

JAMES STUDY

CHAPTER 2:14-20

MEDIA REFERENCE NUMBER SM-304 AUGUST 1, 1998

THE TITLE OF THE MESSAGE:

“Salvation, By Faith or Works? ” - Part 1

THE THEME OF THE BOOK:

James 1:22

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only,
- deceiving yourselves.

INTRODUCTION: The Reading of The Text vv. 14-20

Summation of The Text

Throughout History, Judeo-Christianity has done more to better the world than any other faith in Human history! All one needs to do is look to the great centers of education around the world. Look to the Humanitarian efforts around the world, hospitals, relief operations and standard and quality of living and life.

A careful and accurate study in Sociology clearly shows that wherever Christianity has gone throughout the ages, the morality and value for human life and creation has become the norm in those cultures.

Why?

Because Christianity is a Faith that Does
It's Practical and Usable and the World is Enjoying its Blessings

“True Faith in God,
Produces Great Works Among Men”

On a Theological Level,

We have to ask if Christianity is justified by what it says, or by what it does?

Great Controversy Surrounds *this section of James*

Martin Luther *the great reformer*

Struggled with the Book of James because he considered it a contradiction to the Apostle Paul's Arguments that a man is justified by Faith alone and not by any works of righteousness!

People, Churches Argue Today About this Very Thing

James is not attacking salvation by faith alone

James is attacking a "**False Profession of Faith**" saying that if you believe in the Bible, in God and in His Christ and turn away and actually do nothing with your so-called-faith, called Christianity, then you're not a Christian!

Consider James' Audience:

Predominantly Jewish in background, others certainly Gentile
but all converted to Christ - born again believers

James' Argument is with those who
"Said" they were Christians but "Did" nothing with their Christianity

James 2:24

Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

Jesus Warned Against the Same

Mark 4:16-17

16 "These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; 17 "but they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for awhile.

Frankly,

People who say they're Christians and live contrary to the Christian life make my job hard... and yours

In 1996 - George Barna Poll

25% of Americans Claimed to be Christians, 65 million people Nationwide
(I seriously doubt that statistic)

Honestly,
Christianity has a black eye among many people of the world because of professors of
righteousness and not doers!

The *Relationship* Between Faith and Works

The First Person Ever Made Righteous
((and The Rule of First Mention))

Genesis 15:5-6

Then the Lord brought Abraham outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be." 6 **And Abraham believed in the LORD**, and the Lord (accounted) it to him for **righteousness**.

In a Supernatural, Divine Moment
God "Justified" Abraham when Abraham Believed in the Lord

But what does "Believe" really mean?

A Difference Exists between James' word for 'works' and Paul's
word for 'works' by the context of how it is used

Romans 3:27-28

27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No,
but by **the law of faith**. 28 Therefore we conclude
that a man is justified by faith apart from **the works of the law**.

Paul's "Works"
is referring to the Old Testament,
the Law, the Morality, the Dietary laws

James' "Works"
is referring to the New testament,
lifestyle, practices, fruitful living

Do Not Confuse the "Works" in Paul's Teaching

With the “Works” of James’ teaching

It is the Same Greek Word.

* works grk 2041 ergon (er'-gon);
to toil at a task or at employment. To exert pressure, to sweat at laboring

But in a totally Different Context

(and that’s why cults peddle at your door)

Ephesians 2:8-9

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Paul’s argument is:
you can’t earn salvation by doing this

James’ argument is:
now that you are saved, this is what you will do

1.) What We Say must Agree With What we Do vv. 14

What does it **profit**, my brethren, if someone **says** he has faith but does not have **works**? Can faith **save** him?

a.) What we say must **profit** how we live - profession

if someone **says**

* says grk 3004 lego (leg'-o)
to "lay" forth the words. To proclaim something as a truth. To be saying, talking, telling others

Present Tense - *is saying he has faith*

to be one who has made a profession and
is currently making the profession

if someone says
(it may be true, it may be false)

a Mere Profession of Faith - Not Active, Salvation Faith

No Real “Lifestyle” Change

(14) What does it **profit**, my brethren,

* **profit** grk 3786 **ophelos (of'-el-os)**;
what advantage, what gain is there (to heap up, to accumulate or benefit)

Peter Issued a Warning About This:

2 Peter 2:19-22

19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage. 20 For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. 21 For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. 22 But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A dog returns to his own vomit," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire."

We Personally,
What Profit have we Experienced Since Naming Christ?

our family, friends and enemies can tell us
???? HAS THERE BEEN A LASTING CHANGE ????

John 15:16

"You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father

John 15:5

"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

b.) There will be no works to prove their profession

,if someone says he has faith but
does not have works

There's no physical evidence to the profession of being a Christian

Are you doing Christian things or just saying you're a Christian?

168 hours have passed since last week
How many of those hours were dedicated to God in your life?

But I went Forward at The Billy Graham Crusade
(that's great for Billy Graham - but did you change?)

I John 1:6-7

If we say that we have fellowship with Him (God), and walk (lifestyle) in darkness, (sin) we lie and do not practice the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light (right living) as He is in the light,
#1 - we have fellowship with one another,
and #2 - the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Your Living Tells All - Not What You Say

I am **Not** talking about
the Christian who is struggling with sin - temper, laziness or lust

c.) Such Faith is No Faith at All - it Accomplishes Nothing

Can faith (this type) **save** him?

