

# “Faith Without Works is Dead”

## Belief in Action

### 2:1-13 - RESPECT OF PERSONS

The main problem which prevents or hinders true religion from being practised is respect of persons - of others or self. James addresses this issue first before proceeding to develop his theme further.

#### 2:1-4 - Partiality leads to wicked reasoning

James shows that favouritism based on outward appearances is wrong and inconsistent with our faith in Christ. The Pharisees set a bad example for the Jewish believers to follow (vs 2-3; Luke 20:46-47). He reminds us of the nature of the faith we profess to hold.

**Verse 1: My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with respect of persons.**



NIV: “My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don’t show favouritism.”

**My brethren:** We are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal 3:28). Therefore there is no room for partiality.

**The faith of our Lord Jesus Christ:** Our faith needs to be the same as our Lord’s. He didn’t show favouritism to the rich (cp Matt 19:23-24; Luke 6:24), nor did he seek his own wealth or status (2 Cor 8:9; John 8:50 - cp this verse with Jam 2:4), but in fact taught us to honour the poor (cp Luke 14:7-14). Christ humbled himself completely, but is now elevated to a high position (Acts 2:36; Phil 2:5-11). As he is our Lord, he is the only one that should have supremacy. Keeping this same faith is an indication of our sainthood (Rev 14:12; cp John 13:13-15).



What are the commands from Christ in respect of our brethren? How did he show these principles in his own life? Here is one example: (Hint: there are quite a few in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5-7)). Answer these questions by filling in the box below.

His command	His action
Matt 5:44 - Pray for them that use and persecute you	Luke 23:34 - Forgive them for they know not what they do



**The Lord of Glory:** *doxa* (1391) - the honour resulting from a good opinion (Vines). This is translated elsewhere as dignity, glory, honour, praise, and worship. "The Lord" is in italics, showing us that these words are not in the original. Thus we have "Christ the glory". James gives Christ the title of THE Glory - another reference to the elevated status of our Lord in contrast to his position while he was on earth.



The title also expresses Yahweh's intent to fill the earth with His Glory. He has proclaimed His purpose (Num 14:21). This requires a three-fold development. Try to add more references to back this up:

- 1) In a man - the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor 2:8;.....)
- 2) In a community - the multitudinous Christ (Eph 1:17-18;.....)
- 3) Finally in the earth - when God shall be "all in all" (Rev 21:2,10-11;.....)

Christ is the manifestation of the glory and character of God (John 1:14). That glory was prophesied by Isaiah (Isa 40:5). It involves both physical and moral qualities (Exo 33:18-23; 34:5-7). Christ manifested the moral glory during his ministry (John 1:14), and the physical glory during his transfiguration (Matt 17:2; Luke 9:28-32) and after his resurrection (Acts 22:6-8, 11).

With the glory of Christ before us, all human "glory" falls far short and is of no significance. That glory is beheld in God's Word. We are to be transformed into the same glory (cp 2 Cor 3:18; Phil 3:21; Col 3:4). Christ is to come in the same glory when he judges our actions (cp Matt 25:31; see Psa 24:7-10).



Why do you think James uses such a title of Christ in this context?

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**Respect of persons:** *prosopolepsia* (4382) - partiality, favouritism (towards those of better outward circumstances).



This is not a quality of God or of Christ. Do you know of any references to support this idea? Using a concordance may help too.

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Respect of persons is often linked with judgement (see Lev 19:15; Deut 1:17; 16:19; 2 Chron 19:6-7; Prov 24:23). Compare this with verse 4 - they had made themselves judges and ones with wicked thoughts at that!



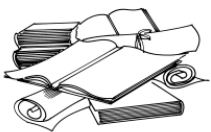
We cannot claim to have the faith of Christ if we respect the persons of men at the same time (see 1 Tim 5:21). In fact, people who admire men are described as ungodly sinners (Jude 16)! We cannot claim to be a child of God if we do not manifest His character. Our faith is dead if we don't do the works of faith. Partiality is not one of these (Jam 3:17-18).

The Ecclesia was judging others on the outward appearance. This is not the basis of pure religion (cp Jam 1:27). This verse shows us that James understood the nature of man very well. The only reason we don't visit the fatherless and widows is because we judge them unworthy of our precious time. If we truly didn't respect persons we would find the time, putting their needs first and our own selves last. This will give true glory to God (1 Cor 10:31-33).

### **Verse 2: For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment;**

*James puts to the believers a hypothetical case and tells them how they were reacting and then he exhorts them on how they should react.*

**Assembly:** *sunagoge* (4864) - a bringing together, an assembly, meeting place. This word is used to describe the Jews' teaching place (cp Acts 13:14-15). James indicates that their meetings were being conducted more like the Jews and not like those with the faith of Christ. The situation James is about to describe is familiar to those who would have come from the synagogue environment.



Read the following: *Eureka* Vol 1, Pg 196-197 (Red Edition).

James is not necessarily referring to an actual Jewish Synagogue (cp Heb 10:25 - "*episunagoge*" - assembling together). The believers still went into Jewish Synagogues for private worship (e.g. Acts 22:19) and the Apostles taught the Jews frequently in their synagogues (e.g. Acts 9:20; 17:1-3; 19:8) but there is no mention of believers collectively worshipping in synagogues (cp Acts 2:46). The Jewish leaders would not have let them worship Christ in their midst (e.g. Acts 4:1-2; 5:28). Compare Paul's response when the Jews opposed him (Acts 19:8-9). The early Ecclesia attended the Jewish synagogues on the Sabbath and held their own meetings elsewhere on the following day (e.g. Acts 20:7).

Unlike 5:14, James doesn't use the word *ekklesia* - "a calling out". The believers were not acting out their calling. They were showing distinctions at the very time that they had gathered together to remember the one who cast away all distinctions (cp Gal 3:28). They were in danger



of acting like the Jews. James highlights that they were not united in fellowship, but just gathered together. Christ warns against those who are inconsistent with what they claim to be (Rev 2:9; 3:9 note - "footstool"; cp Jam 2:3).

**Gold ring:** *chrusodaktulios* (5554) - wearing a golden finger-ring, "a gold fingered man" - a man with his hand conspicuously and ostentatiously loaded with rings and jewels. This was a symbol of importance. One solitary ring, however, was a common and almost indispensable item of clothing, as it was a man's signet. This man, however, was a man of wealth and influence (see Gen 41:42; Esth 3:10; 8:2; Matt 11:8-9; Luke 15:22). It highlights the difference between the two men.

**Goodly:** *lampros* (2986) - radiant, magnificent or sumptuous in appearance. The things of this life that look "goodly" shall perish (Jam 5:2; cp Rev 18:14). There is a danger of being aligned with Babylon (cp Josh 7:20-21).



