

Work is the Demonstration of Faith

[Jas 2:18-26 ESV] 18 But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. 19 You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe--and shudder! 20 Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; 23 and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"--and he was called a friend of God. 24 You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. 25 And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? 26 For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.

I. Intro

- A. J Vernon McGee: Saving Faith can be recognized and identified by spiritual fingerprints of genuine faith.
- B. If you have a living, saving faith, you will have fruit in your life.
- C. This is as straightforward as any truth in scripture
 - 1. Not everyone who says they believe, does
 - 2. Not everyone who fits the mold has faith
 - 3. The outward appearance does not make one saved, actions of the heart matter
- D. The Psalmist King David wrote it:
 - 1. [Psa 51:15-17 ESV] 15 O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. 16 For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.
 - 2. Genuine faith comes from a genuine relationship with God

II. Text

- A. Verse 18:
 - 1. I'll show you my faith by my works
 - 2. This is the point
- B. Verse 19
 - 1. You believe God is one...A universal truth that can be seen in creation, and in the spiritual realm
 - 2. The truth of God is accepted by all...eventually
 - 3. Some have a fear of God that causes rebellion, some have a fear of God that draws us to faith.
- C. Verses 20-24
 - 1. Abraham so much believed God that it produced works
 - 2. This is the picture of faith for us.
- D. Verse 25
 - 1. Rehab also so much believed that she willingly acted on that faith
 - 2. We will also willingly act of faith
- E. Verse 26
 - 1. Faith apart from works is dead
 - 2. It doesn't exist.

III. Points

- A. Even the Demons Believe
 - 1. There is a difference between living faith and dead faith
 - 2. Living faith brings HOPE, and ACTS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS
 - 3. Dead faith is a knowledge without producing fruit of righteousness
 - 4. How do you know the difference?

- a) [Jhn 13:34-35 ESV] 34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. 35 By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”
 - b) Love is not a work that makes us righteous, but a fruit produced because we have been made righteous.
 - 5. The Lordship of Jesus is not going to be in doubt when He returns, and is not in doubt today by the people of Faith.
 - a) People of faith believe in Jesus and it produces works like Jesus
 - b) People that do not believe in Jesus do not produce works of righteousness.
- B. Faith is active along with works
 - 1. This reference is illustrated by James with the stories of Abraham and Rehab.
 - 2. Abraham:
 - a) Abraham offered his son Isaac, but the work of justification was faith, the actions were the results, fruit, of the faith.
 - b) [Heb 11:17-19 ESV] 17 By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, 18 of whom it was said, "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named." 19 He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.
 - 3. Rehab
 - a) [Heb 11:31 ESV] 31 By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.
 - b) Rehab was only righteous because of her faith that proved itself by necessary works.
 - 4. There are many more stories of Faith in Hebrews 11 and throughout the scripture, and all of them come from a genuine belief in Christ.
 - a) Old Testament: believing in the coming messiah
 - b) New Testament: believing in messiah crucified, dead, risen, and alive forevermore.
 - 5. Jesus is alive, I believe it, and it produces actions of faith!
- C. Faith apart from works is dead
 - 1. [Mar 11:12-14, 20-24 ESV] 12 On the following day, when they came from Bethany, he was hungry. 13 And seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see if he could find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. 14 And he said to it, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard it. ... 20 As they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots. 21 And Peter remembered and said to him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered." 22 And Jesus answered them, "Have faith in God. 23 Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. 24 Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.
 - 2. Genuine faith produces Eternal fruit
 - 3. Eternal fruit is from a faith that is alive and is important for the furtherance of the gospel
 - 4. Your life of faith matters so much to this world that needs to hear this truth
 - 5. Faith is alive today in the church!
 - 6. The Church is alive today in FAITH!
 - 7. Faith without works is dead, but Faith at work in the church is alive!

IV. Close

- A. Rest in the fact that Christ saved you and empowered you for good works.
- B. Serve in this power and make a difference in this world.
- C. Find confidence in Christ and Christ alone.