

## **Faith without of works is dead**

When I read this part in James (2:14-26) I can't help but think of many other scriptures Like those of Paul, that sound different from what I read here.

- Is Paul wrong?
- Is James wrong?

Or do we believe that the Bible is Holy Spirit inspired, and is there a way to make sense of these different Scriptures?

**So the idea today is going to be to correlate these scriptures with other scriptures in the Bible and try and make sense of it.**

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First thing is first, remember that the book of James is speaking to believers (people already in the faith). With other words when it speaks of works, it is:

- Not works for salvation sake
  - But rather, true faith will have evidence of good works.
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**14 What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him?**

**Ephesians 2: 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.

**Paul:** Faith alone saves (saved not of works)

**James:** The kind of faith that saves (Saving faith *will* have good works!)

Can you see that they are not contradictory but rather, complimentary. Faith alone does save, but the faith that saves will be evident in works.

I listened to a pastor that said: "faith alone saves, but faith that saves is not alone - it has good work with it"

And I would like to add came from good works:

We were all saved through someone's good works

- Parents that brought you up in the way of the Lord
- The teaching of salvation from someone that was obedient
- The love of the Father you experienced from someone close to you that drew you toward Him.

**Matthew 7:21** "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. **22** Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' **23** Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

Does this verse imply that Faith is not enough?

Certainly not, You have to understand in those days the teachers of the law were very highly esteemed, so it was a desired position to be seen as a Pharisee or Sadducee.

So without having a true relationship with the Father or true Faith, they would live seemingly Godly lives to have been viewed in a certain way by people (false teachers).

**In these few verses, Jesus was saying:**

That to do the will of God means something more than mere action—it requires genuine faith.

- Relationship
- But genuine faith is evident of good works, otherwise Jesus would not have said "does the will of my Father who is in heaven."

## **And we will be judged according to our work one day:**

**1 Corinthians 3: 12** Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— **13** each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. **14** If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. **15** If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

**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.**

It is almost as if James is saying here "You are fooling yourself if you think you have faith if it does not have a natural outflow of works"

**v17** says faith without works is dead!

- A commentary that I read on this described it like this: "Useless, without any life at all. It brings no results, and cannot lead to salvation. There can not be **true faith** that fails to produce works.

You see we are called to be more like Christ

- How did Christ live on earth?
  - He disciplined, He healed, He loved, He had purpose... HE WORKED

**Ephesians 2:10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

- We have a purpose that God prepared beforehand for us
- And that is to do Good works.

So again to be clear James is not saying you have to work to receive salvation (salvation is through faith alone), he is stating that the type of Faith that saves, **true faith, faith that is alive and not dead** will have demonstrative works attached to it.

- And the example James gives earlier in the Book is that of looking after the widows and orphans, **but it is definitely not limited to it.**

## **I believe any work that bring Glory and Honour to His Name is good works**

- In your local church
  - In the marketplace
  - In your family
  - To a random person on the street
  - Or the person behind the counter at Pick n Pay.
  - Etc.
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I also want to clarify:

- It never wrong to pray (that is not what James is saying)
- But when prayer becomes the excuse not to help when you have the means to help; that is wrong

I remember a sermon where the pastor said if you see someone in need, don't pray for a solution. You are the solution!

- Faith in action
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**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. 19 You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! 20 Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless?**

What James is doing here is debunking the argument that some people make for faith without works.

- And an example of this will be if you look at people's lives, especially in today's time, that are sinful and extremely worldly but claim to have faith or believe in God.
  - There is a absence of good fruit
  - Living immoral/ungodly lives

## **21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar?**

The example of of Abraham is such a fitting example for me and I want to take is a bit further (Hebrews 11):

- **8** By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.
- **9** By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. **10** For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.
- **11** By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered Him faithful who had promised. **12** Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.
- **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." **19** He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.

**He had faith and his faith was demonstrated with works/action.**

**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. 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? 26 For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.**

### **Now before we END:**

There are a few things I want to make clear (again)

- When we speak of works, it is important to remember **it is not for salvation**
- **It is from salvation**, the Spirit will stir us to works, as we become more like Christ
- Please do not take this message and start doing work because you feel you must have works! **That becomes religion, and we don't want that!**
- For Gateway, I do not believe there is a problem with faith without works. The leaders regularly testify of its members' love, care, and generosity toward others.
- That is your faith in action.
- The reason I shared this message was so that you can see the scriptures aren't in contradiction with one another, but rather **help explain one another in unity.**
- Now (if you did not already know this) you are also equipped to help someone else understand these scriptures if they find it confusing.

### **I also want to remind**

#### **Run the race with endurance, it is not a sprint (sustainability is key)**

- Please do not do more than you can or give more than you can.
- Only give what you are able to and in the capacity that you can.

**I have seen people in church with burnout**, because they were excited to serve. And in that excitement they "sprinted" and took on too many things at once which is not sustainable. And I have seen how that can lead to **resentment toward the church and its leaders.**

- Be gracious to yourself and allow time for rest. It is very important.
- Not all of us have the same amount of capacity, so be gracious towards others in the way they serve.

**Hebrews 12:1-3.** **1**And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, **2** fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. **3** Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.