This word is also used to describe the splendour of the saints' clothing in the Kingdom. Using Englishman's Greek Concordance, make a list of the references where it is used in this way. How do we obtain it?

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**Apparel:** *esthes* (2066) - clothing, raiment, robe.



This word only appears outside of James in four places. Where are they? What kind of people wear "apparel"?

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What is the significance of the last place it is used?

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**Poor man:** *ptochos* (4434) - beggar, pauper, destitute of wealth (from root word, "to crouch").

**Vile:** *rhuparos* (4508) - dirty, shabby. (See Isa 64:6). The believers saw his physical state as a reflection of his spiritual state, as did the Pharisees (John 9:34). Even if this was correct, Christ is able to change our covering (cp Isa 1:18 - note the context; Zech 3:3-5; Rev 7:14; 19:18).



A lesson here for us is that even if we think someone may be less spiritual than us, this does not mean that they are. We CANNOT condemn them and exalt our own selves (cp Matt 7:1-5; Gal 6:1-10 and notes on Jam 2:15-16). We must rather give them what is needful for their spiritual renewal and growth. In so doing we will not only help them but be encouraged ourselves. There is a good saying that fits well with this: "Never look down on anyone unless you are helping them up."

**Raiment:** Same word as "apparel".



The contrast between these two men would have been a very common sight in the first century ecclesia. Today we don't generally see such a difference. However, there are still distinctions and the principles still apply. What are a few comparisons in ecclesial life today like the "rich versus poor", and how can we help to eliminate the problems caused by these?

Rich	vs	Poor	How do we eliminate these problems?



**Verse 3: And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:**



Roth: "For if there enter ... and ye eye him ... would ye not have been led to make distinction..."

Moff: "Suppose there comes into your meeting ... if you attend to the wearer ..."

**Ye have:** Note that James is not condemning riches or poverty but the believers' attitude towards them in making distinctions among the classes. There is a danger of admiring and seeking identification with prominent people and putting them on pedestals. This is a hazard for the person, who is exalted, as it can make them proud. There is also a hazard for the people exalting them - if the person falls, they will fall with them if they don't have any other stable foundation.



**Respect:** *epiblepo* (1914) - to gaze at (with favour, pity or partiality), regard; to look upon (Young). This expresses the manner in which the natural eye would instantly be drawn to the rich, luxurious man. "Ye eye" (Roth). It is those with a poor and contrite spirit that God regards (cp vs 6-7; Isa 66:1-2; Matt 5:3).

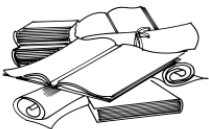
**Weareth:** *phoreo* (5409) - to bear (denotes repeated or habitual action). Compare Matt 11:8.

**Gay clothing:** This is the same phrase as "goodly apparel" (vs 2).

The believers had the wrong basis for honour (cp 1 Thess 5:12-14; 1 Tim 5:17). We cannot worship mammon as well as God (Matt 6:24; cp Psa 82:2-3). However, James is not saying that we must despise or dishonour those that are rich because of their wealth. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus were both men of immense wealth, but it was their spiritual knowledge and wisdom that made them worthy of respect. It was their Christ-like mind that set them apart from their fellow Jews (cp Luke 23:50-53; John 19:38-41). The rich, however, in the case of James' epistle, were the oppressors (vs 6; 5:1-6).

**Sit:** *kathemai* (2521) - to sit down, remain, reside.

**Good:** *kalos* (2573) - denotes that which is intrinsically good. "Honourable place" (Diag). These were similar to the chief seats in the literal synagogue (cp Luke 20:46-47; contrast Luke 14:7-11).



"These were seats of honour which were prepared for elders of the synagogue and for the doctors of the Law. They were placed in front of the ark. Those who occupied them sat with their faces to the people. These seats were sought by ambitious scribes and Pharisees" (*Bible Manners and Customs* Pg 368). The only genuine "good place" is at Christ's feet (Luke 8:35; 10:38-42).

**Stand:** *histemi* (2476) - to stand in an upright or active position, to cause to stand. They did not want to associate with the poor man (cp Isa 65:5; Matt 9:11-13).



This is not how Christ or the Apostles command us to treat the poor. Try to find some references of their commands and guidance in regards to the poor.

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How can we apply this today in our own personal and ecclesial lives?

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**Footstool:** *hupopodion* (5286) - under the feet. Thayer's says "to subject", "to reduce under one's power", "of placing the foot on the neck of a conquered enemy". See Joshua 10:24-26. The believers were assuming the authority of Christ (cp vs 4; 5:9; 2 Tim 4:1,8; John 5:30)! This word occurs nine times in the New Testament - six times quoting from Psa 110:1, twice it refers to the earth as God's footstool (cp Isa 66:1) and once here in James. The rich were granted the position of the Lord of Glory, and the poor were treated as the enemies of Christ. It was the rich who were the real enemies (cp vs 6-7) and the believers who despised the poor (cp vs 6).

### Verse 4: Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?



What is Rotherham's translation of this verse?

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**Partial:** Look up this word in Strong's and then in Englishman's. What were they actually doing?

Strong's No: \_\_\_\_\_ Greek: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Englishman's: \_\_\_\_\_



We can sometimes set up distinctions that may not even exist in our own minds. We must have singleness of mind like our Father (Jam 1:17; Mal 3:5-6).

**And become:** The next step after making distinctions is to judge based on those distinctions.

**Judges:** *krites* (2923) - from *krino* - which includes the process of trial, passing of judgement and executing the sentence. The Law warned against this (see Lev 19:15) and so did Christ (cp John 7:24; Matt 7:1-5). Christ is the true judge (cp Jam 5:9; 4:12; Acts 10:42; 2 Tim 4:8). There is a danger of classifying people as a certain type due to a previous action and never letting them out of that class. As judges, they decided that some were more worthy than others, but that conclusion was made based on mere appearances. This was a breach of the Law (vs 9). It was also contrary to the character of the Father who they were supposed to emulate: "for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart" (1 Sam 16:7; Psa 109:30-31).



James deals with judgement in several places. Where are they? Why does he emphasise this?

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**Of:** "with" (RV, Roth) - They were not judging the thoughts of others but were instead displaying partiality themselves, on the basis of mere fleshly display. This was a reflection of their evil thoughts.

**Evil:** *poneros* (4190) - hurtful, evil (in effect or influence) - compare James 4:16. This is the kind of evil that causes labour, pain and sorrow, and stirs up strife in the Ecclesia. It needs to be abhorred (Job 28:28; Psa 34:14; Prov 3:7; 8:13; Isa 1:16-17; Rom 12:9).

