



Real Faith // Real Action

#5 Faith V Works or Works from Faith

Introduction: A lot of people get confused with James in this passage thinking that they can get in God's good graces through doing good things alone. That is not what James is saying. He is simply saying that if you have faith, then there will be something to show for it. If Christ really lives in you by His Spirit, then He will want to live through you for God's purposes and His glory. Jesus image of the vine in John 15 shows that if we stay attached, fruit will grow. In fact... He expects that it will.

Play and listen to... "New Wine" - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ozGKIOzEVc>

Pray: Ask that God would have His way in you and produce fruit in keeping with repentance.

Read: James 2: 14-26

Play video: <https://youtu.be/tJ736IXCbs>

Share for 1 min each what your "take away" thought is from this video

Thoughts to share:

- Explain in your own words the difference between what Paul says in Romans 3:28 (see Ephesians 2:8-9; 2 Timothy 1:9) and James' statement in 2:14,24. How do you reconcile the faith/works issue?
- In James 2:14, James asks the tough question - after pointing out the worthlessness of a workless faith, then asks a deeper question; "can that faith save him?" (v14b). What is your answer and why?
- James illustrates workless faith in vv16-17. Compare this with 1 John 3:17-19. What is your faith like... really? What changes might you need to make in order to live your faith out?
- One person put it like this... "We are not saved **by** deeds; we are saved **for** deeds." Faith and works are then complimentary. How is your faith expressed in deeds?
- Check out Abraham (Genesis 22:1-12) and Rahab (Joshua 2:1-15) and their faith expressed. In what way does the evidence of their faith reveal the condition of their hearts?
- Someone once said that faith is like calories: you can't see them, but you can always see their results! If our actions reflect our faith, what might be included in those actions? (That is, what do we do that makes us different, and reflects our trust in God).

Consider... Like the body is lifeless without breath, so too our faith is lifeless without deeds that express our faith. Genuine faith does not exist alone; it exists in partnership with works. What are we prepared to risk losing for sake of expressing our trust in God. What have we given up in favour of our faith and witness? How do our neighbours and workmates know that we are different (apart from occasional church attendance) from a simple do-gooder in the community?

Pray... for those in your group who are still working through these decisions, for family members and friends who struggle to understand the relationship between faith and works.