

5 Just Works

James 2:14-26

It is easier said than done” is a cliché that certainly applies to our Christian life. It is much easier to talk about God than to obey him. James said, “Even the demons believe there is one God.” But that certainly does not make them Christians! That’s why someone can have all his doctrine perfectly straight and still have missed out on God’s will. James helps us stay on target.

1. What are some ways we don’t put actions behind our words?

2. Read James 2:14-26. According to James, what good is faith without deeds (vv. 14-17)? Explain why.

3. What objection does James anticipate (v. 18)?

How does he answer it (vv. 18-19)?

4. Why is mere intellectual agreement to truth not enough (v. 19)?

5. James gives two Old Testament examples of faith in action. The first is the familiar story of God testing Abraham by asking him to sacrifice his son Isaac. Abraham obeyed but was stopped by an angel at the last minute (see Gen 22). How was Abraham’s faith made complete by what he did (2:21-24)?

6. The second example is Rahab, the prostitute who hid two Israelite spies sent to Jericho before Israel’s attack (see Josh 2). How did Rahab’s belief affect her (Jas 2:25)?

7. How do your actions demonstrate the reality of your faith?

8. How does James's closing analogy (v. 26) summarize his teaching on faith and actions?

9. Does James ever say that works without faith can save? What does this imply about faith?

10. In what ways can you bring your actions more in line with your beliefs?

11. Talk to God about ways he can lead you into a more consistent Christian life.

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