**Thoughts:** *dialogismos* (1261) - discussion, reasonings (internal = consideration; external = debate). They come from the heart (cp Matt 15:18-19; 12:34-35; Luke 9:46-47; see Jam 1:14). The believers were reasoning themselves astray (cp Jam 1:22). James is not teaching that we must not judge (cp 1 Cor 5:12; 6:5), but that our judgements must be based on the righteousness of God (cp John 7:24).

The believers were setting themselves in the position of judging from external appearances instead of from within (see Isa 11:3-4; Jer 17:10; 1 Pet 1:17). Their problem was that they didn't understand what true religion was (cp Jam 1:26-27). They were, in effect, judging that the principle of true religion was not right (see Jam 4:11-12).



## 2:5-7 - Partiality is inconsistent with God's calling

Having highlighted the believers' basis of judgement, James now shows them God's basis and warns that if they do not change their ways they will find themselves in opposition to God, both now and in the day of judgement.

First, James shows how inconsistent their partiality is in regard to God's purpose. He has chosen those whom the world may despise, to be heirs to the greater riches of the future age.

Man's standard	God's standard
Rich of this world	Poor of this world
Rich in appearance	Rich in faith
Receive honourable seat	Heirs of Kingdom
Judges with evil thoughts	Those that love Him

### Verse 5: Harken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him?

**Harken:** *akouo* (191) - to attend to, consider what is said - see Acts 15:13.

**My beloved brethren:** - see notes on James 1:16.

**Chosen:** *eklegomai* (1586) - see 1 Cor 1:26-31. God (emphasised by Roth, Diag) had chosen the poor but they had dishonoured them (vs 6)! Yahweh has respect unto the lowly (Psa 138:6; Isa 66:1-2; see also Deut 14:2).



**The poor:** NIV-"who are the poor in the eyes of the world"-that is, those who have been decreed by the world to be poor. The poor are more inclined to accept the Gospel because they have little to lose, and know their own needs (cp Matt 5:3; 11:5).

**World:** *kosmos* (2889) - arrangement. Possessions can blind us to true spiritual values (see Prov 30:7-9; Luke 12:21). Present poverty is only a temporary state. The called will not be poor in the Kingdom (Matt 5:3).



**Consider Luke 12:13-21:** What are things we possess in this life that could be detrimental to the vision we have? They aren't limited to tangible things. What are ways we could use them to benefit the Truth, or if we can't utilise them, how can we overcome them so that we may become the poor of this world?

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**Rich:** *plousios* (4145). The Greek word is in the future tense: "to be rich" (see Roth, RSV, and Moff). God is not calling those who already have a rich faith (it is not obtained until we have heard the Word of God - Rom 10:17) but those who may become rich in faith. It is a process (See Isa 66:2; Rev 2:9; 3:17-18). The value of faith is that it can be shared without loss (cp 2 Cor 6:10; 8:9-15; Prov 13:7).

**Heirs:** This verse shows that the Kingdom has not literally been set up yet (cp Matt 25:34).



Look up "heirs" in Strong's. Where are some other references with a similar idea? What do they say?

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**Kingdom:** *basileia* (932)-royalty, rule or realm. Thayer's Greek Definitions says:

- 1) Royal power, kingship, dominion, rule
- 2) A kingdom, the territory subject to the rule of a king
- 3) Used in N.T. to refer to reign of Messiah.

It is God's pleasure to give it to us (cp Luke 12:31-32; 1 Thess 2:12; Eph 1:5,9).

**Promised:** *epaggello* (1861) - to announce upon, to engage to do something. James highlights two promises - eternal life (Jam 1:12; cp Tit 1:2; 1 John 2:25) and a place in God's Kingdom (cp Matt 25:34; Rev 3:21).

**Love:** *agapao* (25). Proper love is essential (cp 1 Cor 13:1-7). (See notes on Jam 1:12).



How do we start to know this love (see 2 John 6)?

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**Compare this verse and Jam 1:12 with Psa 37:9; Isa 30:18; 40:31; 64:4; Lam 3:25-26 and 1 Cor 2:9.** What are the differences in the references? What does this love also involve, and in the context of James' quote, why do we need this attribute? Compare Rom 8:24-25.

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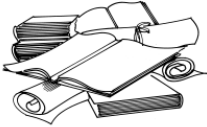


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Future blessings will not be granted just because of present poverty. True poverty is being poor in the spirit of this world (cp Matt 5:3; Isa 66:2). We do not necessarily need to be literally poor (see Matt 27:57; 1 Tim 6:17-19), but we need to aspire to the riches of the future age rather than the riches of today's world.



See *Elpis Israel*, Pg 156, paragraph 2.



Compare this verse with Jam 1:12. Both of these references are similar yet each offers a slightly different reward. Fill in each part of the statements in the table below and then write what reward each verse is talking about in the bolded boxes.

James 1:12	James 2:5
Blessed is the man that endureth [trial]	Hath not God chosen the poor of this world
Tried (faith - 1 Pet 1:7)	
	Heirs to the kingdom
Those who love Him	

Paul says something similar in his last epistle to Timothy (2 Tim 4:7-8). What is it?

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Compare the widow of Mark 12 and Luke 21 with this verse. Read the context of all the passages. What comparisons can you find?

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*The believers were still in the environment of the Jews with all their partiality. James warns them not to be influenced by the Jews' actions, nor to bring their partiality into the Ecclesia.*



## Verse 6: But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?

**Despised:** *atimazo* (818) - dishonour. The believers were in effect questioning God's ability to choose those worthy of honour (See 1 Cor 1:26-31; Prov 14:31). They found themselves therefore in opposition to Him. Christ himself was despised because he was poor in the things of this world (Isa 53:3). A person rich in faith should be honoured. They that consistently labour in the Word are worthy of double honour (cp 1 Tim 5:17).



Do we consider some in the Ecclesia as having less importance than others? God has chosen all of us for His Kingdom. Should we despise those whom God has chosen? How can we respect those people?

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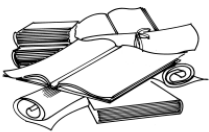


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**Rich men:** *plousios* (4145). Rotherham emphasises the action of the rich - "the rich" oppress ... "themselves" drag ... "they" defame. James is referring to the rich Jews as a class of the world in general that had oppressed the believers, not rich men like Nicodemus and Joseph.

**Oppress:** *katadunasteuo* (2616). The oppression began with the Jewish leaders (e.g. Acts 4:1-7,17). Man was not given this "right". He was only given dominion over the inferior creation (cp Gen 1:26).



"As to his own species, however, he was permitted to be neither a Law to himself nor to his fellows" (*Elpis Israel*, Pg 64).



