

Pure Religion

Faith Proven (Part 1) – James 2:14-26
March 11, 2018

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

I. WHAT FAITH?

- The faith that James describes here is not saving faith. It is a “dead,” “demonic,” and “useless” faith (vss. 17, 19, 20, 26).
- The natural answer to James’s question in vs. 14, both in English and Greek, is “no.”
- Jesus taught that true faith is a faith that produces works (Matt. 3:7-9; 12:33-37; Luke 19:11-27).
- James is clear—a faith that would heartlessly turn the helpless away is merely a cognitive faith, not a heart-filled faith (Isa. 58:7-9; Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-35; 2 Cor. 8:12-15; 1 John 3:16-18).
- Genuine faith can be seen (vs. 18).
- Demons have faith, so does Satan; it is not a saving faith (Job 1:6-12; Mark 5:1-13).

II. TWO ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Abraham (Genesis 22)
 - * Obediently took Isaac to the mountain
 - * Carried out the act personally
 - * Believed that God would still fulfill his promise through Isaac (Gen. 22:5; Heb. 11:17-19)
 - * Demonstrated his belief both before and after the events
2. Rahab (Joshua 2)
 - * Showed hospitality to the Israelite spies (Heb. 11:31)
 - * Hid the spies
 - * Demonstrated her faith in the God of Israel (Josh. 2:8-13)
 - * Sent the spies off in a safe direction and covered for them
 - * Fulfilled her vow to spare her family (Josh. 6:25)

KNOW: The faith that saves is different from any other type of faith—it is grounded in both a knowledge and response to God. True faith leans into God.

DO: Is your faith real? Make sure—check again.

Recommended Reading:

In His Steps by Charles Sheldon (LifePoint Library #813.54 SHE)
A Real Christian: The Life of John Wesley by Kenneth J. Collins
Studies on Saving Faith by A.W. Pink

Questions/Discovery Points for Life Groups/Families

Please read James 2:14-26

1. Does James think that a faith devoid of good works can save a person?
2. Talk about some of James’s illustrations he has used so far related to Christian good works. What do they have in common?
3. Who is James arguing with in this passage? Is his technique helpful?
4. How does James say that Abraham and Rahab demonstrated their faith? Was it their good works that saved them?
5. What do demons believe about God?
6. What did you learn that you can apply from Sunday’s message?