

I) V14 INTRO: What does it profit, my brethren if someone says he has faith but does
In V12, James referred to the manner in which these believers **spoke** and **acted**
This is because the way we **speak** and what we **do** reveals **who we really are**
Pr 20:11 Even small children are **known by their actions**, so is their conduct really
pure and upright?

II) Our **works** reveal our **nature**, and are **outward evidences** of being saved
Fact: Our **invisible faith** becomes **visible** by how we **speak** and what we **do**
DEVELOP

III) Before we received Christ and His forgiveness, we were simply **unbelievers**
Though we **occasionally** did good things, we still had what is called a **sin nature**
This means we had a **natural inclination** to sin
We **choose** to do our own will and if **given a choice** to sin, we ordinarily do it
SIN NATURE

IV) Spurgeon: As the salt flavors every drop in the Atlantic, so does sin affect **every
atom of our nature**. It is so sadly there, so abundantly there, that if you **cannot detect** it,
you are deceived.

THE FACT IS

V) We don't have to be taught to rebel against God, to love and value something else
more than Him, to casually use His name, or reject setting a day apart to worship Him
Sunday's a good day for soccer or little league or just hanging around

VI) We don't have to be taught to hate our parents, or want to kill someone.

VII) Who taught us **to sleep** with somebody else's spouse, to **steal** or to **lie** about
someone just to hurt them? Who taught us to **long for** something somebody else has,
envying the person, wishing we had it and they didn't, including even their home, their
wife, servant, animal or anything else that belonged to them?

WHO TAUGHT US THESE THINGS

VIII) These things are the natural works of a sinful nature

Mk 7:18-20 (Jesus said) nothing that enters a person **from the outside** can defile
them. For it doesn't go **into their heart** but into their stomach, and then out of the
body." (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods clean.) He went on: "**What comes out** of
a person **is what** defiles them. For it is **from within**, out of a person's heart, that **evil
thoughts come**—sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit,
lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance, and folly. All these vile things **come from within**;
they are what defile you."

- I) Jesus made it clear that we were actually **in bondage** to sin
Jn 8:34 Most assuredly, **I say to you**, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.
- II) As those in bondage to sin, we habitually did those things that were natural to do
Jesus brought a **message of freedom**, calling on us to **believe** and receive Him
This message was **God's requirements** for forgiveness and entrance into heaven
- III) All that man **says** or **does** is judged by this standard, the **law of liberty** (V12)
The law of liberty is the gospel message, given to us by Jesus (1:25)
- IV) It is this gospel message that men will be judged by
Jn 12:48 He who rejects Me, and **does not receive My words**, has that which judges him--**the word** that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.
- V) All of what is said and done will be judged by God
Mt 12:36-37 But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.
AGAIN
- VI) The **standard** for His judgment is the perfect Law of Liberty (1:25)
God's law is completely fulfilled on our behalf by Jesus
Mt 5:17-18 Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them **but to fulfill them**
- VII) Because of this, by faith in Him, we now have liberty
Ro 8:2 The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has **made me free** from the law of sin and death
JAMES WENT ON TO SAY
- VIII) V13 For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy
God **freely** grants mercy **to all** who come to Him in humility
Ps 86:5 For You, Lord, are good, and **ready to forgive**, and abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You.
- IX) When someone withholds mercy it is evidence that they have not received mercy
Jesus said it is the merciful who obtain mercy: we give what we have received
- X) James now continues exhorting his readers to a life of good works

- I) He has already exhorted them to live a life earmarked by good works
Jas 1:22 But be **doers** of the word, and not **hearers only**, deceiving yourselves
- II) Being **doers** would consist of being swift to hear, slow to wrath, slow to speak
It includes laying aside filthiness and wickedness, bridling the tongue, visiting widows and orphans, being unspotted from the world, and not showing partiality to some people over others
- III) James now continues to build on the theme of being doers of the word
- IV) V14 What does it profit my brethren if someone **says** he has faith but does not
James is saying that **said faith** is not the same as **living faith**
- V) This is because it is easy to **say** that you believe, not knowing what that means
- VI) There are many who do not realize that the Christian faith is meant to be lived out
This is demonstrated by the many answering invitations, yet never changing
Mt 7:21 Not everyone **who says to Me**, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who **does the will** of My Father who is in heaven
- VII) **Tozer**: The idea that this world is a **playground** instead of a **battleground** has now been accepted in practice by the vast majority of Christians
- VIII) James is making it clear that good works will always be **an earmark** of true faith
We are not **saved** by good works, but salvation **always** produces good works
- IX) Salvation is a **free gift** received by faith, and is not won by human effort
Eph 2:8-9 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith --and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- **not by works**, so that no one can boast
- X) A life that avoids practicing evil and pursues what is good reveals sincere faith
JAMES MAKES IT CLEAR
- XI) **Head** faith, **said** faith, or **demon** faith is not **saving** faith
Nor is it **living** faith
- XII) Faith produces works of love, and these works reveal that a person loves the Lord