**Draw:** *helkuo* (1670) - "drag" (RV, Diag). Compare Acts 16:19; 21:30. "And themselves (emphatic) drag you" (Roth). They were being persecuted exactly like the apostles!

**Judgement seats:** *kriterion* (2922). This is the place where the believers were judged against holding the faith of Christ. The believers had been showing respect to these very people - the ones who would also judge with respect of persons.

## Verse 7: Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?

**Blaspheme:** *blasphemeo* (987) - to speak impiously, defile, defame. Under the Law it was punishable by death (See Exo 20:7; Lev 24:10-16). There is a danger of the name being blasphemed by a believer's actions (cp 2 Sam 12:14; Eze 36:21; Matt 12:31; 18:7; Rom 2:23-24; 1 Tim 6:1).

**Worthy:** *kalos* (2570) - valuable or virtuous, "denotes that which is intrinsically good" (Vine). Compare vs 3 - "good".



This word is also used in James 3:13; 4:17. (Look up and compare "*agathos*" - Jam 1:17; 3:17). Why do you think there is a distinction in the words used?

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**Name:** there is emphasis on this word and phrase throughout James' epistle and his speech in Acts 15.



Look up this phrase and perhaps colour it in and cross reference it. What is James trying to get across to us in this context?

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**Called:** *epikaleomai* (1941) - also translated "surnamed". Only a father (cp Gen 48:16; Isa 43:6-7) or a husband (cp Isa 4:1; 54:5) can call another by his name (cp Eph 3:14-15). Yahweh's name is called upon Israel (cp Deut 28:9-10; 2 Chron 7:14; Jer 14:9; Dan 9:19) and upon the Gentiles (cp Amos 9:12; Acts 15:14, 17). Baptism places Christ's name on us (cp Matt 28:19; Acts 2:38-39). Through baptism we become children of God (cp Heb 2:13; 1 John 3:1) and Christ's bride (cp 2 Cor 11:2; Rev 19:7). God's name can be blasphemed if our actions are not consistent with His character as expressed in His name (Exo 34:6-7; cp 2 Sam 12:14).

It is impossible for believers to show partiality to those of worldly status who blaspheme the very things that the believers claim to adhere to; the two groups are incompatible.



What people or things of this world, which are highly esteemed in the eyes of outsiders, do we look up to, even though their very essence (though it may not seem like it on the surface) is against God's name?

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James is also implying that by despising the poor and bringing judgement against them, they were acting just like the rich Jews who persecuted the Ecclesia and blasphemed God's name.



## 2:8-11 - Lesson from the Law

*James next anticipates an objection that might be raised - that they were fulfilling the Law of Lev 19:18 in loving the rich by showing honour to them. It is common for human nature to justify itself and to attempt to use the Scriptures to do so.*

*James points out that under the Law of Moses, breaking just one point cancelled out the good of keeping the rest of the Law. Then he shows that we have greater demands placed upon us by the Law of Liberty.*

### Verse 8: If ye fulfil the Royal Law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:



NIV: "If you really keep the Royal Law".

Roth: "If ye are indeed fulfilling".

**Fulfil:** *teleo* (5055) execute. The Jews boasted in their keeping of the Law (cp Rom 2:17) and so James knew they would object to this because they would say they *were* loving their neighbour. However, they didn't love the person for the right things but were rather focused on status and wealth.

**Royal Law:** *basilikos* (937) - signifies belonging to a king, proclaimed by a king. This Law is proclaimed by the King of Heaven (Lev 19:18), and declared again by Christ, the King of the Future age (Matt 22:37-40; John 13:34; 15:12; see 2 John 5). As a Royal Law, it provided the chief principle by which to LIVE life in the Truth. In Leviticus 19, it is placed in juxtaposition with a warning against respect of persons (vs 15). Therefore, love and not partiality, should govern our lives. If the Royal authority of the Father and Son is appreciated, this Law should be obeyed by those who claim to be their subjects and by those who wish to be kings of the future age.

**Scripture:** *graphe* (1124). The whole Scripture must be used as the basis for our life (2 Tim 3:16-17). We can't just use one part. Leviticus 19 covers various Laws relating to conduct towards our brethren.

**Love:** *agapao* (25) Divine love. This word is seldom found outside the Bible. Love comes from God (cp John 4:7-8) so it is not an emotion of the flesh. It is probably best rendered "self-sacrificial love", for in love God gave up His son (John 3:16) and Christ gave up His life (Gal 2:20).



Our love to our neighbours is an outworking of God's love to us (cp 1 John 4:9-12). Love is a fulfilment of the Law (cp Rom 13:8-10; Gal 5:14). The love which we receive as followers of Christ must be revealed in our attitude to others. It is not action, but it must be expressed in action, otherwise it is not love at all. It must not be confused with mere friendliness or affection based on the likings of the flesh for it must be expressed to our enemies as well (Matt 5:44; Rom 12:20). It is this unique attitude of a believer towards his brethren and the world that separates him unto God Himself. It is pre-eminently His love, but the manifestation of it in our hearts and lives is motivated by the power of the Word (Rom 5:5; Gal 5:22-25; 1 Thess 4:9).





## Verse 9: But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the Law as transgressors.

**But:** Here James brings in his sober warning.

**Respect of persons:** same phrase as verse 1. In such partiality as James has described, there is no love except the love of self. The command against this is in the same chapter of the Royal Law (cp Lev 19:15). This shows their inconsistency. The Law was regarded as a series of detached rules. Those broken were offset against those kept. The final balance determined their standing before God. This way of thinking was totally wrong, as James goes on to point out: our life in Christ is not a series of do's and do not's.

Respect of persons must not be to the poor either. All should be treated the same in this context (see Exo 23:2-3; Deut 1:17; Prov 22:2). However, they had been treating the rich well, but the poor they had shunned. James shows them they must both be treated EQUALLY as well. Perfect justice had to be shown at all times (Deut 16:18-20).

**Commit:** *ergazomai* (2038) - to toil. They were working in sin! This is a stronger word than that used for being "doers" of the Word (cp Matt 7:23).

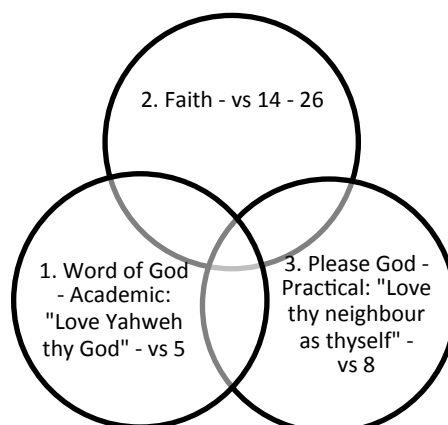
**Sin:** *hamartia* (266) - state of sin (cp 1 John 3:4, 9-11).

