

Faith That Works
JAMES 2:14-23

1

Faith That Works

One Main Point: Faith that doesn't bear fruit, doesn't save souls.

Faith That Works

- A rhetorical question (vs. 14) (answer: no)
- An example scenario (vss. 15-16)
 - o *sola* Christianese
 - o Rhetorical question #2 (answer: none)
- Concluding evaluation (vs. 17)
 - o Faith that *is alone*, is faith that's *not alive* (cf. vs. 26)

2

Faith That Works

A Silly Claim, a Forceful Reply

- "But faith and works *can* be separated!"
 - o Interruption by James: "Please, show me how that works—authenticate your life of faith without fruitfulness, I'll authenticate mine *by* my fruitfulness and we'll see how it goes. Only my approach will demonstrate anything about the true nature of my faith. Why, you ask?"
 - An example—the orthodox demons

3

Faith That Works

- Showing that faith without works is useless (vs. 20)
 - o What James is *not* showing:
 - How to be *saved from one's sin*
 - How to be *declared perfect in Christ* before God
 - How to *achieve or come to possess* saving faith itself
 - How *good works merit God's favor* in salvation
 - James is showing that while faith and obedience (works) can be *conceptually* separated, they can't be *actually* separated in the life of (saving) faith.

4

Faith That Works

- o Abraham, justified by works (vs. 21)
 - 'justified' and Gen. 22
 - Gr. *dikaiōō* coming out of Judaism | To discern and pronounce one to be *morally upright—righteous*—as a matter of judgment (cf. 1 Kgs. 8:31-32; Job. 1:1; Mic. 6:11; Matt. 5:20; 12:37; 25:33-40)
 - Faith + works—but to what end?
 - Gen. 15:6 | "counted to him as righteousness"
 - o *Faithfulness fulfills* faith—the *fulfillment* of faith is *faithfulness*

5

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- Gen 15:6, Gen. 22; Jas. 2:21-23 taken in tandem
 - Abraham's works were such that he could genuinely be pronounced an upright, righteous man (Gen. 15:6; Jas. 2:21-23), a kind of man who would, therefore, stand in the judgment (Ps. 1), his prior faith and God's declaration of righteousness over him (Gen. 15:6) having found its full expression in obedience.
 - o James's supporting point: Works can't be separated from faith because they both *authenticate* and *fulfill* living faith—the only kind that faith that saves from judgment.
 - The overlooked climax: a friend of God!

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Faith That Works

Practical Faith

- The folly of loving Jesus “deep down in your heart,” but nowhere else
- The folly of fruit-stapling