*

save grk 4982 sozo (sode'-zo);

to heal from and to preserve from sin and it's judgment
No - Not this Kind of Faith - The Negative is here - No !

Such a person is lying to themselves and to others around him.
He is in fact - not a Christian at all - just watch and you'll see

James 1:22

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, **deceiving yourselves.**

and the word of God has just judged him not a Christian

This Person hasn't Lost their Salvation
They Never Had it to begin with

They Need to Get Saved Now!!!

2.) How We Live in Practice Tells All

vv. 15-16

If a brother or sister is **naked** and **destitute** of daily food, **16** and one of you **says** to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not **give** them the things which are needed for the body, what does it **profit**?

James Inserts another Illustration

a.) True Faith Serves its Brothers and Sisters

If a **brother** or **sister**

Our Fellowship within the Church

Galatians 6:10

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all,
but especially to those who are of **the household of faith.** - the church

There's a Real Fatal Error Many are Making in these Last Days
"we'll just skip church and have it at home this week"

or
"I don't need to go - I'll get the tape"
or
I've been going for years, I don't have to go as much nowadays

Hebrews 10:25

Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another-- and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

The New Testament model many synagogues became churches

This is a Great Danger and I Think the First Step Toward
(Apostasy)

How will you know who to care for if you are not fellowshiping with the Church

True Christian Fellowship is The Sweetest of All

John 13:34-35

34 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

How We Live in Practice, Tells All

b.) When we Meet the Needs of the Local Body

if a brother or sister
is **naked** and **destitute** of daily food

1 Timothy 6:8

And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.

Having Compassion on the Brother or Sister in Need
is a characteristic of Christ

Friday was a wild day
up-down-up-down 'til I was numb!!!

- a broken marriage
- matters with the city
- contract situations
- a young woman with cancer

True Faith will do Something About it

c.) Our Response Reveals the Depth to Our Profession

and one of you **says** to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not **give** them the things which are needed for the body, what does it **profit?**

I see this "So-Called" Christian with a drum stick in his mouth a bag of potato chips in one hand and pork ribs in the other and Twinkies stuffed in every pocket... "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," - see ya at church next week... O' huummm remember to praise the Lord man

I John 3:16-17

16 By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 17 But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? -- **IT DOESN'T !**

SEVERAL WEEKS AGO A MAN CAME INTO MY OFFICE and said, God has blessed my life. I want to bless others but also this too. I want to get all the other guy's in this church who've been blessed with money and meet with em' - form some kind of spiritual investment group to free up the money and have it working for His glory...

"Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,"
HERE'S A BASKET OF FOOD OR A SHIRT

" but you do not **give** them the things which are needed for the body, what does it **profit?**

When in fact you possess what they need,
but withhold it from them

Ephesians 4:28

Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.

Proverbs 19:17

He who has pity on the poor lends to the LORD, and He will pay back what he has given.

3.) Real Faith is as a Compass toward the Christian v. 17-20

Thus also faith (**professed**) **by itself**, if it does not have works, is **dead**.

The **Responsibility** Between Faith and Works

They cannot contradict each other -- but only confirm one another

* **dead** grk 3498 nekros (nek-ros');
a rotting corpse. A dead carcass

1. Professing faith - works = death

2. Professing faith + works = death (**works religion**)

3. (**saving**) **faith produces + works = life**

Real Faith is as a Compass toward the Christian

a.) Only Works can Make my Faith Visible

18 But someone will **say**, "You have **faith**, and I have **works**."

Show me your faith without your works, and I will **show** you my faith by my **works**.

- You **say** "I have Faith" - Big Deal
- I'll **Show** you my works - *which back up the fact that I have faith*

You Cannot Prove that you have Faith
without showing me your works

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE

You Cannot Back Up Your Faith By What You Say,
Only by what you do!!!

It's Doesn't Matter
What You Say about Christ

WHO THEN IS A TRUE BELIEVER, FOR REAL?

Matthew 24:13

"But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

Matthew 13:24-30

24 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; 25 "but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. 26 "But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. 27 "So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' 28 "He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' 29 "But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. 30 'Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

We All look The Same Right Now in Here

Real Faith is as a Compass toward the Christian

b.) Be careful to Make Sure that you Really Trust in Christ

You **believe** that there is one God. You do well.
Even the demons **believe--** and **tremble!**

* **Believe** grk 4100 **pisteuo (pist-yoo'-o);**
to have faith (in, upon, or with respect to, a person or thing), i.e. credit

* tremble grk 5425 phrisso (fris'-so);
to "bristle" or chill, the skin of, to cause a shudder of fear. To make as Goose
flesh

The Point is...

They Know A lot and They're Not Saved

**Satan Can Say "I Believe in God"
and mean it yet be totally lost**

(20) But do you want to know, **O foolish man,**
that **faith** without **works** is **dead**?

To **Believe** is to Acknowledge Christ,
To **Have Faith** is Trust in Him

(20) But do you want to know, **O foolish man,**

"do any of you really want to know the truth"

We should be concerned about those who say
but do not obey

James is Warning Against Easy Believe-ism
which is a cheap grace - a message that kills

* foolish grk 2756 kenos (ken-os');
having an empty container or bucket

O You Empty (worksless) Man - Me/You

(20) **faith without works is dead!!! - Dead**

not weak / not sick / not little

Matthew 13:24-30

24 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; 25 "but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. 26 "But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. 27 "So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' 28 "He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' 29 "But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. 30 Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"