**Convinced:** *elegcho* (1651). "Convicted" (RV). Compare John 8:46. This transgression was an invasion of another's rights, and humiliating the poor visitor was breaking the Law (cp Psa 82:2-4).

**Transgressors:** *parabates* (3848) - violator. See Rom 2:25,27.

## Verse 10: For whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all.

**Whole:** *holos* (3650) - complete. The Law revolved around two main principles - love God and love our neighbours, "for on these two commandments hang all the Law and the prophets" (cp Matt 22:36-40; 1 John 4:19-21; Ecc 12:13). It requires faith and conviction in a believer to accomplish both these principles as we shall see in verses 14-26. Thus we have a threefold chain:





These three characteristics of the true believer are inseparable. It is only when these three aspects are intertwined like an unbreakable chain that a believer's life will be of any value. If one link fails, the chain will fall apart.

**In one:** To show respect of persons is to lack love of a certain class and therefore fails to fulfil the Law. They were in fact guilty of breaking the whole Law (cp Matt 5:18-19).

**Guilty:** Compare Deut 27:26; Gal 3:10 - these references relate to the breaking of the Law of Moses. James has taken the same principle and shown that it applies just as much to the Law of Liberty.

**All:** *pas* (3956) - every, whole. They broke the chain even though they had only snapped one link.

This is not saying that a sinner is held guilty as if he violated every ordinance, but that although all other commands are kept just one sin will separate us from God and we require forgiveness for this (cp Psa 130:3-4).

**Verse 11: or He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the Law.**



Using the Englishman's concordance, try to find Christ's own commandments and commentary on these two Laws. What do they mean to us?

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**Commit adultery:** *moicheuo* (3431). (See Exo 20:14).

**Kill:** *phoneuo* (5407) - to be a murderer. (See Exo 20:13, cp 1 John 3:15).

It is easy to stress certain commandments that we find easy to keep or are our strengths (e.g. the study of God's Word, gospel proclamation, patience), and neglect other commandments (e.g. putting it into practice). This inconsistency is not of God (cp Jam 1:17). We can also show great criticism towards those who do not have the same natural tendencies. God will not judge us on our natural abilities but on how we have changed and responded to His Word.



### Thought to think about and do

It is our weak areas that God wants us to work on. Ask yourself "What areas of my character can be improved and how can I improve them?" (Hint - it is God who does the improving if we let him).

Note that James chooses two points that he will accuse his readers of later (see Jam 4:2,4).

## 2:12-13 - The need to keep whole Law of Liberty

*A correct appreciation of the future judgement should dictate our present lives. In everything that we do, it ought to be consistent with the judgement which we expect at His hand.*

### Verse 12: So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the Law of Liberty.

How often James comes back to this insistence upon the need for actively living the word!

**Speak:** Compare Matt 12:36-37; Rom 15:18.

**Do:** There is a saying, "It is easy to sit up and take notice; what is difficult is getting up and taking action". It is possible to expound the Word and yet live inconsistently with its principles. Our actions must confirm our speech (cp 1 John 3:18) and both must be conducted with Christ in mind (cp Col 3:17). The believers had both spoken and acted amiss (vs 3). See also 1:25 - "blessed in his deed".



Look up the NIV version of this verse. In what way is this Law contrasted to the Mosaic Law?

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**Judged:** *krino* (2919)-this is the verb of vs 4. Since they had judged others harshly, they would be judged in like manner (Matt 7:1-2; Jam 4:11-12; 5:9).

**Law of Liberty:** See the notes below, as well as notes on Jam 1:25.

### THE LAW OF LIBERTY

The Law of Liberty recognises that all sin and therefore come under the curse of the Law (Gal 3:10) However this Law extends the mercy of forgiveness to us (cp Rom 7:23-8:4), and so we are freed from the curse by a newness of life in Christ (Rom 6:4-6; 7:1-6; Col 2:14). This, however, imposes on us an obligation to walk in the light of that experience of forgiveness. Having received of the goodness of God, we are expected to extend the same mercy to others (cp Matt 6:12; 18:32-33; Rom 14:10,13; Eph 4:32). We have to recognise that "all have sinned" (Rom 3:23), both rich and poor, and thus we have all have been reduced to a common ground (cp Psa 62:9; 1 Cor 7:21-23; see also Isa 40:4-8). We cannot show partiality, but should, in humility, treat all as "one" in Christ (Gal 3:28). The basis of the extension of our mercy to one who has wronged us, is that we ourselves have been so graciously forgiven by God Almighty.

The Law of Liberty is based on affecting our conscience – to offend it by not extending mercy and reflecting God (Who has abundantly poured grace on us), would indicate a double-minded person. "The very term 'Law of Liberty' shows that the liberty referred to is subject to restraints: it expresses liberty from condemnation, not license to please oneself" (H.P. Mansfield). We must "speak and do as they that shall be judged by the Law of Liberty".

See also Gal 2:16-21; 3:9-14; 5:1-6, 13-26; 6:14-16. Paul has some interesting points to note in Galatians and sums up the liberty we have in Christ well. When we are baptised we no longer live the life of the person we were before. Christ lives in us and we live by the faith of him, who loved us, and gave himself for us. Thus it is appropriate that we must live like him in forgiving others, for did he not say, "Father, forgive them" about the very ones who were crucifying him? His whole life was ruled by the perfect Law of Liberty, "for all the Law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Gal 5:14; cp Jam 2:8).

**Verse 13: For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.**

**Without mercy:** They were not persuaded even when entreated. Christ gave a similar warning (cp Matt 7:1-2; 6:15).



Contrast the examples of David and Joab. How did they act? How did God respond to that? Compare Psa 18:25-26.

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**Mercy:** *eleos* (1656) - compassion (human or Divine, especially active). We all will need mercy in the day of judgement. Therefore there is a need to manifest those characteristics in this life (cp Matt 5:7; 18:21-35; Luke 6:36).



What do these references below say regarding God's mercy to us and our mercy to others?

- Rom 9:15
- Psa 18:25
- Prov 21:13
- Jer 9:23-24
- Matt 7:1-5
- Matt 23:23, cp vs 14
- Exo 34:6-7
- Psa 103:4-13
- Prov 16:6
- Zech 7:9-10
- Rom 11:22

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If we judge ourselves and not our brethren, we will be shown mercy (1 Cor 11:28-31). We proclaim a death sentence on ourselves by judging and not showing mercy to others. By not forgiving people's debts to us, God will not forgive our debts to Him either (Matt 6:12; Eph 4:32; Col 3:13).

