

STRAIGHT TALK

Relationship Between Genuine **Faith** and **Good Works**
James 2:14-26

First, the Conclusion:

Genuine Good Works **NEVER** Lead to Salvation
BUT...
Genuine Salvation **ALWAYS** Leads to Good Works

Flow of this section: **QUESTION; EXAMPLE; CONCLUSION**

Episode One: My **FRIEND** in need vs. 14-19

Q1: Is faith **ABSENT** of good works really **GENUINE** faith? vs. 14

Ex1: Someone **POOR** and **HUNGRY** vs. 15-16

C1: Faith **ABSENT** of good works is NOT **GENUINE** vs. 17-18

MAIN POINT:

Faith that is Solely **INTELLECTUAL ASSENT** is **NOT** Saving Faith vs. 19

Episode Two: **ABRAHAM** and **ISAAC**

vs. 20-24; Genesis 15:6, 22:1-14 (key is 9-10)

Q2: Is Faith **APART** from works **USELESS?** vs. 20

Ex2: Abraham offers Isaac as a **SACRIFICE** vs. 21-23

C2: **GENUINE** Faith leads to **GOOD WORKS** vs. 24

Episode Three: **RAHAB** and the **SPIES** vs. 25; Joshua 2 (key 8-11)

Q3: Does God **JUSTIFY** based on **WORKS?** vs. 25

Ex3: Rahab **PROTECTS** the spies vs. 25

C3: Faith **APART** from works is **DEAD** vs. 26

Life Group Discussion Questions – February 23, 2025

James 2:17 *So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. (ESV)*

DISCOVER (read James 2:14-26)

1. Are you a doer or a thinker? Are you more likely to act without thinking or think without acting? Give an example.
2. What does living faith look like? What kind of works might accompany living faith? What does dead faith look like? Is dead faith a real faith? Why or why not? What warning should we take from this?
3. How can the phrase, “I will pray for you,” sometimes be a cop out? How can you make sure that you do pray for people that you say you will pray for?
4. Is it possible to believe in God and not be saved? What is the difference between saving faith and non-saving belief like the demons had? Why do the demons shudder? (see James 2:19)
5. The question: Can faith with no works save you? This question has been around a long time. Works and faith have often been at the center of debate in the church. What exactly is necessary for salvation?

EXPLORE

1. Have two members of your group role play. Have one defend the position of “faith without works” and the other, “faith with works”. What is the underlying problem here? What is the solution?
2. How does Paul’s argument in Romans 3:28 differ from James’ point in 2:24? What kind of faith is each criticizing?
3. How do Abraham (Genesis 22) and Rahab (Joshua 2) prove James’ point that faith without works is useless? Does vv. 21-26 refute the rest of the teachings in the Bible of justification by faith alone? Is this passage teaching faith by works? Then how can we reconcile the Scriptural teaching of justification by faith with these verses?
4. Which came first, Rahab’s faith or works? How do we know she had faith? Would her belief in the God of the Hebrews have saved her if she didn’t act on it?
5. Read Ephesians 2:8-10. What is the relationship between grace and works?

EXPERIENCE

1. If you were arrested for being a Christian, what evidence would be used to prove the point? From James 1:22-27 and 2:14-17, what further evidence do you want to provide this week? How can you better put your faith into practice?
2. What is our reaction when people need help? Do we truly help them out or just when it’s convenient? Discuss the implications of our actions and inactions.
3. We should evaluate our own spiritual condition by examining our fruit. Do you love sharing the gospel? Does compassion, encouragement, empowerment, speaking truth, servant leadership typify your life? Do you delight in studying God’s Word and prayer? Do you sacrifice things in your own life in order to pursue God? Now contrast these attributes with things such as attending church, being baptized, joining the choir, praying a prayer, owning a Bible, or calling yourself a Christian. How can your Life Group help you to refocus and prioritize your life?

PRAY

Father in heaven, thank You for the faithful redemptive work of Your Son. I pray that this day my efforts of any kind will demonstrate a living faith that honors Your great Name. I pray that I will not carry-out dead works but that I would demonstrate a vibrant faith, using Jesus as the model for my life journey with You. I pray in Jesus’ Name. Amen.