

# A Workless Faith Is A Worthless Faith

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[ 0 : 00 ] If you have a Bible with you, I want you to take your Bibles and turn, if you would, to a little New Testament book that goes by the name of its author.

! New Testament books go by the name of their authors. This one happens to be authored by the brother of Jesus. All right, now you're thinking in your mind.

Technically, not as full brother, but half brother. You know, same mother, different father. And what New Testament book would that be? Well, before you answer, there are two possibilities.

James or Jude. All right, both were the half brothers of Jesus. But what I want us to look at this morning is the larger of the two books.

And that would be James. All right, so take your Bibles and open to the book of James. And our text for this morning is James chapter 2.

[ 1 : 19 ] And I want to read verses 14 all the way to the end of that chapter, verse 26. So James 2.14 through 26. What does it profit?

Or some of your versions might have. What good is it? Or what use is it? My brethren? If someone says he has faith but does not have works, can faith save him?

If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, Depart in peace, be warmed and filled. But you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?

But it's also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, you have faith and I have works.

Show me your faith without works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that there is one God you do well. Even the demons believe and tremble.

[ 2 : 29 ] But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?

Do you see that faith was working together with his works? By works, faith was made perfect. And the scripture was fulfilled, which says, Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

And he was called the friend of God. You see then, that a man is justified by works and not by faith only. Likewise was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way?

Whereas the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. Familiar passage.

If you have read James very much over the years or studied it yourself, heard sermons on it, you know. This is a very familiar, very famous passage in James.

[ 3 : 40 ] And so, based upon this passage, not very difficult to figure out my subject. And I guess I could identify the subject in a word.

Work. Work. Work. Is that a word you like to hear? Work. Is that a word that engenders excitement in your heart and in your mind?

And just the bare mention of the word work, does it get the juices flowing inside of you and giving rise to, you know, great levels of energy?

Just overflowing in your life? Just overflowing in your life? You know, just the name of the word work. Really exciting word, isn't it? Something we love to hear.

Or, and I think probably we would all fit under this category, does just the mention of the word make you feel tired all over? I got out of my yard yesterday.

[ 4 : 44 ] Today, Sherry and I both, and we worked ourselves to a frazzle trying to clean up the place. You know, this year, I don't know what it is. Maybe some of you can give me the scientific explanation.

But the webworms. Unbelievable. And, of course, I have pecan trees. We have pecan trees in our yard. And so we've got those things. Some of our trees are almost totally engulfed by them. And that's bad enough. You know, very unsightly. Perhaps maybe perfect for Halloween. I don't know. But the filth of those things is all over my roof.

So our job yesterday was really from the tip of our house all the way to the yard and every part of it to clean up the filth. And we worked ourselves to death.

And right now, I'm just kind of sore. And I don't really want to hear the word work. Okay? Well, I'm sorry. But that's what I'm going to have to preach this morning.

[ 5 : 40 ] Work. And so we have kind of various reactions in our minds about this word work. And, you know, to some extent, I think all of us would agree that work is something fulfilling.

And we do, to some measure, enjoy work. At least we enjoy what it accomplishes and maybe the financial benefits of it and all that kind of stuff. But by and large, I think we would admit that work is not one of our favorite subjects and certainly not one of our favorite activities.

When the employees of a Detroit business office showed up for work one Monday morning, they all noticed the following important memo that had been kind of attached to the bulletin board.

And it read as follows. The management regrets that it has come to their attention that workers dying on the job are failing to fall down.

This practice must stop as it becomes impossible to distinguish between death and the natural movement of the staff. Any employee found dead in an upright position will be dropped from the payroll.

[ 6 : 50 ] Work. Work. Not one of our favorite subjects. Not an exciting subject. And yet, you would have to agree that it is a necessary subject.

Not just necessary in the larger context of life itself. But necessary in the context of the spiritual life. The life with Christ and for Christ.

Our lives as believers. It's a necessary subject. And the Bible does address it and teaches on it a number of places in Scripture. And specifically, it teaches on the subject of good works.