**Rejoiceth against:** *katakauchaomai* (2620) - to exult against, "triumphs" (Diag). At the judgement seat, mercy shall drown out judgement, because the mercy that we have shown to others will be advanced to our support. The difference between the ones cast out and the ones found worthy will be based on their attitudes and actions to their fellow man (Matt 25:31-46). Mercy and judgement are both aspects of God's character (Exo 34:6-7) which He holds in perfect balance (cp Rom 11:22). This is shown in the Law of Liberty, for it recognises the curse of the Law of sin and death upon us (judgement) but frees us from this curse through the forgiveness of sins (mercy). We shall be judged by how we have reflected this balance in our own lives, for we shall be judged by "the perfect Law of Liberty". By reflecting these characteristics of our Father, we will truly be keeping the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory. God manifestation is: Us living in a way that others can see God living in Us.



**Note Gen 12:3; Josh 2:12-14.** This very principle was acted out in Rahab's life, and Abraham was promised this as well (see Jam 2:21,25).

## 2:14-17 - FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD

James follows on from "speak ye and so do" (vs 12) to develop his main theme further by showing that faith without works is of no use. Our works are an outward testimony of our faith.

**Verse 14:** What *doth it* profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?



Diag: "What advantage, my brethren have any one, though he say he has faith, but have not works? This faith is not able to save him".

**Profit:** *ophelos* (3786) - to heap up, accumulate. After considering all that James has written so far, this question should have burnt deeply into the hearts and consciences of his readers. They were not laying up treasures in heaven (cp Matt 6:19-21), but rather trying to make a profit in this world.

**Say:** *lego* (3004). The believers were all talk and no action (cp vs 16). This problem is addressed in the next chapter.



**Faith:** "That faith" (RV, Moff).



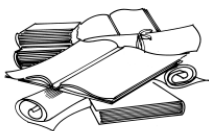
The age-old question has to be asked: what is faith? Use Strong's concordance and study this word, its related words and roots. Where does it come from, what does it lead to, how do we hold onto it? Find where else it is used in the chapter and where "that faith" occurs. What is the difference between these two words? Why does James use both terms?

Strong's No: \_\_\_\_\_ Greek: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

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Bro John Thomas' translation of Hebrews 11:1 is as follows: "Faith is a confident anticipation of things hoped for, a full persuasion of things not seen." - *Elpis Israel*, Pg 173.

As we shall soon see, faith is a living conviction that will motivate action. Faith is necessary for salvation (cp Rom 1:16-17) but not "that faith" which is based merely on the knowledge of a set of doctrines (cp Matt 3:7-10). It must be believed and then done (cp Rom 2:13).

**Works:** *ergon* (2041) - to toil, occupation. In the context of James' letter, he is referring to works of faith shown in trial. Trials are necessary to produce an enduring faith (cp Jam 1:2-4).



"Work" is another key word in this section. List the different things that James mentions concerning "works" and note how we can apply them to our lives.

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An interesting parable to consider in the light of the subject of Faith and Works is the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Builders (**Matt 7:21-27; Luke 6:46-49**).

*James answers this question in three stages. The first is a simple analogy.*

**Verse 15: If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,**



**Naked:** Have a look at the following references. Is nakedness limited to physical nakedness?

- Exo 32:6,25
- Prov 29: 18 (see margin)
- 2 Cor 5:2-4
- Heb 4:12-13
- Rev 3:17
- Rev 16:15

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**Destitute:** *leipo* (3007) - to leave, that is, to fail or be absent, (see Jam 1:4 - "wanting"; vs 5 - "lack"). (cp Acts 11:28-29; 1 Cor 11:21-22; Rom 15:26).

The Law demonstrated how they should have been cared for (see notes on the Fatherless and Widows - Jam 1:27).

**Verse 16:** And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what *doth it* profit?



Wey: "I wish you well; keep yourselves warm and well fed".

**Peace:** *eirene* (1515) - to set as one, prosperity. This was a common benediction used when one's needs had been satisfied (Luke 7:48-50; 8:46-48; Acts 16:36; 1 Sam 1:17; 20:42; 2 Kings 5:19). The Jewish greeting "shalom" was empty and useless as a mere word. However, it is derived from a root word, "to be at one" and hence implies a "sharer". James teaches us to use even the most common words with full meaning, and not to use words that sound beautiful and eloquent but not actually mean them.

No amount of faith can substitute for the requirements of a person in need. This would be a hollow blessing.

**Ye give them not:** if we do not help our fellow brethren, whether with physical or spiritual help, we ourselves are spiritually naked and have not a vision (Prov 29:18, see vs 15 "naked"). We are destitute of faith, found wanting (Jam 1:4) and lack wisdom (Jam 1:5) before the God above Who has given us all things that are needful for the life we live now, and in the age to come. If we do not share this blessing, we do not appreciate Him (cp Isa 58:6-14; Luke 14:12-14). He will switch the places of the rich and poor (Psa 68:5-6; Isa 10:1; Luke 1:52-53).

**Things which are needful:** Compare Prov 3:27-28; Luke 3:11.

**What doth it profit?:** Nothing - to either the possessor of that faith or to those in need. James is using a small incident to illustrate his point. It is the small things that Christ desires us to act upon. The future depends on what we do in the present (Jam 1:27; Matt 25:31-46; 1 John 3:16-19).



**Thought to think about and do**

It is easy to see the large things that try our brethren's faith, but how often do we see the small things? In what ways might we show the right attitude to others in helping them in both physical and spiritual needs?

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However, all these actions must be done in love (1 Cor 13:1-3; Gal 5:13; Col 1:4-5; Heb 10:23-24; 1 Thess 1:3), otherwise it is of no value (cp vs 8). Love must be the motivating force of the works of faith (Gal 5:6).



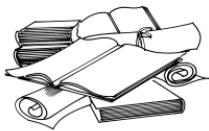
## Verse 17: Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.



MKJV: "Even so, if it does not have works, faith is dead, being by itself".

**Dead:** *nekros* (3498) - From a primary word "*nekus*" - a corpse. Faith or conviction must be living and active to be of advantage to anyone. This point is emphasised in vs 20 and vs 26. A mere assertion of principles is not enough. Paul is in accord with this teaching (Rom 2:13).

Why does God require works as well as faith? He is looking for those who not only believe what He says, but are also obedient (Mark 16:16; cp Heb 11:8). These works of faith are a manifestation of God's character and thus reflect that we are truly His children (cp 1 John 2:4-6).



