

Title: Faith Without Works Is Dead

Text: James 2:14-26

Let us take our Bibles and turn to James chapter 2. James chapter 2..
Our subject this morning is: FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD...

This passage of scripture is very easy to understand. But, it is very hard to apply. Satan and our old sin nature resist at every opportunity. You see, Satan doesn't want the Christian to be active in the ministry of Jesus Christ. He wants us to be passive, non-involved Christians. So, this passage becomes very important to the spiritual growth of a believer.

James chapter 2 beginning with Vs 14...(READ VS 14-26)

PRAYER

Faith without works, according to the Bible, is dead. This principle is stated in Vs 14 and Vs 26. It is the key point that James is driving home in this letter. FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD.

Now, James challenges us with a tremendous question. The question is found in Vs 14. "WHAT USE IS IT, MY BRETHREN, IF A MAN SAYS HE HAS FAITH, BUT HE HAS NO WORKS? CAN THAT FAITH SAVE HIM?"

Now, that is a good question. CAN FAITH WITHOUT WORKS SAVE? Can that kind of faith save you? The obvious answer is NO!!...BUT WHY?

There has been a great emphases in our day on FAITH in Jesus Christ. I hope it never ends. But, we in the past 50 years, since WW2 ..have been faced with a new type of Faith. A new kind of faith. We are told that all we need to do is believe in Jesus. To say with our lips that we profess Jesus as Saviour. And then every thing will be alright

You will be a christian....you will be saved.....And it doesn't really matter whether or not you ^{go} to church....or, your life changes....or, your attitudes change....JUST BELIEVE.....JUST WALK DOWN THE ISLE....JUST JOIN THE CHURCH....

But, dear friends, the Bible teaches that if there is real faith, your life will show it by your service and your attitude. So, this passage becomes very important to our understanding. Because without works, the Bible says, the Holy Spirit says, **Your faith is DEAD...**

(2B) II. Now, I would like to share with you five reasons why faith without works cannot save a person.....Five reasons..... *According to This passage,*

(1) Number one, you will find in Verses 15 and 16 that faith without works cannot save a person because real faith cannot be unconcerned about the needs of others. It is as simple as that!

Real faith, cannot be unconcerned about the needs of others. It is as though James sees one who is without clothes and food, and he says to him: "Brother! be warmed and filled, go in peace.

What we mean by that is that we don't want to be personally involved. Go your way in peace. I will think about you. But, I don't want to be personally involved with you.

You see! James is saying that it is faith without works. And it is dead, if we don't do something in a concert way to help our brother or sister. How can we say that our faith is working when we see people in need and fail to help them? Is it not faith without works when a person stands within the realm of our opportunity - a person who we know needs Jesus as saviour - and, yet, we do nothing to share our faith with him? James says it is faith without works. WHY? Because real faith cannot be unconcerned about the needs of others. And that includes the ^{greater} need of ^{all - and that} salvation. ~~as well~~

as physical needs

Would you turn, please, to I John chapter 3...Here we have a great illustration. I John chapter 3 beginning with Vs 17.....

John writes: "But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth."

Wow!!! Do you see?...John is saying the same thing as James. That faith without works is dead.

Our brother is in need and we say, "Well, I love you. God in peace. Praise the Lord.".....Yet, we do nothing in a concert way to help. James says that that kind of faith is dead.

O.K...come back to James. In James chapter 2, faith without works cannot save a person because real faith will be concerned about the needs of others. And will do something about those needs. And this includes the greatest need of all....the need of personal salvation.

(2C) Now, secondly, Vs 18, faith without works cannot save a person because real faith will be seen in your life. Vs 18 says, "But someone may well say, you have faith, and I have works, show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works."

In other words, LET IT BE SEEN. Real faith will be seen in the life of a ^{Christian} person.

So often, we see people who say that they believe in Jesus Christ, but there is no evidence/ There is nothing seen in the life of that person.

Now, I realize we christians can fall into a terrible problem at this point. We can judge and evaluate the spiritual fruit of a person. And yet, dear friends, the Bible teaches that if there is real faith, there will be evidence of that faith. People will see your fruit.

Now, what is the evidence that ought to be seen in our lives?.....Well, above all else, I believe, it is the fruit of the Holy Spirit. The fruit of the Holy Spirit is LOVE...JOY...PEACE....PATIENCE...KINDNESS...GOODNESS.... FAITHFULNESS....GENTLENESS....SELF-CONTROL....If faith is real, those ^{characteristics} characteristics will be seen in your life.....