Right? Or we could even use the word righteous. Righteous works. And you may have noticed as I read the passage this morning, notice the redundancy, the redundant use of the word works in this passage.

I mean, in 13 verses. And I know you didn't count them up, but you can go back and count them. In 13 verses, James uses the word works no less than 12 times.

[ 8 : 05 ] 12 times. And what's even more significant than that is that 10 times, in these 13 verses, 10 times in the passage, James mentions faith and works together.

Now, that's significant. That's important to note. Because you see, according to James, and we can just kind of put it all together right here at the beginning. According to James, genuine faith, not talking about practical faith, but saving faith.

That genuine faith is what activates good works. And good works is what validates genuine faith. Genuine saving faith. That's clearly what he's teaching here. That's it in a nutshell. And that's what we need to learn from this particular passage. And so you see, faith and works, not just to James, but other places in Scripture, faith and works are so interconnected that according to James, a workless faith is a worthless faith.

Let me say that again. A workless faith is a worthless faith. Now, may I be perfectly honest with you, church, this morning.

[ 9 : 32 ] Your pastor is one who believes that every believer, every child of God, therefore every member of the local church, should be serving the Lord in some way or another.

We should all be serving the Lord. I believe every believer ought to be serving the Lord in one way or another. Now, don't misunderstand me.

Your works of righteousness or good works must, of course, extend beyond just the ministry of this church. I'm not just talking about works that are related only within the context of the church.

And James isn't talking about that either. Because, you see, but every member of the church should be involved in his church, serving his church in some capacity or another.

Now, most of you here in this room, and I almost feel like I'm speaking to the choir, you get that. In fact, many of you in this room are serving the Lord in multiple ways.

[ 10 : 32 ] Multiple ways. Number of ways. Maybe too many ways. But don't back off, okay? We're in trouble if you do. But we need all to be serving the Lord in one way or the other.

And among other things, we can learn that from this particular passage. See, contrary to what has become, I think, the Western mindset concerning the church, the church is not about me or you. It's not about us. Not about me personally. It's not about the church doing something for you and meeting all the needs of your family.

Now, hopefully we can find that here in the church. And the church is about that. But first and foremost, the church is about Jesus. About Him. And specifically worshiping Him and serving through His church.

And so first and foremost, church is not about getting. It's about giving. It's about giving of yourself. [11:43] It's about giving of your gifts and your talents. And yes, your resources for the kingdom. For the work of the gospel in this kingdom. It is about giving.

Giving. And so it is in the giving. And this is a principle that I think many of God's people, especially in our country and in the West and this culture, have missed this.

They've forgotten this. And it's this. It is in the giving that we get. And we get what we need. First and foremost.

And so on this Sunday for emphasizing getting connected. Getting connected to the ministries of the church. We should consider what James teaches us about the relationship between faith and works.

Which is obviously a lesson that goes much broader to the fullest extent. Beyond just simply serving your church through its various ministries.

[12:44] We need to learn this lesson about faith and works. And I want us to consider four truths about this from the text. And the first of these really is meant to address a theological controversy.

I can't preach on this passage and teach on this passage without addressing this issue. Even if it's an issue that you're not aware of.

We need to first consider a certain theological controversy. About this passage. And so number one. What I want to call a supposed contradiction. That's number one if you take notes.

A supposed contradiction. And so the first point of my sermon this morning focuses on something that is essentially outside of the text.

Outside of this particular passage. And my purpose is twofold. First of all to inform. To inform so that you would understand the controversy about this passage and know the truth.

[13:46] But second to introduce. My purpose is to introduce you to the real heart of the subject of this passage in James chapter 2.

Now perhaps you already know that the controversy centers on the supposed contradiction between James on the one hand and on the other hand the apostle Paul.

The controversy concerning what the two have written in scripture. And there are those who would then say that James teaches a doctrine of salvation by works.

