

JAMES

A Faith That Works

Study 8

Faith without Works is Dead

James 2:14-26

James 2:14-26

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds."

Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.

You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend. You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone.

In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

1) a) Fill in the blanks. Fill in the blanks on types of Semantics according to the slide in the video lecture.

Semantics	Univocal	Equivocal	Analogical
How many meaning?	One meaning all the time	Two or more meanings	Partly the same, partly different
Examples	"Tasty" Meaning: yummy Same meaning whether "tasty"	"Bark" Meaning: i) tree's skin ii) dog's vocal sound	"Good" Meaning: a positive attribute i) God is "good"

	breakfast or “tasty” dessert		ii) Grapes are “good”
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b) Fill in the blanks. In James 2:24 and Romans 3:28,4:3-5 , there are three words there are used in an Equivocal manner: “justify, faith and works”

i) “Justify”

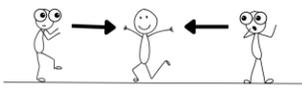
Justified				
Author	Verse	Illustration	Difference of meaning	Relation to who?
Paul	Romans 4:2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not <u>before God.</u>		Made right in the eyes of God	Man’s relationship with God
James	James 2:24 You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. James 2:18 But someone will say, “You have faith; I have deeds.” <u>Show me</u> your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds.		Proven right in the eyes of man, Demonstrating, vindicating a claim	Man’s relationship with the world

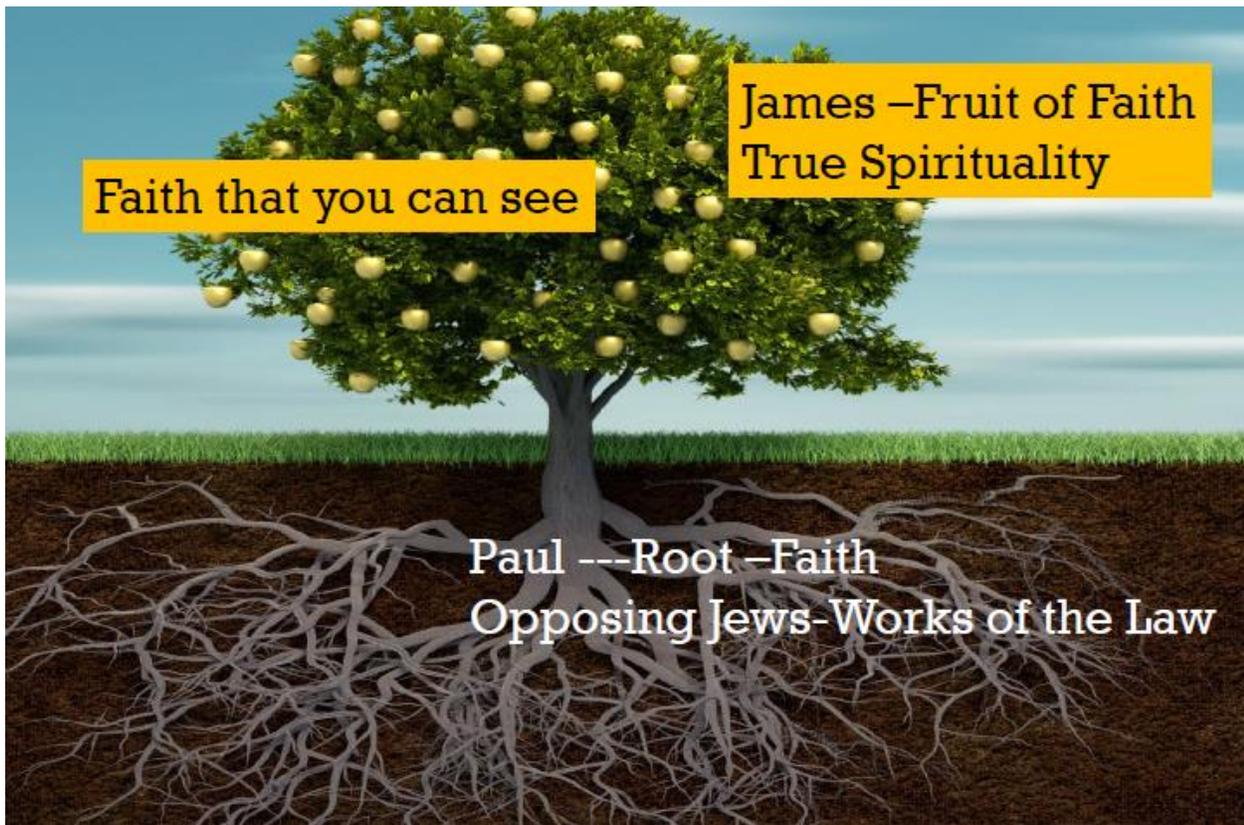
ii) "Faith"

Faith				
Author	Verse	Illustration	Difference of meaning	Relation to who?
Paul	Romans 4:5 However, to the one <u>who does not work but trusts God</u> who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness.		Genuine saving faith in God	Man's relationship with God
James	James 2:14 What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but <u>does not have works</u> ? Can that faith save him?		Professing faith in the eyes of men	Man's relationship with the world

ii) "Works"

Works				
Author	Verse	Illustration	Difference of meaning	Relation to who?
Paul	Romans 3:20 Therefore no one will be declared righteous <u>in God's sight</u> by the works of the law ; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin.		Works of the law towards God	Man's relationship with God

James	James 2:20 <u>Do you want to be shown</u> , you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless?		Works (evidence) of faith towards men	Man's relationship with the world
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c) Fill in the blanks. Fill in the author's intention when they wrote the instruction according to the video lecture.

Verse	Romans 3:28 For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.	James 2:24 You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone.
Author	Paul	James
Justified=	Justified :-Pronounced righteous in the sight of God	Use justified to mean proved righteous in the sight of others

Author's Intention	Shows how unbeliever becomes a Christian	Shows how believer lives as a Christian
Emphasis	 Root of salvation	 Fruit of salvation
Direction	Stresses inward disposition	Stresses outward action
Demonstrates	Demonstrates God's part with human participation	Demonstrates human part with God's help

James 2:14-18

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds."

Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds

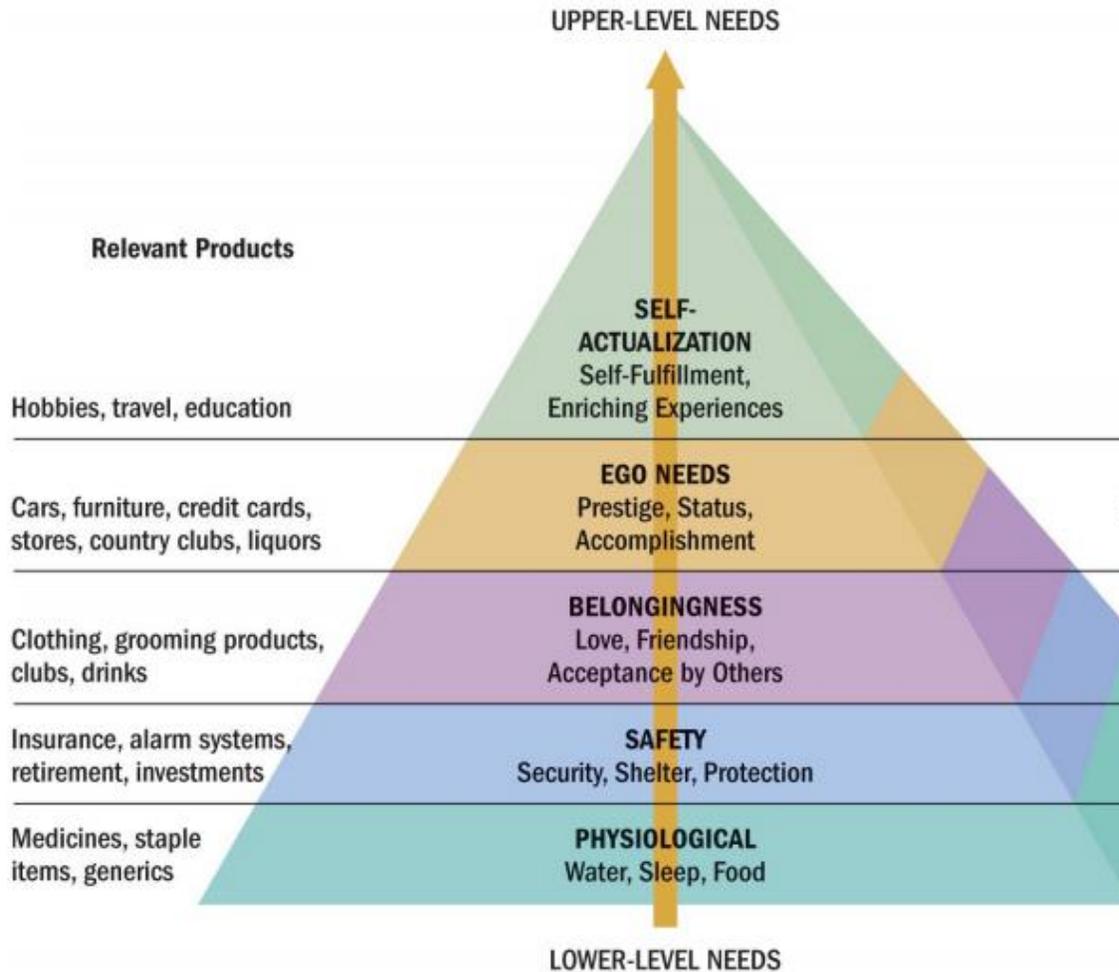
2) a) Reflection question. Reflect on James 2:14-17 and James 1:22-23, do you see a tension between belief and action in your life?

