

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.

Nov 2017

FAITH IN ACTION: #4: DEAD OR DYNAMIC

INTRODUCTION

“I know I’m saved by grace, so I don’t have to worry about changing my conduct.” What’s wrong with this statement?

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

Read James 2:14-19

1. What is the relationship between faith and deeds?
2. How might Christians justify being a “fruit inspector?” **Gal 5:22**
3. James is taking the terms “faith” and “deeds” to an extreme to make his point. What is the principle he’s underlining in verses 15-17? **1 Jn 3:17**
4. Think of a person who lives a good life but doesn’t embrace Christ (i.e. Mormon). How would you answer this person if they said, “You have faith; I have deeds”?
5. In verse 19, how does James challenge those who only give intellectual assent to God (faith that he exists)? How might you adapt this approach with someone in that category?

Read James 2:20-26

6. James seems to contradict Paul’s statement (**Romans 4:1-5; Gal 3**) about how Abraham was made righteous. How do you reconcile these passages? **Rom 3:28; Gal 5:6; Eph 2:10**
7. How do you understand the statement, “a person is justified by what he does” (verse 24)? What does a person of true faith do – toward God and toward man? **Phil 2:12**
8. Rahab the prostitute isn’t the most obvious example to mention. But in **Hebrews 11:31** what do we learn about her? How does she illustrate this truth?
9. What is James’ bottom line (verses 17; 26)?

APPLICATION

- James began this section with a question: “What good is it if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him?” After studying this, how would you answer that?
- What is one practical way you can express your faith in doing good deeds this week: toward God, your family, or others.

When someone claims to have faith, what he or she may have is intellectual assent – agreement with a set of Christian teachings – and as such it would be incomplete faith. True faith transforms our conduct as well as our thoughts. If our lives remain unchanged, we don’t truly believe the truths we claim to believe.

– Life Application Bible notes, page 2668.

It is only a false faith that does not issue in works and that is incapable of saving. By “works” James does not have in mind the Jewish doctrine of works as a means of salvation, but rather works of faith, the ethical outworking of true piety and especially the “work of love” (see James 2:8).

– Wycliffe Bible Commentary on James 2:14.