They would say that's what he's teaching. And then they would say that Paul on the other hand is teaching a doctrine of salvation by faith. So salvation by works. That's what James is teaching here. And salvation by faith. That's what Paul is teaching here. There are those who would see that. And say this is an extreme contradiction. And have difficulty reconciling. And the two passages they point to are James chapter 2 verse 24.

[14:48] Where James says you see then that a man is justified by works and not by faith only. That's what he says in verse 24. But then they point to Romans chapter 3 and verse 28.

Where Paul says therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law. Well, you know, admittedly that seems to be a contradiction.

It appears to be a contradiction. And worse than that, it seems to say that James is on the wrong side of scripture. Teaching a salvation by works.

A works salvation. That's pretty serious. But I assure you that there is no problem with what James says. And therefore there is no contradiction.

And so therefore no controversy. No contradiction here. And so we need to understand what is being said here. And understand about this supposed contradiction.

[15:51] In the first place, James was writing from a separate set of circumstances. You need to understand that. Than the circumstances Paul was writing under.

Two different sets of circumstances. And let me just tell you what they were. Paul was combating a certain doctrine that was infiltrating the church in the day.

That was really threatening to destroy the church. The early church. The first century church. And it was what the Bible calls. Or what is called Judaizers. Paul was writing concerning the Judaizers. That had infiltrated the New Testament church. That basically taught. That to be a good Christian. You had to be a good Jew. First. First.

not a good Jew in the sense of obeying all the works of the law, the old covenant laws, then if you don't do that, then you're not a Christian. The Judaizers, and Paul was addressing that.

[17:18] That was the set of circumstances that Paul was writing under and addressing. James, on the other hand, was not combating the Judaizers.

I guess in a word, the technical word would be that he was combating the antinomians. You say, what are they? What were they? Well, they still exist today, by the way.

Antinomians, anti, that means against, right? Nomians, or from the Greek word *nomos*, meaning law, so they were those who were against the law. Against the Old Testament law.

Any part of it, including the Ten Commandments. And so, he was addressing the extreme opposite of theological problems in the church. And it was basically teaching that I'm saved, and so now I can live any way I want to.

That's antinomianism. By the way, does that exist still today? You bet it does. I don't have to be concerned about anything in the Old Testament.

[18:23] I'm New Testament. I'm saved. I'm free. I'm liberated, and so I can live any way I want to. I have my salvation, and I can never lose it. That's antinomianism.

And that was the issue that James was addressing in the church. James, by the way, was the leader of the Jerusalem church. All right, so James and Paul wrote out of separate circumstances. That's the first thing we need to know. Second, we also have to consider the specific context that each one wrote in.

The context of these two verses. One in James, the other in Romans. And really, with that said, the kind of specialized connotation attached to the words that each one used in common.

Because they both used the word works, and they both used the word justified. But they had different connotations. A different sense of the word. So the first one is the word works.

[19:22] Paul uses the word works in reference to the works of the Jewish law. Remember the set of circumstances. Those who said you had to obey the Old Testament law in order to be saved.

And so Paul uses the word works in that context in reference to the Jewish law, the Old Testament law, such as circumcision. In fact, if you'll look at that passage where the controversy exists, a broader view will reveal that Paul is addressing the issue of circumcision.

Those are the works that he's talking about. That many were thinking they were saved by. And yet Paul says you're not saved by the works of the law. You're saved by grace through faith.

So the word works. Different connotation in which Paul uses it. And so salvation, the issue he was addressing, salvation comes by keeping all the works of the Mosaic law.

And so he's addressing works in that sense. Now James, on the other hand, uses the word works in reference to works that come out of faith. That come out from true faith.

[20:36] Works, faith, obedience, love, kindness, working to help others and serving the Lord. He was writing from that perspective.

He uses the works in that sense. And so he's talking about the believers' works in obedience to God that are motivated by genuine faith that they have and love that they have for God.

So works in that sense. Different connotation. Different context. Second, we have the word justified. And perhaps the controversy really centers more on that word than the word works.

And even the combination of the two. The word justified. That's a great theological word. And so Paul uses the word justified. James uses the word justified.

