noonday (2). The Lord will guide you always; (3) he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land (4) and will strengthen your frame. (5)
Isaiah 58:10-11