H.P. Mansfield has a good description of what faith should do: "Faith that expresses itself only in word and not in action is dead. A living faith will motivate action. Otherwise belief is a mere academic exercise of no practical value. A real faith will change a life. The RV renders the final clause (of verse 14) as: "can that faith save him?" the answer is NO. Faith must motivate action, and bring forth fruit to the glory of the Father." (*James to Jude Expositor*, Pg 44).



### Thought to think about and do

Do I do the works of faith? Is my conviction real? Does it motivate me to action?



## 2:18-26 - FAITH SHOWN BY WORKS (DEMONSTRATED BY ABRAHAM AND RAHAB)

*James moves on to the second stage of his answer to the question at the end of vs 14, by showing that a belief in doctrine without a corresponding change in the way of life, is not sufficient.*

**Verse 18: Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.**

*James outlines the problem that the Ecclesia had - separating faith from works.*

**A man may say:** James introduces a new person into his argument as his humility does not permit him to set himself forward as an ideal example. This person shows the emptiness of a purely academic religion.

**Thou hast faith:** The recipient of this statement has a belief about something, but it can be asked whether it is actually a belief, if they don't demonstrate it.

**I have works:** The new person can demonstrate their faith.

**Shew me thy faith without thy works:** It is impossible. A conviction can only be proved through action; otherwise it is no conviction at all and is of no value.

**I will shew thee my faith by my works:** A practical demonstration of the motive force behind their action, by which, they are able to overcome the world (1 John 5:4).

It is impossible to show our faith without works. We can say as much as we like about the Truth and how much we believe it, but if we don't have the actions to show it, no one will believe us (cp Job 1:8-11). We can have works without faith, but we cannot have faith without works. A real faith will automatically manifest itself in works. The works themselves testify of a greater force than that which is natural. Hebrews 11 gives numerous examples of faithful brethren who showed their faith by their actions (cp Heb 11:4,7-8 etc).



The Truth must be our obsession, and it must be KNOWN to be our obsession. What do people in and out of the Truth think your addiction is? Is it consistent with the Truth? If not, how can you change that? If so, how can you make it stronger, and help others to be as enthusiastic as you are about the Truth?



## Verse 19: Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

**Thou believest:** *pisteuo* (400) - to have faith. This is the verb for "faith". This is "possessing conviction".

**That there is one God:** This is the first article of the Jewish and Christian faiths (Exo 20:1-4; Deut 6:4; Isa 45:5-6; Mark 12:29; John 17:5; 1 Cor 8:4-6; Eph 4:4-6; 1 Tim 2:5).



We do believe the doctrine that there is only one God, but what effect does it have on us? What does "God is one God" mean to you personally and ecclesially?

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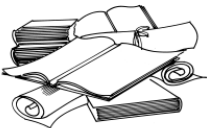
**Thou doest well:** James again uses irony (cp vs 8). Sound doctrine is important but is not an end in itself.

**Devils:** *daimonion* (1140). Those mentally or physically unsound whom Christ healed recognised the Divine power in his healing work (cp Matt 8:28-29, Mark 5:7-20; Luke 4:41). However, their utterance of this fact was not enough to save them. Their faith, once they were healed, would have to be expressed in actions in order to obtain salvation (cp Luke 17:12-19).

**Also believe:** If one were to believe that faith was enough without action, this would mean, says James, that the devils could also be saved because they had a conviction, but no works.

**Tremble:** *phrisso* (5425) - to bristle or chill, that is, shudder (fear). Their belief is a source of terror, not salvation. They merely uttered a truth without it truly affecting them.

Knowledge alone is not acceptable to God. Sometimes all it does is frighten. True doctrine will develop within us a love for God and it will affect the way they act. It is important to have a true living faith to please Him (cp Heb 11:6).



See the booklet *Do all to the Glory of God* for other examples of how doctrine can be manifested in our lives.

The final stage of James' argument is in giving two examples from the Old Testament to illustrate his point - one of the man Abraham, the father of the faithful, and the second of the woman Rahab, a sinful Gentile whose faith was shown in her support and assistance in the work that Yahweh was about to accomplish in her city. The contrast between the two shows the universality of the principle. Abraham was under the trial of obedience as a saint - obey or disobey. Rahab was under the trial of opportunity as a sinner - accept the Truth or reject it. They were both blessed to find a place in Christ's lineage, because of their faith (Matt 1:2,5).

### Verse 20: But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?



RSV: "Do you want to be shown, you shallow man, that faith apart from works is barren?"

**Know:** *ginosko* (1097) - to come to know completely.

**Vain:** *kenos* (2756) - "empty" (Vine). It was an empty quality rather than vanity and pride.



**Dead:** The Diaglott renders this "unproductive". Faith that is not followed by works produces NO glory to God, for there is no fruit (cp Tit 3:8,13-14). Paul taught this same fact: "God will render to every man according to his deeds... For not the hearers of the Law are just before God but the doers of the Law shall be justified" (Rom 2:6,13).

*James presents conclusive evidence for those who have ears to hear (cp Matt 13:9) and wish to become true, profitable servants of God.*

### Verse 21: Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

**Abraham our father:** He is the father of the Jews, but more significantly he is the father of the faithful (cp Rom 4:12, 16; Gal 3:7-9; Isa 51:1-2).

**Justified:** *dikaioo* (1344) - to render just or innocent, be righteous. These "works" sprang out of his faith, and were not merely actions in obedience to a command without motivation. This work was motivated by the promise that "God would provide" (see Rom 4:12-25). For this, God rewarded him, not only with sparing his son, but with a future blessing confirmed by an oath (Gen 22:16-18; Heb 6:12-20).

**Offered Isaac his son upon the altar:** Once there is belief (Gen 15:6; Jam 2:23), there must be obedience (see Gen 22:16,18).



## Verse 22: Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?



Wey: "You notice that his faith was co-operating with his actions, and that by his actions his faith was perfected".

**Wrought:** *sunergeo* (4903) - to be a fellow-worker, co-operate. It is also from the verb "energeo" - to be energised. Thus faith energised Abraham to act. This act was not performed without faith but rather was the outworking of it. The faith Abraham showed in Genesis 15:6 was the motive force behind his actions in Genesis 22 (cp Heb 11:17-19). That faith is motivated by love (cp Gal 5:6).

**Perfect:** *teleioo* (5048) - mature, brought to completion. Abraham's faith developed over time through trials (cp Heb 6:12-15; Jam 1:3-4). True children of Abraham will also manifest the same works (John 8:39).



In Hebrews 6, note the words "faith and patience" (vs 12) and "patiently endured" (vs 15). Compare these with the similarity of thought of James 1:2-4. What can we learn from this?

## Verse 23: And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

**Fulfilled:** *pleroo* (4137) - to bring to completion. The Scripture was Genesis 15:6. The events of Genesis 22 completed the process. God then confirmed the covenant by an oath (Gen 15:5-6; 22:16-17).