But Paul uses it in a different sense. In fact, it is in a technical sense. Theological sense. He uses the word justified in reference to the unique, saving work of God.

[21:41] Whereby he justifies the sinner. We're justified by faith. Whereby God places the believer in Christ. And places the believer in a position before him of justification.

Where all sin is obliterated. And that one who is saved is seen by God as just.

As righteous. As righteous as Christ. That's the technical use of the term justified. And that's what Paul is talking about. He uses it in a theological sense.

Justification by faith. The great battle cry of the Reformation. And then James, though, uses the word justified in a completely practical sense.

Not a theological sense. But in a practical sense. He uses the word justified in reference to the works of man. The works of man.

[ 22 : 46 ] My works. Your works. As believers. Whether it's in our lives spiritually. Or works in the context of the church. He's talking about works of man.

A practical sense. So, then, in one sense, God justifies. But in the other sense, man justifies. In those two ways.

That is, God declares man's justification by grace alone through faith alone. But then man vindicates his justification.

He validates it. He proves it to be real. How? By works. By good works. And so, here's the bottom line.

Paul says we are saved by faith alone. And he's right. Praise the Lord. Saved by faith alone. No. But then James says, yes.

[ 23 : 47 ] That's right. But the faith that saves is not alone. It's not alone. Or it's not true faith.

And so, a workless faith is a worthless faith. So, now, that's the theological and the controversy of this. This supposed contradiction.

And that kind of introduces us to what James' subject is. And that's what we need to see. Not what Paul was talking about. But what James is talking about in relation to faith and works.

And so, let's see what he has to say about that. So, we have the supposed contradiction. But then, second, I want you to notice a serious conversation. We need to have a serious conversation about this.

The relationship of faith and works. And that's kind of James' approach here. He puts it kind of in the form of a conversation. In the next few verses, James makes his argument concerning the relationship of faith and works by using a common literary technique that's still used even today.

[ 24 : 53 ] He presents it in the form of a kind of conversation. A conversation. A theoretical, kind of hypothetical conversation with some unnamed person.

Or persons. I don't know if you noticed that in there. But this is how he presents it. In verse 14, he says, If someone said... So, he's kind of referring to someone saying or giving an alternate view. In verse 18, he says, But someone will say... So, you see, this is a kind of hypothetical conversation between two positions. James presents this back and forth dialogue with some kind of antagonist with an opposing view.

And so, look how James presents the truth using this technique. Verse 14. Look at verse 14. What does it profit? James asks. What does it profit?

What good is it? If someone says... That's what you ought to key in on. That word says. If someone says he has faith.

[ 26 : 01 ] But does not have works. You see, he says he has faith. And really, anyone can say that. Right? There are a lot of people who say that.

That they have faith. But James says that faith, true faith, is something you see. It's something that's proven.

Something that is evidenced by behavior. In other places, the Bible writers use the word fruit. But it's a behavior.

It's works. And so, look at it. Look at what he says. What good is it? What use is it? What does it profit you, my brethren? So, he's speaking to believers here.

What does it profit if someone says he has faith but does not have works? And then, this question. Can faith save him?

[ 27 : 02 ] That's an interesting question. And our first kind of response is, well, yes. Faith can save him. But the implied answer to this is no.

Well, how can that be? How can that be? I mean, what's he asking here? Can faith save him? Well, I would tell you that in the Greek text, there is a definite article just before the noun faith.

The article. Definite article. The. And it's not translated in our English version because it would be really awkward. And if you would study Greek, you'd realize that nearly every noun in the Greek text has the definite article before it.

And we wouldn't speak that way. We wouldn't write that way. We wouldn't say the before every noun. And so it's left out of the translation. But it is important to note that there is a definite article.

So what is James actually saying? He is really saying, can the faith he says he has save him?

That's the idea.

[ 28 : 13 ] Someone says he has faith. And James says, can the faith he says he has save him? Or can we even translate it. Can that kind of faith.

Save him. What kind of faith? A workless. A workless faith. A faith that produces no works. Can that faith.

