

GreyStone EDU James: GS.EDU 2020  
SESSION 05 FAITH/WORKS  
WEEK OF 06/30/2020

Welcome back! Thank you for registering for our Distance-Discipleship Summer Study: JAMES by Matt Chandler; hosted by Grey Stone EDU with Small Groups by Lifeway! We are going to grow spiritually over the next 13 weeks by studying this vital book together!

\*\*\***Video reminder:** In order to view the video teachings each week, you will need to download the **Lifeway Small Groups App for your device.**

### MAIN POINT

Faith and works aren't mutually exclusive. Works don't save us, but good works should follow true faith.

### INTRODUCTION

- **What is the connection between belief and action?**
- **Why is it important that our faith be connected to action in our lives?**

James introduced the idea of hearing and doing at the end of chapter 1, along with a definition of pure and undefiled religion. Chapter 2 then put a spotlight on a specific example of worldly behavior in the church that contradicted that worldly definition and the biblical standard of loving God and loving our neighbors. (Love God; Love Others). This week we'll consider his argument for why our actions and beliefs must line up with each other. This is the crux of James's message. Faith works.

**Watch the session 05 video featuring Matt Chandler.**

### Video Teaching Notes

- **Faith without Works**
  1. Faith without works is U\_\_\_\_\_.
  2. Faith without works cannot save.
  3. Faith without works is I\_\_\_\_\_.
  4. Faith without works is dead.
- The gospel saves us, sanctifies us, and holds us firm to the end.
- James is not arguing that works must be A\_\_\_\_\_ to faith but rather that genuine, biblical faith will inevitably be characterized by works.
- Faith trusts God, and faith O\_\_\_\_\_ God.
- Works is a life of loving God and loving others.
- Legitimate faith leads to an ongoing love of G\_\_\_\_\_ and an ongoing love of O\_\_\_\_\_.
- You have been blessed by God to live an openhanded life that shows you are not enslaved to those blessings but rather are grateful for them.
- As we experience the grace and mercy of God, as we rest in that saving faith alone, our heart begins to be transformed and changed so that our love for God starts to T\_\_\_\_\_ into a love for people.
- Intellectual assent to correct doctrine is not salvation.
- Every "Thou shalt not" and every "Thou shalt" is about God inviting you into the deepest life possible.
- It's Desire that leads to Discipline that determines Destiny,

\*\*\***USELESS; INEFFECTIVE; ADDED; OBEYS; GOD; OTHERS; TRANSLATE...**

### SCRIPTURES USED IN TODAY'S SESSION: JAMES 2:14-26

- **JAMES 2:8**
- **MATTHEW 25:31-46**
- **GENESIS 22:7-8**
- **GENESIS 20**
- **JOSHUA 2**
- **ACTS 2:37-38**
- **HEBREWS 11:1,6,17,31**
- **EPHESIANS 2:8-10**
- **LUKE 10:25-37**

## Conclusions and Remarks

1. Faith is a part of life, for example, you have faith in certain chairs, based on what you see, know and have experienced. There are some chairs you have no faith in.
2. Fall in love with Jesus and fall in love with others...even people we don't like.
3. Belief is not the same as salvation: Even demons believe and they are not children of God.

The reference to Spurgeon Quote: See: <https://www.spurgeon.org/resource-library/sermons/the-apple-tree-in-the-wood#flipbook/>

## Notes from Pastor Randall

- Acts of mercy are NOT a means to salvation.
- Acts of mercy ARE a necessary evidence of salvation.
- A "Deedless" faith is a useless faith. (see 2:18)
- Faith is not an intellectual agreement with correct theology and doctrine.
- Faith is not simply an emotional response.
- Faith requires a willful obedience to God. (See 2:19)

## My Personal Study

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

### Read James 2:14-17.

- **How did James use the term "faith"? ...The term "works"?**
- **Why is delighting in the Lord a vital part of faith and works?**
- **How is keeping the law different from faith-based works of righteousness?**

The word "faith" has the sense of trust in and commitment to Christ for salvation. The openness to receive God's grace brings redemption, and the redeemed live out that grace. The term "works" refers to good deeds—actions on others' behalf that demonstrate Christ's love (see v. 8). James's question called for an obvious answer: an inactive faith accomplishes nothing.