- I) 2023 The Barna Group compiled a survey of opinions about Christians
Only 15% label Christianity as a faith they respect
48% consider it judgmental, 49% consider Christians hypocritical
Gandhi: I like your Christ; I do not like your Christians
THE FACT IS
- II) Christians are often judged by **stereotypes** and common culture
IS THIS FAIR
- III) No group in human history has contributed more to **education** than Christians have
No group in history has contributed more to **healthcare** than Christians have
- IV) Christians, more than any other group, have contributed to the welfare and protection of children, beginning children's homes and pioneering modern social work
No other group in history has fought the slave trade more than Christians have
- V) No other single group in human history has contributed more to the cause of charity than Christians, or has worked to strengthen marriages, or has advocated against infanticide or worked against abortion or child abuse
- VI) The church is the largest single provider of healthcare and education in the world, especially in some of the poorest countries
- VII) Christians birthed orphanages, built hospitals, started charities, founded universities, birthed the Sunday School movement, established soup kitchens, built nursing homes, cared for the homeless, provided medical aid for the needy, etc
Medical missionaries travel throughout the world, ministering to the unsaved
Wycliffe translators have translated the complete bible into 704 languages, while the NT is available in 1,582 languages worldwide
- VIII) James is saying that faith is known **by works** that glorify God and care for others
It is by works and their **springing forth from faith** that reveals a genuine believer
NOTICE
- IX) V14 Can **faith** save him?
This is where many begin to claim that James **contradicts** the gospel of grace
- X) Remembering that James is writing to Jews helps us to understand this question
The Jewish people had a prayer that revealed their spiritual creed
Dt 6:4 Hear or Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord

- I) Though they might say this, the statement without works is **just words**
Simply repeating the statement did not reveal genuine faith in God
Faith is more than simply repeating a statement
- II) They needed **to do** the things that they were telling others to do
Mt 23:2-3 (Jesus said) The scribes and the Pharisees sit in **Moses' seat**. Therefore whatever they **tell you** to observe, that observe and **do**, but do not do according to their works; for they **say, and do not do**.
- III) **Moses' Seat** was a symbolic, physical seat within ancient synagogues where the scribes or Pharisees would sit during services. It was a seat of authority and judgment within Pharisaical Judaism
- IV) Both Jesus and James were saying that words **without works** are empty
Good **works** must always accompany good **words**
AN EXAMPLE
- V) V15-16 If a **brother** or **sister** is naked and destitute of daily food and one of you
If faith does not produce a life of good works, then it is not genuine faith
Faith that does not motivate service to those in need is not real
HIS POINT
- VI) Believers must not only **speak** words of faith, but live out our faith
Phil 2:12 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to **work out** your salvation with fear and trembling
- VII) Part of how we do this is by lovingly helping our brothers and sisters in need
Gal 6:10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and **especially to those who are of the household of faith**.
- VIII) This loving generosity was one of the earmarks of the early church
Ac 2:44-45 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need
- IX) V16 We must not simply say Depart in peace (end of conversation!), be warmed
Rather than pious clichés, by faith we meet the need when we have the ability to
Pr 3:27 Do not withhold good from those who need it, when you have the ability to help

- I) 1 Jn 3:16-18 We know what real love is because Jesus gave up His life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion—how can God's love be in that person? Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions.
- II) **Good works** demonstrate the reality of Christian faith
Good works reveal compassion, the sacrifice of comfort, sympathetic care, generosity of finances and a willingness to give personal time
ONE OF THE MORE DIFFICULT SACRIFICES
- III) Lu 10:30-37 The good Samaritan
A man was attacked and robbed of everything and left on the road half dead
A priest and a Levite passed by and left him, but a Samaritan had pity on him
He bandaged his wounds, took him to an inn and took care of him
The next day he paid the innkeeper and promised to return and pay any other bills
- IV) One of the more **practical works** is sacrificing the time that is necessary
Some would rather give money than to give their personal time
- V) V17 Thus also faith **by itself** if it does not have works **is dead**
Faith produces good works, proving itself to be alive
- VI) If there are no good works, it proves that there is no living faith
We are not saved **by** works, but are saved **for** works
Titus 2:14 (Jesus) gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous **for good works**.
Eph 2:10 For we are Gods handiwork, created in Christ Jesus **to do good works**, which God prepared in advance for us to.
- VII) V18 But someone will **say** You have faith and I have **works**
Argument: Genuine faith can be revealed in different ways
- VIII) V18 **Show** me your faith without your works and I will show you my faith by my
HIS ARGUMENT
- IX) If you have **no works**, you have no claim to faith
They are not separate, but joined together
Faith must be worked out: Anything less is not genuine faith (Lu 6:46)