Save him. And the implied answer, of course, is what? No. That's the answer James is wanting us to get. No. That's not the kind of faith it saves.

Now we're not working to be saved. It's faith. But it's a faith that produces works. That's the kind of faith genuine faith is. And this is what James is having this conversation about.

And making his point through that kind of technique. A conversation about a serious conversation about faith and works. And the works that prove it.

[ 29 : 15 ] See, because talk is cheap, isn't it? And we can talk all we want to. And so James backs that up with an illustration. Look at verse 15. If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food.

And one of you says to them, depart. That is, go in peace. Be warm. Be filled. Could you imagine that scenario? Be warm. Be filled.

But you do not give them the things which are needed for the body. What does it profit? That is, what good is it? What good is that?

That's just talk. And so verse 17. Thus, or even so, faith. So there's the illustration. Here's the application. Faith, that is the faith you say you have.

If it does not have works, it's dead. It's dead. Now, it doesn't use dead in the sense of something that was alive and now it's dead.

[ 30 : 18 ] And so, therefore, we could lose our salvation. You're not talking about that. The word dead is nekros in the Greek. And it just means lifeless, barren, worthless. Bain.

Of no value. It's a faith that is not true saving faith. It's worthless faith. And so, then James gets back to his conversation.

Conversation with this kind of hypothetical antagonist. And so, verse 18. But someone will say, you have faith and I have works.

And it's almost as if James imagines someone in the crowd raising a hand and saying, Pastor James, clarification, please.

What about the one who has the gift of faith? And the one who has the gift of works? What about that?

[ 31 : 17 ] I mean, God gives different gifts to each person within the body of Christ. You know, some gift of faith, some the gift of works and so forth. Some faith work of gifts and some more practical gifts.

And so, I mean, doesn't God give different gifts? So, how can you, James, criticize the one who has the gift of faith and say that that person's faith is worthless? And James responds, really his response is, I'm not talking about spiritual gifts.

That's not the subject. I'm not talking about faith in the sense of the practical side of faith in the life of the believer. I'm talking about saving faith.

True saving faith. And real saving faith is shown to be real by works. That's what he's talking about. And so he says in verse 18, Show me your faith without works. And so, really, actually, if you read between the lines, he's saying, I dare you. Because it's impossible.

[ 32 : 29 ] Show me your faith without works. This so-called faith you say you have. Show it to me without works. It's impossible. And then he says, and I will show you my faith by my works.

By my works. Again, it's impossible to prove any measure of faith you say you have without showing it by works.

Without pointing to the resulting works. And so James says, I will show you my saving faith by my works. This is a serious conversation that he's having with some hypothetical person, some antagonist, someone with an alternate view.

He's just kind of putting it together there so that we can see the argument clearly about faith and works. And then as we go a little further, it is as if James anticipates his antagonist.

What he's thinking. Kind of like saying, I know what you're thinking. You're thinking that true faith is proved or evidenced by what you believe.

[ 33 : 44 ] By your correct doctrine. By what you believe about God specifically. That's not the proof of true saving faith. It never has been.

It never has been. Correct doctrine is not the proof of salvation. Dear people. Now I hope you have correct doctrine. That doesn't prove you're saved. You say, well, why not?

Well, because the devil has correct doctrine. Isn't that what James says? He's anticipating the objection of this hypothetical antagonist.

Oh, you think that believing rightly is the proof of salvation. But he says in verse 19, You believe that there is one God.

Great. You do well. But even the demons believe that. And they shudder.

[ 34 : 49 ] They're terrified. They tremble. They have right doctrine. They're not saved. They're not saved. They're not saved. See, you can be as straight as a gun barrel.

Theologically. And yet be lost as a goose. Because doctrine, theology, is not the proof of salvation. It's not the proof of true faith.

So there is the supposed contradiction, which is not a contradiction at all. And then there is this serious conversation that James uses to make the argument.

The relationship between faith and works. And then third, a scriptural confirmation. He turns to scripture.