Now, I realize we christians can fall into a terrible problem. And that is to judge and evaluate the spiritual fruit of a person. And yet, the Bible teaches that if there is real faith, there will be evidence. So that, people may see it. *The evidence will be the fruit of the HS.* Let me give you an example. *Kindness*

Turn in your Bibles to the Gospel of Matthew. The Gospel of Matthew chapter 7....This is the sermon on the mount. And Jesus is speaking. Matthew chapter 7 beginning at verse 15.....~~In this passage~~ Jesus is talking about false prophets. But the principle of recognizing a false prophet is just as true about them as it is about anyone who has faith in Jesus Christ. That is...that if it is faith without works..there will be no fruit. If it is faith with works, it will be seen in the life of a person.

(Read Matthew 7:15-20)

Whose fruits?.....We would say "false Prophets"...True. ~~But~~ it can also apply to anyones life. By their fruits you will know them. It will be seen in the life. And faith without works cannot possible save a ~~person~~ *person*. Because real faith will be seen in the life of a saved person. And if there is no works there is no knowledge. Because faith produces.

Now, come back to James.....*without works* Faith cannot save a person becuse real fiath will be seen in the life of a person.

(3) Third, Vs 19....Faith without works cannot possible save a person because real faith is more than agreement to a ~~set~~ *set* of facts.

Notice, Vs 19...."You believe that God is one. You do well; the ~~devils~~ *demons* also believe and shudder."

I heard an evangelist say once, when he was speaking on the subject of "HELL"..."Most folks feel that all the atehsist are going to be in Hell, but the Bible teaches that Hell is going to be full of people who believe in God." And you know, there is some truth in that statement.

You ask a ^{person} ~~man~~ today about his faith and he says, "I believe in God." But, the Bible tells us that Hell is full of people who believe in God. That the ^{demons} ~~devils~~ believe, yet, they tremble. They have more of a fear of God than we do. (In other words, there is more to this idea of Faith than intellectually agreeing to a set of facts. Scores of people, and oh, how my heart goes out to them, scores of people simply believe the facts. But, they have never personally applied them to their lives. To let the facts change the way they live. Faith is more than agreement to a set of facts.

Please notice a key phrase in this little section of James. It appears in Vs 14. It says: "if a man says"....It appears also in Vs 16: "and one of you says"....It appears in Vs 18: "^{Someone} ~~a man~~ may ^{well say} ~~say~~."

The point is: that a man is saying these things. He is giving lip service..."professing"...but there is no "possession" of life inside. Faith without works is dead because real faith is more than intellectual ^{agreement} ~~agreement~~ to a set of facts.

^{Dear Friend} My ~~friends~~ ^{folks}, you may know everything about the gospel. You may know that you are a sinner. It doesn't take a whole lot of knowledge for that....You say, "I know I am a sinner. ^{and I know the} ~~For~~ the Bible says that I ~~have~~ sinned and come short of the glory of God."

You may know that Christ died on the corss ; and that when he died he died for the whole human race. You may know that...

You may say, "I believe that Jesus arose from the dead, ^{And} and that is fine; and you ought to because he did." And it is important and it is a guarantee that since Jesus arose from the dead we too will have life.

you may say,

"I believe that Christ is coming back again." That is right. You should believe that. The Bible teaches it over and over and over again. But, my friends, if this is merely agreement to the facts, and it has never captured your heart, *It has never changed your life*, it is faith without works. And it is dead.

And may I remind you that the eternal destiny of those who believe in God, and yet who are merely giving lip service to this belief, the eternal destiny is the same as those who deny the existence of God. *Dear* OH, FRIENDS, FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD....

(4) But there is a fourth reason why faith without works cannot save a person. According to Verses 21-25, Faith without works cannot save a person because ~~the~~ real faith will prove through works that it is genuine. We have two examples here.

First, we have the example of Abraham offering his son Issaac on the altar. Now, some folks have misunderstood this passage. They have said that this passage teaches that a man is saved BY WORKS. WRONG...IT DOESNOT SAY THAT! The passage teaches that a person is saved by faith. And then that faith will eventually be proven and tested as to whether it is real or not.

you see

According to the Bible Abraham believed God and it was accounted unto him as righteousness. *He was saved.* But, the test of offering his son Isaac on the altar when God ask him to and he was willing to do so, proved that his faith was genuine, and real. Faith without works cannot save a person because real faith will eventually prove through works that it is real.

