

Show me your faith

James 2:18

4. By Living Your Faith

James 2:14–3:1

2:14 What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? 15 Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. 16 If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? 17 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. 18 But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. 19 You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.

20 You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? 21 Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. 23 And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend. 24 You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone. 25 In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? 26 As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

3:1 Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.

1. Real faith is active

▲ Faith is not just boasting and blustering

James 2:14 What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? — 18 But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do.

- ▼ Some profess their faith – and it becomes obvious what they are
- ▼ Some practice their faith – and it becomes obvious who they are

- ▶ Faith believes God is real and relevant
- ▶ Faith believes God is right
- ▶ Faith believes God is redeeming and rewarding
- ▶ Faith believes God is ready

▲ Faith is not just blathering a "blessing"

James 2:15 Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. 16 If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? 17 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

- ▼ There is a wish for warmth and wellness
- ▼ That is a waste of words and wishing

▲ Faith is not just bland believing

James 2:19 You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.

- ▼ There are demon believers – are they saved?
- ▼ There are deadbeat believers – are they saved?

2. Real faith is apparent

▲ Hear the first illustration – an ancient patriarch

James 2:20 You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? 21 Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. 23 And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend. 24 You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone.

- ▼ Abraham accepted God's miraculous covenant
- ▼ Abraham acted at God's mysterious command

▲ Hear the further illustration – an ancient prostitute

James 2:25 In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction?

- ▼ Rahab affirmed her faith in God
- ▼ Rahab actionized her faith in God

3. Real faith is alive

▲ Faith enables action

James 2:17 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

▲ Faith empowers and energizes action

James 2:26 As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

4. Real faith is authorizing

▲ Experiencing faith comes first

James 3:1 you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.

▲ Educating folks can follow

James 3:1 Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.

Action Assignments

1. God's Word imparts truth and instruction toward action, including both dos and don'ts – so expect to be counseled and corrected regularly.
 - working and witnessing for Jesus • loving and serving others • personal morality and integrity • loving and worshiping God • relying on and receiving from God •
2. Real faith believes God's Word and acts upon it in heartfelt obedience and expectation – so find out what pleases God and act accordingly.
3. Actions and lifestyles serve as observable evidence of genuine faith, both to our fellow believers and to unbelievers – so let your light shine.
4. Teachers bear greater responsibility to live out their faith and practice what they preach – so pray for your pastors and teachers, please!