



“Faith Is An Action Word”

James 2:14-26

Sermon by Tom Ellsworth, May 13, 2012
(also available online at socc.org)

We hope you will enjoy spending more time thinking and talking about the topics that we hear on Sundays during the sermons. **Feel free to simply think about and discuss what you heard and were challenged by.** Or you may use these questions as a guide or to supplement your conversations.

1. James himself asked the first question for us. “What good is it, my brothers, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds?” Is this a rhetorical question? Or is the answer debatable?
2. And he asks, “Can such faith save them?”
3. What makes it so tempting at times to focus on and strengthen our faith compared to doing deeds?
4. Some have indicated that an emphasis on doing good deeds to “prove” or “earn” your salvation might eventually cause some to then *avoid* doing good deeds for fear of being wrongly motivated. What experiences or observations have you had in this area?
5. What is the difference between *believing* in the one true God...and actually *following* Him? (see verse 19.)
6. Are faith *and* works both attributes of a Christ follower? How strong are you in each of these areas?

James 2

¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them?

¹⁵ Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. ¹⁶ 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? ¹⁷ In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

¹⁸ 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. ¹⁹ You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.

²⁰ You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? ²¹ Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? ²² You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. ²³ 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. ²⁴ You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone.

²⁵ 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? ²⁶ As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead