



7/31/25

There's an old song by Rich Mullins that says, "Faith without works is like a song you can't sing. It's about as useless as a screen door on a submarine." It reminds me of today's passage. It's a fun song. Here's the link if you'd like to hear it

~ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hmhN5X4dxYM>

*Blessings,
Jonna*

James 2:14-26

What is genuine faith and how is it lived out? From Hebrews 11:1 and 6, I learn 3 aspects of faith.

- 1. Faith is putting my full CONFIDENCE in the Lord. That is what biblical hope is... confident expectation.*
- 2. Faith is being absolutely convinced that He is who He says He is, even though I can't see Him.*
- 3. Faith is being COMMITTED to draw near to God and seek Him... because I know that He is real and that He rewards me for trusting Him.*

When I have genuine faith, it changes me. "A faith that saves you is a faith that changes you." This is what James stresses in James 2:14-26. The truth is... works without faith have zero value for earning my righteousness. AND faith without works is not genuine faith... How do I know that my faith is real? My faith will be put into action.

Vs. 14-17 ~ True faith will affect how I care for others. I know that works don't save me... only faith in Jesus. But if my faith isn't growing in compassion for others, it's not real faith. To tell someone in need that I wish them well, while refusing to help provide for their needs, do I really have faith? Did Jesus wish people well but walk away from their needs? He fed

thousands of people. He healed the sick. He raised the dead.

Obviously, I can't miraculously feed thousands or raise the dead... but I CAN be looking for how God wants to use me with the gifts and resources He's given me to care for the people He places in my path. This takes me looking outside myself, being eager to serve the Lord by serving people who are made in His image (that's everyone). What is my motivation? Gratitude... I was in desperate need... not just for physical food and clothing... but for the Bread of Life, the Living Water to nourish my soul. I was in desperate need to be clothed in the righteous robe of Jesus. He saw my need and He met my need. O Lord, please help me to do the same for others, motivated by gratitude for what You've done for me. And help me to trust that You will provide what I need in order to care for others just as You provided the bread for the disciples to give to the 5000 in John 6. James 1:27 says, "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world." Please help me to actively and eagerly do this... not because I HAVE to, but because I WANT to.

Vs. 18-19 ~ True faith is not just acknowledging who God is but being the hands and feet of Jesus. "Even the demons believe - and shudder!" Demons know that God is who He is, and that there is only ONE God... and they're terrified because they are deeply aware that their time is running short. To believe ONLY that there is a God, but NOT let it affect how I live, is to have less faith than demons. Whoa!!!

Vs. 20-25 ~ Works without faith is useless because they're done for self-honor rather than God-honor. So also, "faith apart from works is useless." It is the same as what James said in chapter 1, that if I only hear the word but don't put it into action, I deceive myself. Somehow saying I have faith without putting it into action makes me feel good about myself, but it's worthless.

What about Abraham? "He believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness." Does this statement that faith without works is dead contradict what God said about Abraham's faith??? Not at all. He put his faith into action when he offered his son Isaac on the altar in obedience to God. He was convinced that God would either stop him from sacrificing his son or raise him from the dead because God had promised that Abraham would be the father of many nations THROUGH ISAAC. Not only did this incredible trust please God, but Abraham was called "a friend of God." Jesus said to the disciples in John 15:14, "You are My friends if you do what I command you." That's what Abraham did... he obeyed God because he believed God... and God called him a friend.

What about Rahab? When Israelite messengers went into Jericho to check it out before attempting to overtake it, the people of Jericho searched for them to kill them. Rahab believed that their God was the one and only true God. AND she acted on that faith. She protected the Israelites and sent them out of Jericho in a direction where they wouldn't get caught. God saw her faith put into action and He protected her and her family when "Joshua fought the battle at Jericho... and the walls came a tumblin' down."

How much did God bless Rahab for her faith in action? She married one of the Israelites who protected her and her family... Salmon. They gave birth to Boaz, who married Ruth, who gave birth to Jesse, who was the father of David... whose bloodline eventually gave birth to JESUS! The Gentile prostitute Rahab was in the lineage of JESUS! How cool is that!!!

Who gets blessed more by putting their faith into action? God or me? Definitely ME! God takes my actions based on faith and lavishes me with His blessings.

Vs. 26 ~ What is the bottom line? "For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead." My faith is like my physical body... unable to move or do anything unless my body has a spirit. My works mean nothing if they are not housed in the body of my faith... but as it is with my body and my spirit, my faith and my works are intertwined... By my faith intertwined with my actions I prove out that God has justified me and given me life. Through my faith lived out in my actions, I can actually be called a friend of God.

Father, please continue to perfect the faith You've placed in me. Help me to live it out in my actions... by how I care for others and by how I obey You. Amen.