- **What are some statements we say that sound Christian without thinking or without acting on them?**
- **How does acting in accordance with our words show that our belief is genuine?**

James drew the parallel between words without actions and faith that produces no good works. Apart from works, such faith is dead in and of itself—inwardly lifeless and outwardly unproductive. Mere words, no matter how kind or well-meaning, are not substitutes for helpful actions. Destitute people need more than good wishes; they need practical provisions.

### Read James 2:18-26.

- **Respond to this statement: Intellectual assent to correct doctrine isn't salvation. What does this statement mean? How does it challenge the way you view Christianity? How does it affect the way you share the gospel?**

Understanding this point could literally save your soul. Especially if you've grown up in church, you might mistakenly think salvation is a matter of believing the right things about Jesus, like a code that unlocks the gates of heaven.

- **What's your reaction to James's statement that even demons believe in God (see v. 19)? What do you think it means for demons to shudder? How does this reality convict us about the nature of saving faith and works?**
- **How do the examples of Abraham and Rahab, who seemed to be polar opposites in every earthly way, encourage you in your faith?**

For examples of authentic faith, James turned to the Old Testament. First he pointed to Abraham, the father of the Hebrews—the first patriarch. The example of Abraham and his offer of Isaac as a sacrifice (Gen. 22:1-19) affirms James's teachings about faith. Abraham's faith was proven genuine by his obedience to God's command. His faith made his good works possible. Faith's purpose in a believer's life is to produce good works; without good works, faith is incomplete. Good works demonstrate faith's integrity and maturity.

James's second example of faith demonstrated by works was Rahab the prostitute (Josh. 2:1-24). James emphasized that she had demonstrated her faith by protecting the spies. Her actions were evidence of her having a right relationship with God.

## APPLICATION

Identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to our lives.

- **What kinds of things in your life—even seemingly “spiritual” things—might cause you to look the other way when there is a person in need?**
- **On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 meaning you never do anything and 10 meaning you always do something, how often do you pray for people when you say you will? How often do you try to help meet a need?**
- **How would the world be different if every Christian demonstrated authentic faith as James described it? Explain.**
- **What remaining questions or comments do you have regarding this session's video teaching?**

E-mail Pastor Randall with your questions or comments after today's session: [Randall@gsdurham.com](mailto:Randall@gsdurham.com)

**This Week's Companion Reading: James Session 5 from Lifeway:**

<https://www.lifeway.com/en/product-family/james-bible-study>

**Next Week is Session 06: Blessings/Curses and will be sent out 07.07.20**

## PRAYER

Close by praying for authentic faith that is demonstrated through works.

## COMMENTARY Digging Deeper in James 2:14-26

2:14-26 In this section James continues with the theme of “being hearers and doers of the word” (1:19-27) by focusing on the relationship between faith and works.

2:14 Can his faith save him should be understood to mean, “Can a faith that does not express itself in good works be a saving faith?” The answer is no.

2:15-17 Giving a blessing to someone in need without offering tangible aid is useless. If faith is not accompanied by works, it is dead by itself.

2:18 The argument turns to the relationship between faith and works. Beginning in this verse James answered a “straw man” argument ( but someone will say) against his assertion that faith without works is dead.

2:19-20 The demons also believe— and they shudder is an answer to the mistaken assertion that belief in God by itself is sufficient for salvation. Demons believe, but it is impossible for them to be saved. Saving faith entails more than mere knowledge. It includes trust and obedience, for faith without works is useless.

2:21-23 The example of Abraham and his offer of Isaac as a sacrifice (Gen 22:1-19) affirms James's teachings about faith. What exactly a biblical author means by justified depends on the context in which he uses it. For instance, Paul (Rm 4:1-5; Gal 3:6-14) argued that “works of the law” cannot make one “justified” because he wished to make clear that salvation is a gift given only through faith. Abraham believed God, and his trust in God was counted as righteousness (Gen 15:6; Gal 3:6). James focuses more on the role good works play in proving faith genuine. Abraham's faith was proven genuine by his obedience to God's command. His faith made his good works possible.

2:24-26 James's declaration that man is justified by works and not by faith alone may seem to contradict Rm 3:28, but note that Paul was writing about “works of the law,” meaning the Mosaic law, whereas James spoke only of “works,” which has in view good deeds. James's references to law are to “the law of freedom” (the gospel; see 2:12) and to “the royal law” (v. 8; Lev. 19:18), both of which affirm his assertion that true faith is expressed through good works.