Quick Verse Reference

James 1:22-23

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror.

Background information



b) Discussion question. Refer to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory in the image above, what would you classify the reference in James v16 of 'physical need'? Verse 14 "without clothes and daily food" can help you.

vi) Check the boxes. Which of the following are you personally willing to provide for the different categories of people in your life.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs	Physiological need (food, water, clothing, medicine)	Safety and security (healthcare, insurance, rent for houses)	Belongingness (inviting them to spend time together, whether in God's words or other activities)	Ego needs (car, furniture, branded items, branded handbags)	Self-actualization (hobbies, travelling, high tier education)
Strangers					
Acquaintance					
Colleagues					
A Christian brother /sister					
Friends					
Close Friends					
Relatives					
Immediate family					

James 2:19-20

You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.

You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless?

3) Discussion question. What is James saying about the demon's belief in God?

James 2:21-26

Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend.

You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone.

In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead

4) Discussion question. What is the difference between Abraham and Rahab and what did the both have in common?

Takeaway

Even though we are saved by faith not works, works are evidence of authentic faith. So Christians who have little or no fruits or labour of love have to check whether their root is healthy planted to God, our source of love.

Case Study

Case 1 – Works produced by Faith

Janine Leong goes to Third Baptist Church, and is a financially independent woman in her forties. She hangs around middle-class friends in church and rarely met any poor people personally.

Then she decided to volunteer in Soup Kitchen and Hopeful Ministry and met a lot of people who came to her with financial need.

1) a) Discussion question. Below are a list of people Janine met.

Case 1.1 – Ah Hock

The first person Janine met is called Ah Hock. Ah Hock said he is in financial need. When asked on the details of the financial need, he says he needs money to renew his Astro subscription. He says that the Astro subscription is to keep his elderly parents occupied at home.

i) If you are Janine, would you help Ah Hock?

Case 1.2 – Benny

Janine met Benny. Benny is a working man and the sole bread winner of his family. He says he needs money to invest in BeatCoins. He says it has potential to see returns in a month's time and he just need some help for the capital to invest so he can feed his family.

ii) If you are Janine, would you help Benny?

Case 1.3 – Christine

Janine met Christine. Christine says that her newborn baby cannot tolerate normal milk or even breast milk and need a specially formulated milk. She needs money to buy that milk.

iii) If you are Janine, would you help Christine?

Case 1.4 – Deva

Janine met Deva. Deva works as a part time maid in an office. She says she needs money to buy stationeries, school uniform and shoes for her 6 kids for the new school semester.

iv) If you are Janine, would you help Deva?

Case 1.5 – Edwin

Janine met Edwin. He says he has mouth cancer and needs money for the treatment. He wants to have the best treatment that is only available in China and needs money for the flight as well as the treatments from the private doctors there.

v) If you are Janine, would you help Edwin?

Case 1.6 – Fiona

Janine met Fiona. Fiona is an elderly lady who wants a second pair of dentures. She cried in front of Janine for an hour and says she eats rice with sauces every day and had no money to buy meat and vegetables because she has no income.

Janine decided to bring Fiona to a government dental clinic and paid RM50 to make a new pair of dentures. When the dentist asked Fiona what was wrong with the current dentures, she said it was loose and caused her trouble chewing meat and vegetables.

vi) If you are Janine, how would you respond?

vii) Discussion question. What is the apostle James expecting from us in terms of helping out the poor? Is it too much?

c) Reflection question. Do you think spending more time reading the Bible, praying more regularly, and sharing the gospel with people who don't believe in God can strengthen your own love towards God and others?

d) Reflection question. What can you do this week that would demonstrate your faith and the love of Jesus?