

“Faith and Works”

James 2:14-26

June 12, 2022 | Jason Finley, Lead Pastor for Equipping

“The New Testament does not offer a lot of encouragement for people who just want enough Christianity to be saved.”

- D.A. Carson

Faith without works:

- Cannot save (v. 14)
- Useless (v. 20)
- Dead (vv. 17, 24)

BIG IDEA: We are saved for good works through a living faith.

James 2:14 | “What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him?”

James 2:26 | “For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.”

I. Guard against the deceit of your heart.

James 1:16 | “Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers.”

James 1:22 | “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”

James 1:26 | “If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person’s religion is worthless.”

1. Hollow words (vv. 15-17)

James 2:15-17 | “15 If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and filled,’ without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? 17 So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.”

2. Ungodly comparison (v. 18)

James 2:18 | “But someone will say, ‘You have faith and I have works.’ Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.”

3. Doctrine without delight (v. 19)

James 2:19 | “You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!”

Mark 12:28-31 | “Which commandment is the most important of all?’ 29 Jesus answered, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ 31 The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

II. Show living faith through a life of good works.

James 2:20 | “Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless?”

- “Show” or “see” used 4 times in this passage (vv. 18, 20, 22, 24).
- We are saved by faith alone, but saving faith is never alone.
- Living faith is shown by our works.

1. Love of God (vv. 21-24; Genesis 15:6, 22:12, 18)

James 2:21-24 | “21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; 23 and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, ‘Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness’—and he was called a friend of God. 24 You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone.”

Genesis 15:6 | “And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.”

Genesis 22:12 | “He said, ‘Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.’”

Genesis 22:18 | “and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.”

Hebrews 11:17-18 | “17 By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, 18 of whom it was said, ‘Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.’”

James 1:21 | “receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.”

John 14:23-24 | “23 Jesus answered him, ‘If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. 24 Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father’s who sent me.’”

Ephesians 2:8-10 | “8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

How do faith and works relate to our salvation?	
Incorrect	Correct
Works → Salvation Faith + Works → Salvation Faith → Salvation	Faith → Salvation + Works *Our confidence before God is NOT in our works, but rests on the work of another: Jesus Christ!

2. Love of neighbor (v. 25; Joshua 2:11)

James 2:25 | “And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way?”

Joshua 2:11 | “for the Lord your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath.”

Hebrews 11:30-31 | “30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days. 31 By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.”

Benediction

Jude 1:24-25 | “24 Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, 25 to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.”