- I) You **claim** to have faith but no works: I have **works** that prove my faith is real
Quote: There is no way to show we really believe in Christ, but by being diligent in good works, from gospel motives, and for gospel purposes.
YOU HAVE SAID FAITH
- II) V19 You **believe** that **there is one God**. You do well. Even **demons believe** and His Jewish readers would know he is referring to their statement of faith
THOUGHT
- III) Your theology concerning God being One is correct
You acknowledge that there is a God, and that is a good starting point
- IV) True faith is deeper than simply **intellectually agreeing** with a statement of faith
This is what has resulted in so many people missing out on knowing Jesus
- V) James quotes Israel's fundamental affirmation of faith in the One God
Dt 6:4-5 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, **the LORD is one**! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.
POINT
- VI) You cannot believe V4, (the Lord is one) and not obey V5 (Love Him completely)
That kind of belief is worthless because love for God is shown by love for people
1 Jn 4:20-21 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God *must* love his brother also.
- VII) It is this truth that drops us to our knees, seeking the Lord for help to do this
- VIII) Notice James says Demons believe: they know who God is
Mk 1:23-25 Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out, "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? **I know who you are** --the Holy One of God!" "Be quiet!" said Jesus sternly. "Come out of him!"
Mt 8:29 (The men of the Gadarenes) cried out, saying, "What have we to do with You, Jesus, You **Son of God**? Have You come here to torment us before the time?"
- IX) They know **without any doubt** Who He is, but are still eternally doomed
Their knowledge is completely orthodox, but they are still lost

- I) V20 But do you want to know O foolish (empty of understanding) man that faith
Faith will always produce good works or it is not genuine
Mt 12:33 Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its
fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit.
- II) A **living tree** produces fruit, but a **dead tree** never does
- III) V21-24 Was not Abraham our father justified **by works** when he offered Isaac his
This is where people argue that **the bible contradicts itself**
LET'S LOOK AT THIS
- IV) They argue from V24, that a person is justified **by works** and not by **faith alone**
- V) This is not a contradiction, it is a **logical conclusion** to his argument about works
He has been saying that faith always produces works that are visibly seen
Abraham is the supreme example of a faith that worked
- VI) Gen 15:6 Abram **believed in the Lord** and He accounted it to him for righteousness
Abraham was a believer, from when he left Ur of the Chaldees at the age of 75
He was a believer for 40+ years when he offered Isaac, who was 20-33 years old
- VII) This gives us insight into what Paul said to the Romans
Ro 4:3-5 What does the Scripture say? "Abraham *believed* God, and it was
credited to him as righteousness." Now when a man works, his wages are not credited
to him as a gift, but as an obligation. However, to the man who does not work but trusts
God who justifies the wicked, **his faith is credited as righteousness.**
- VIII) James isn't saying **Abraham's works** saved him, but that his works **revealed** faith
- IX) V24 Justified, in this context, refers to vindication, or proof of righteousness
Point: His supreme vindication of faith came when he offered up his son Isaac
- X) Fact: Visible works justify invisible faith because what you believe, you act upon
Abraham believed God and his faith moved him to trust God to keep His promises
- XI) God had promised Abraham that through Isaac, the nations would be blessed
Abraham **believed God**, and knew He would do what He had said

- I) Heb 11:17-19 By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death
- II) V25 Likewise was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received
- III) James links these two because of the contrast they allow
Abraham is a picture of righteous trust: Rahab of God's incredible mercy!
- IV) Rahab was a gentile woman living in the city of Jericho (Joshua 2)
She had heard God dried up the Red Sea and delivered powerful kings to Israel
- V) Two Jewish spies had entered Jericho, and Rahab had hidden them to protect them
She told the spies that God is God in heaven above and on earth beneath
This revealed that she had come to believe in the God of Israel
- VI) By faith, she hid the two spies and received God's mercy
This resulted in her ending up in the line of Jesus (Mt 1:5)
INTERESTINGLY
- VII) No biblical writer dwells on her past
They all point to her as a woman of faith (Joshua, Hebrews, and James)
FINALLY
- VIII) V26 For **as the body** without the spirit is dead so faith **without works** is dead also
The **spirit** animates a person, and faith animates a person to **good works**
- IX) A dead body doesn't get dressed and go to work
A person with head faith is spiritually dead, also
- IX) Jews don't touch a dead body, because it is defiling, so do not have dead faith