

July 12, 2020

The Bridge Bible Fellowship

Pastor Paul S. Brown

James 2:1-13

“Is Your Faith Dead Or Alive? – Part 1”

- I. Prescript (1:1)
- II. Be Joyful in Trials (1:2–15)
- III. Stop Being Misled (1:16-18)
- IV. Respond Properly to the Word of God (1:19-27)
- V. Stop the Sin of Partiality (2:1-13)
- VI. Is Your Faith Dead or Alive? (2:14-26)**

A. Dead Faith (14-20)

So What?

Discussion & Application:

1. Some people believe that James and the Apostle Paul disagree on the issue of justification by faith. Why do they think that? What passages do they point to that appear to contradict each other? Some have said that James and Paul are not face-to-face in opposition on the issue of justification by faith, but back-to-back defending this against two separate enemies. What do they mean by this? Who are the two separate enemies that Paul and James would be fighting against?
2. What connection does James 2:14-26 have with the first half of chapter 2? How does a proper understanding of 2:1-13 help us understand what James is saying (and not saying) in 2:14-26?
3. Have you ever known someone who professed faith in Jesus but never demonstrated any change of life (or later denied Jesus completely)? Are there any biblical examples of this as well?
4. What is a dead faith? What are some characteristics of a dead faith? What specific characteristics does James describe in making his point?
5. What do demons believe about God? Monotheism? Trinity? Creation? God's attributes? Virgin birth? Sinless life of Jesus? Death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus? [Note: knowing all of these things makes it easier for them to twist the truth in false religions and cults] How does James describe their faith even going beyond normal orthodoxy? What do they add emotionally to their orthodox faith? What good is that faith to them? What point is he making about the dead faith of some humans?
6. What writings of the Apostle Paul would substantiate what James is saying about faith without works being dead? What writings of John? Of the author of Hebrews? Of Peter? Of John? Of Jude? Compile as complete a list as possible.
7. Based on your answers to question #6, if there are that many verses that agree with James, why do so many people today still want to say that repentance and obedience are not necessary to go to heaven? Why would some say that if a person at one time professes faith in Jesus and then later walks away from Jesus, denies him, lives a life of sin, and even becomes an atheist, they will still go to heaven? What are they trying to defend? What do they misunderstand about the nature of genuine saving grace and faith?
8. Read 2 Cor. 13:5 and take the faith test. Do you have a living faith or a dead faith? How do you know? What specific evidence is there in your life that you have been transformed by the Gospel of Jesus? [Note: the biblical answer isn't that you prayed a prayer, walked an aisle, got baptized... See the man Simon in Acts 8 who did all those things, yet his heart was not right with God and he was still in the gall of bitterness and in the bondage of iniquity.]
9. Who do you know that has a dead faith? Pray for them and then go to them to talk about it. Encourage them to listen to these messages. Tell them how God gave you a living faith that is changing you from the inside-out.
10. If you haven't already done so, **memorize James 2:14-26** and quote it in the morning, at noon, and at night every day this week. Don't forget to review the first chapter too. Ask the LORD to transform you from the inside out so that your life is a testimony of the reality of a living faith.



**MY MAJOR FORM OF
EXERCISE IS JUMPING
TO CONCLUSIONS**

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Is Your Faith Alive or Dead? Part 1

James 2:14-26

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James 2:14–26 (NASB95) – ¹⁴ What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,” and yet you do not give them what is necessary for *their* body, what use is that? ¹⁷ Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, *being* by itself. ¹⁸ But someone may *well* say, “You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works.” ¹⁹

¹⁹ You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. ²⁰ But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless? ²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? ²² You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; ²³ and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS," and he was called the friend of God. ²⁴ You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone.

²⁵ In the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? ²⁶ For just as the body without *the* spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

James:

James 2:24 (NASB95) – You see that a man is
justified by works and not by faith alone.

Paul:

Romans 3:28 (NASB95) – For we maintain that a man
is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.

Observations on what James & Paul believed:

1. Both agree that **justification** (being declared righteous by God) **is by faith alone** (Gal. 2:9-10 – Paul; Acts 15:21-29 – James)
2. Both teach that **genuine faith results in works** (Paul: Gal. 5:16 – faith working through love; Eph. 2:8-10; Titus 1:16; 2:7; 3:8. James: 1:26-27; 2:1ff)
3. **Paul and James supplement one another.** Paul says, “Faith PLUS works will not save” (Rom. 3:20-22; 4:1-10). James says, “Faith WITHOUT works will not save” (James 2:14-17).

Reformers:

“Faith alone justifies;
but faith that justifies is never alone.”

2 Corinthians 13:5 (NASB95) – **KEEP ON testing yourselves** *to see* if you are in the faith; **KEEP ON examining yourselves!** Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you — unless indeed you fail the test?

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 - A. Dead Faith (14-20)
 - 1. Empty Profession of Faith (14-17)
 - a. Proposition (14)

14 What **use** is it, my brethren,
if someone **says he has faith**
but he **has no works**?
Can **that faith save** him?

Works?

Eph. 2:8-10

Titus 2:14

Luke 6:46

Faith?

strong confidence in and reliance upon
someone or something

Intellect, Emotion, and Will

Empty Professions of Faith

Ezekiel 33:30-33

Matthew 7:21ff

John 8:24ff

Acts 8:9-24

Demas

1 John 2:19

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2. Ask the Lord to reveal your true heart. Confirm a living faith.
3. Walk in obedience to Scripture.
4. Believe that "Faith alone justifies; but faith that justifies is never alone."
5. Pray for and go to others who have an empty profession of faith.