

PLEASANT VIEW PROCLAIMER

April 3, 2022

James: A Faith That Works Can That Faith Save Him (2:14-26)

This morning we continue our series from James, called "A Faith That Works," by looking at the latter part of chapter two where James addresses the relationship between faith and works. In 2:14 James presents two questions that tie directly back to his previous instruction to show mercy instead of partiality.

James 2:14 (ESV) - What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him?

The first question is asking about the benefit of someone saying they have faith but not works. In the context of the previous verses, this is essentially asking "can someone show mercy with only their words?" The second question simply asks, "can that faith save him?" James' answer to this question is clearly "No," but why? In the remainder of this passage, he presents three arguments for why faith without works cannot save anyone.

Argument #1 _____ (2:15-17)

This argument is very simple. Can someone's words meet another's physical need for clothing and food? Of course, the answer is "No," and is why James asks, "what good is that?" He answers his own question by stating "So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead." What does it mean if someone's faith is "dead?" (vv. 2:17, 26). Literally it means that the faith is useless, but also indicates that their faith is clearly not in God.

Argument #2 _____ (2:18-19)

The second argument begins with a back and forth with an opponent who insists that someone can have faith in God without works. James answers this by pointing to The Shema:

Deuteronomy 6:4 (ESV) - "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.

Even to this day, The Shema is considered the central statement of faith of Judaism, and is recited twice per day. However, James says reciting these words alone doesn't even bring someone above the level of the demons who

BE STRONG
and
COURAGEOUS
DO NOT BE AFRAID.
DO NOT BE DISCOURAGED,
for the
LORD YOUR GOD
will be with you
WHEREVER YOU GO
Joshua 1:9

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bible class topics

The Lord is my light and
my salvation;
Whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the strength of
my life;
Of whom shall I be afraid?
When the wicked came
against me
To eat up my flesh,
My enemies and my foes,
They stumbled and fell.
Though an army may
encamp against me,
My heart will not fear;
Though war may rise
against me,
In this will I be confident.

also “believe—and shudder!” This argument would most definitely have gotten the attention of his Jewish readers.

Argument #3 _____ (2:20-26)

This final argument points back to examples from Jewish history in the Old Testament. Both Abraham and Rahab are mentioned in Hebrews 11 because of their faith, and here James is pointing out that their faith was lived out by what they did.

What About Paul?

To some it may seem that James’ teaching here on the relationship between faith and works conflicts with Paul’s teachings (Rom 3:20, 28; 4:2; Gal 3:2). However, these two teachings are not in conflict but instead are looking at faith in Christ from two different directions. Paul beautifully ties these two concepts together in Ephesians:

Ephesians 2:8-10 (ESV) - For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

What About Us?

The obvious message for all of us is that our faith in Christ must be evident by the things we do. When I was introduced as the “Interim Pulpit Minister” back in August 2021, it was very clearly stated that “Tim will be working with us, but not for us.” The implication being that we will all be working together to fulfill the mission of the church. If we are going to work together, then we need a plan. On **April 24th** we will be holding a **church-wide meeting** to begin the process of building out this plan for the future of the Pleasant View Church of Christ. My encouragement to everyone (in view of James’ reminder) is to **(1) attend the meeting, (2) contribute to building out the plan** and **(3) take ownership of activities and go to work!**

PRAYER LIST

- **Isabel Johnson** was able to go home Thursday.
- **James Craig**, Faye Head’s brother, is out of ICU and will be going into in-patient rehab
- **Nick Phifer**, a family friend of the Reeds, has had a relapse of leukemia.
- **Chris Snoddy** is out of the hospital and doing well
- **Charles Richie** is doing better at home
- **Ethan Pennington**, Tammy’s cousin, has brain cancer
- Continue to pray for **Rosemary Douglas, Gaynell Walker, Rebecca Brown, Kristine Garrett, John Hayes, Ann Reed, Jim Sims**, and **Faye Waller**

SERVING TODAY (April 3, 2022)

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Read: M. Reed
Prayer: J. Walker

WORSHIP

Read: C. Baker
Wait On Table: D. Billingsley
Serve: D. Demonbreun, J. Buchanan
Prayer: E. Walker