

1. What is James' closing word about faith without works?
2. List all the works that James suggested so far in the first two chapters of his letter.
3. Now go back through James 2:14-26, and note all the statements James has made to describe faith without works. What do you find?

Reflect

If Christianity was illegal, and you were arrested for being a Christian, what evidence would be used against you?

Take-Away

What is your take away from our look at faith and works?

Next Steps:

- I have been content with "inactive faith" and need to start practicing "active faith."
- I understand that true faith is obedient response, where faith and action are synergized.
- One area I would like to see my faith better translate into action is _____
- This week, I will try to show my faith by what I do.

Memory Verse – James 2:24

You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone.

Next Week: James 3:1-12

Prayer Requests



James: A "How To" Manual for Life

*This Week: How to "Live" Faith
James 2:14-26*

So Far: James began by encouraging his readers to joyfully endure the trials of life, because that will develop steadfastness and maturity in their lives. He told them to ask God for wisdom, because he gives generously and without reproach. God never tempts; he only gives good gifts. The one who remains steadfast under trial will be blessed and will receive the crown of life.

James encouraged his readers to be doers of God's word and not hearers only. They should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger. He said that pure religion, what God wants from his children, is to bridle one's tongue, take care of the needy, and remain unstained by the world.

James then warned them about showing partiality to the rich while neglecting the poor. He called them to fulfill the royal law of neighborly love.

This Week: James challenges his readers further about being doers of the word by stating in no uncertain terms that faith without works is dead. He makes his case with several arguments, through direct statement, rhetorical example, anticipating objections, and using the biblical examples of Abraham and Rahab. It is a keenly persuasive argument.

Open

1. Are you more of a "let's get it done" type or a more of a "let's think this through" type?

Read James 2:14-26

What Good is Faith Without Works? 14-17

1. Twice James asks the question, "What good is it?"
The first time he attaches a hypothetical condition.
What is that condition? 14

What is the expected answer to the question?

2. The second time he attaches an example.
What is that example? 15-16

How does this example prove James' point?

Can you think of similar examples of faith without works?

3. In between those questions, he asks another question.
What is it? 14

What is the expected answer to that question?

4. What is James' conclusion? 17

5. In what ways would faith without works be "dead"?
Think of as many ways as you can.

Read Matthew 5:14-16

How does someone "let his light shine," according to Jesus?

What is the result of others seeing your good works?

Read Matthew 7:21-23

Who will enter the kingdom of heaven?

What does it really mean to know Jesus?

6. Earlier in chapter two, James called on his readers to fulfill the royal law. How does fulfilling the royal law relate to this discussion of faith and works?

Read Luke 10:25-37

How would this story have been surprising to Jesus' original hearers?

How did Jesus answer the question, "Who is my neighbor?"

How does this relate to the issue of faith and works?

An Objection Answered 18-19

1. What objection does James anticipate? 18

2. James responds to this objection in two ways.
What is his first response, in verse 18?

What is his second response, in verse 19?

Summarize James' argument here in your own words.

Examples: Abraham and Rahab 20-25

1. What was the connection between Abraham's faith and his works, according to verse 22?

2. How did Abraham fulfill the scripture quoted in verse 23?

3. Why was Abraham called a "friend of God"?

4. What is James' argument from Abraham's example? 24

Reflect

How would you like to see your faith become more active and complete, as in Abraham's life?

How would you like to grow as a "friend of God"?

5. How was Rahab different from Abraham?

How was she similar?

6. What lessons can you take away from the stories of Abraham and Rahab?