**Believed:** The very act of faith itself is a work of righteousness. This hope against hope (Rom 4:18) is a remarkable act of faith which invariably manifests itself in works (see Heb 11:8-19).



In what type of works can our faith manifest itself?

**Friend:** *philos* (5384) - dear, fond, friendly. Compare 2 Chron 20:7; Isa 41:8. Friendship with Abraham was a token of God's approval because Abraham obeyed God (cp Gen 18:17-19; John

15:14). Contrast this with James 4:4. James was writing to some who were the very opposite. Friendship is to have fellowship with someone. We come into fellowship with God at our baptism. The more we try to grow to understand Him and His ways, the more our fellowship will grow and strengthen. It is a gradual process but this will be finally outworked when we share true fellowship with Him in the Kingdom Age and see His face.



Friendship also has another basis. There is always something we have in common with our friends. What was the thing that Abraham and God had in common (See Gen 22:12; John 3:15; cp John 8:56)?

Summary of Abraham's justification			
vs 23	Gen 15:5	Part One/Cause	"Belief that He is" (Heb 11:6).
vs 21	Gen 22	Part Two/Effect	"Belief that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him" (Heb 11:6)
vs 22 & 23		Outcome	"Faith is made perfect" = Abraham becomes the Friend of God.

Thus we get the complete picture: Abraham's belief had a powerful effect on his way of life, and therefore he was called "the Friend of God".

So how is this significant for us? We go through the same process:

- 1) Once we believe that Christ died and rose for us (vs 23);
- 2) There must be a baptism to that effect (vs 21);
- 3) Thus faith is made perfect - we become friends of our God and His Son since we have obeyed (John 15:14).



We are God's friends on the basis of our obedience. We can only obey if we know of Him and His ways. However, this is not the final thing that we have to do to be accepted into God's family. We have to continually seek for the perfection, maturity or completion of our faith, and the understanding of God and His ways throughout our mortal lives. Our baptism is only the beginning of the journey. It is a continual process toward an end. We must strive for the mark of the high calling,

so that in His glorious kingdom, we may truly become a "friend of God," being in fellowship with Him and with His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Verse 24: Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.**

**Not by faith only:** James is emphasising vs 17. He has shown that faith AND works are not only necessary but they are an integral part of each other. The word "only" means "alone". Strong's



gives the meaning as “merely”. Compare this with 1:22 - “be ye doers of the word, and not hearers **only**”. Faith/hearing must be accompanied by works/doing.

### RECONCILING JAMES AND PAUL (ROMANS 3 & 4)

Some critics of the Bible say that, because Paul teaches justification by faith and not works, and James teaches justification by works, the Bible contradicts itself.

Paul's argument is dealing with justification by faith as opposed to justification by the Law of Moses. It is by God's grace that man is justified; it cannot be earned by man (Rom 3:20-24,28; Eph 2:8-9).

James is concerned with showing that a saving faith is one that lives. Its works are the works of faith, not the works of Law. James does not say that faith is not necessary, but that a man cannot be justified by faith ALONE (cp Jam 2:17). See Gal 2:16,20 - we have to believe but we also need to LIVE by the FAITH (cp Gal 3:11).

They each deal with the two stages of justification - by faith and by works -

1. As a sinner, Abraham was justified from his past sins when his faith was counted for righteousness (Rom 4:2-5).
2. As a saint he was justified by works when he offered up Isaac on the altar (Jam 2:21-23).

“Abraham was the subject of a twofold justification, as it were; first, of a *justification by faith*; secondly, of a *justification by works*. Paul says he was justified by faith; and James, that he was justified by works. They are both right. As a sinner he was justified from his *past sins* when his faith was counted to him for righteousness; and as a saint, he was justified by works when he offered up Isaac. Of his justification as a saint James writes, “Abraham our father was justified by works, when he offered Isaac his son upon the altar. Faith wrought with his works, and *by works was faith made perfect*. And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and NOT *by faith alone*” (Jam 2:21-24).

I have termed it a twofold justification by way of illustration but it is, in fact, only one. The two stand related as cause and effect; faith being the motive principle it is a justification which *begins* with the remission of sins that are past, and is *perfected* in obedience unto death. The idea may be simplified thus. No exaltation without probation. If a man believe and obey the gospel *his past sins* are forgiven him in Christ; but, if after this he walks in the course of the world his faith is proved to be dead, and he forfeits his title to eternal life. But if, on the other hand, a man become an adopted son of Abraham, and “by a patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, honour, and incorruptibility” (Rom 2:7), he will find everlasting life in the Paradise of God” (*Elpis Israel*, Pg 278-279).

Abraham's faith of Gen 15 was of the genuine saving quality that would manifest itself in works; the obedience of Gen 22 proceeded directly from this living faith and is its fruits.

**Verse 25: Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent *them* out another way?**

**Justified by works:** Many in the land believed (see Josh 2:9-11; 5:1) but she alone acted in faith (Heb 11:31). She believed in the one God (cp Josh 2:11 with Deut 4:39) and acted (contrast Jam 2:19). Rahab held her faith before the spies arrived (cp Josh 2:8-11 - Her explanation of why she hid them was a confession of her faith). Her faith was acted upon in hiding the spies, sending them another way, and staying in the city until Joshua (Yah shall save) arrived. Her example showed that Gentiles also can be justified (cp Rom 3:29-30). Her belief and faith, therefore, found expression in action, and though a Gentile, she was privileged to be both the ancestor of David and Christ (Matt 1:5).

**Another way:** This was so they could escape and return to destroy her city! (cp Josh 6: 17, 22-25).

**Verse 26: For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.**



**Spirit:** *pneuma* (4151) - breath. Compare the Diaglott - "the body without breath is dead" (compare the AV margin).

Consider Adam. Until he was given the breath of life, he was not able to fulfil his purpose - to multiply and fill the earth with a Godly seed (see Mal 2:15). A lifeless body is a corpse - inactive and ineffective. It decays and ceases to exist (cp Psa 104:29-30). Faith that bases its substance on doctrinal truth alone has no life and is incapable of showing it. In the same way as action shows that a body is alive, so works of faith show that a person's faith is alive.



What are the works of faith? Can we just decide on the spur of the moment to "do a work of faith"? What causes a work of faith to be done?

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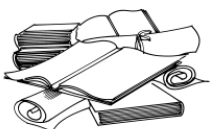
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"A person who believes, but in action fails to respond to that belief lives a lie. So, according to James, faith without works is as good as a corpse. It is faith in action that provides life and vigour" (H. P. Mansfield, *James to Jude Expositor*, Pg 48).