The second illustration that James gives concerns Rahab(Vs 25). Now, Rahab was a harlot...a prostitute of the street. And yet she believed God. But, dear friends, the evidence that she really did believe God was that she was willing to endanger her own life when she helped the two spies of Joshua escape from Jericho. *And the fact that she gave up her*

life style as a prostitute.

And let me tell you, she took an alfull chance. She endangered her life. She recognized her own sin. And she believed in the Lord. But, the evidence that something real had taken place in her life was her willingness to do what she did. Faith without works cannot save a person because real faith will eventually prove thorough some action that it is real.

My friends, I don't know the test that God will bring to your life. I don't know how your faith will eventual be provedn. But, at some time, and at some period in your life, God will prove to you whether or not your faith in Him is real. Because Faith without works is dead.

(5) There is one final reason as to why Faith without works cannot save a perso
And that is, because REAL FAITH IS MORE THAN MERE PROFESSION.

Sometimes we make a mistake by asking people to merely profess their faith in the Lord Jesus. Now, I know that we must accept people by what they says. We must not judge. If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Christ, then we accept that confession. But, dear friends, God knows the heart. He knows whether or not that confession is real. And so do you.

Over on the Book of Matthew,
I would like you to turn to Matthew, please. Matthew chapter 7 verse 21.
Here, we find a tremendous example. A powerful example.

Jesus says in Vs 21..."Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord' will enter the Kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of my Father, who is in heaven.. Many will say to me on that day, "Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name cast out demons, and in your name perform many miracles? And then I will declare to them, I never knew you; depart from me, you evil doers."

*Wow! That is pretty strong ~~language~~
illustrate*

Faith without works cannot save us because real faith is more than mere profession. Jesus said that not everyone who says "Lord, Lord". Now, that is a big step. There are some people who have refused to even say "Lord." And thus acknowledge his claims ^{or} ~~in~~ their life.

But, here are people who say, "Lord, Lord." They have acknowledged him. But Jesus says that not everyone who says that will enter the kingdom of heaven. Not everyone will. In fact many will say that they have done much for God, yet he will say that I never knew you. Depart from me you who work equity. ^{Strong} ~~Some~~ words. Faith without works is dead.

~~Now, come back to James chapter 2, please. And notice Vs 26:~~ "For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead." It is not real faith at all because real faith is not merely "profession." Real faith is "procession." Real faith is trusting and relying on Jesus who lived and died and rose again, who is present with us, and who will come again. Real faith is saying that I have no hope without Jesus. So, I flee to him. And I say: "God save me."

Many times a person comes to Christ and down deep that say: "God you are pretty lucky getting me."....That is not faith...

When God talks about faith. He is talking about complete releance and trust and commitment of the whole person to one thing: that Jesus Christ died for my sins...that he paid for them on the cross....that he rose from the grave for my justification. And I trust myself to him. It is commitment. Yes, it is a belief....But, it is more than that. It is a commitment with the heart. It is a reliance on the living person of Christ ...realizing that there is no hope without Jesus.

~~My friends, faith is a reliance and trust upon Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.~~ ^{It is religion} Upon Jesus who said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the ^{Father} ~~faith~~ except through me."

And that commitment changes your life - the way you act and treat others - the things you do and say - your attitudes and your willingness to serve others through the ministries of the church.

Believing in the resurrection of Christ ^{and} trusting him to save you.

Oh, it is a simple decision, some have said. Yes, it is. But, on the other hand, it is a difficult decision, isn't it? It is simple to receive Him because God has made it so wonderful. Simply ask and we receive. But, behind the asking there is so much. There is the struggle with ourselves. There is the struggle of wondering whether we should really trust God. There is the temptations of all this world has to offer. But, God says that there is no faith and hope without works. It is dead.

My friend, if you are here today and you are giving lip service to your belief in Christ. Or, if you are depending upon your church membership for salvation or Baptism, or what every it might be...the Bible tells us that only the resurrected Christ can save us. And the moment we truly trust Him for our salvation, the moment we fall at his feet and say, "Jesus, save me"....at that moment God produces in us new life. God does it and we become new creatures. And then we have the ability to produce works that are acceptable to Him. Because God looks at our life through the resurrected power of Jesus Christ. For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."

Oh ^{We need to} ~~him~~ ^{Jesus} Flee to ~~Christ~~ ^{to} today. Receive him and trust him as ^{our} ~~your~~ saviour. And God will do everything he promised to do in your life....

Shall we close in prayer

May This be part of our vision and
Victory for 1997

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