Verse 20. But do you know? Do you want to know? Or do you want to be shown? Oh, foolish person. He's kind of referring to that hypothetical person out there.

[ 35 : 54 ] You want to be shown, oh, foolish person, that faith without works is dead? You want me to prove it? Want me to show that to you? Well, I'll show it to you. And so James offers a scriptural confirmation of this truth about faith and works.

And he does so from the Old Testament. And he provides two examples. Abraham and Reh. Two very well-known examples.

Abraham, certainly the most well-known of the two. And he begins with Abraham. Abraham, verses 21 to 23. Look at it again. Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?

He wasn't saved by works. Was his faith validated by his works? That's what he means. Was he not? Do you see that faith was working together with his works?

And by works, faith was made perfect? Proven to be real? And pure? And the scripture was fulfilled.

[ 36 : 58 ] What God said about Abraham is true. Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness. All right. So this is the illustration from Abraham.

And James brings together two events in Abraham's life that are recorded in scripture. Two very key events. His saving faith and his working faith. Though he begins with the working faith to prove the saving faith in his line of reasoning here.

But I want to begin with Abraham's saving faith. What does James say about that? Well, he refers to Genesis chapter 15 and verse 6. Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

That he was saved. How was Abraham saved? By faith. By faith. You can go to other places in scripture and find that very clearly.

Saved by faith. And so he refers to that in Genesis 15. And he believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness.

[ 38 : 02 ] What did Abraham believe, by the way? He believed God's covenant. That's what is referred to here in Genesis 15. He believes the promise that God made.

The plan God promised through Abraham. Very much the same as what we believe when we believe the gospel. God's promise to us.

His plan for us. We believe that. And this is what Abraham believed and he was saved. So we have Abraham's faith. Then we have Abraham's working faith.

His working faith. And again, he begins with that to prove the other. And so we've kind of reversed the order here in our understanding. Trying to understand what James' point is. And so think about what James says about his working faith.

James references Genesis 22 and verse 12. That's how we know the working faith came after the saving faith. Because Genesis 22 comes after Genesis 15.

[ 39 : 01 ] Alright? So it didn't begin with Abraham's working faith and then leading to saving faith. You're not saved by works. But he began with his saving faith. And then later in verse 22 of Genesis, he refers to his working faith.

And in that passage, the Bible tells us about Abraham being willing to obey God and offer up his son of promise, Isaac, on the altar of sacrifice.

Abraham was willing to do that. And would have done that. God had not stopped him. He was obeying God. And listen to what God said to you in Genesis 22.

Now I know that you fear God. Translation, now I know your faith is real. Your faith is true.

Since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me. Abraham's working faith proved God's word about his saving faith.

[ 40 : 06 ] The reality of a saving faith. And verse 24. You see then, from that illustration, you see then that a man is justified, his faith is validated by works.

And not by faith only. Again, a faith that is worthless. And then we have Rahab. In verse 25.

Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works?

Was she? In the sense that James means justified. That is, her faith was proved by works.

When she received the messengers and sent them out another way. And we don't have a reference in the Old Testament about Rahab coming to faith. And so many people have questioned that. I mean, she was a harlot.

I mean, was she really saved back there in Joshua? Yes, she was. How do we know that? We have the Holy Spirit's word on it. Because the Holy Spirit doesn't give us the exact instance when Rahab was saved.

[ 41 : 12 ] It just simply gives us the proof of it. Her works. You see the relationship between faith and works. We have the Holy Spirit's word that Rahab was saved by faith.

We have it given to us through James. And Rahab's faith was validated. It was proved when she risked all to protect God's people. This is a scriptural confirmation of what James is talking about. That a workless faith is a worthless faith. And then James caps it all off with a strong conclusion. That's the final point.

He just makes the argument. Uses illustration and application. Good substance of a great sermon. And then he concludes with a strong conclusion.

Verse 26. For as the body without the spirit is dead. Who would dispute that by the way? As the body without the spirit is dead.

[ 42 : 20 ] So faith without works is dead also. That's the conclusion. You can't refute it. As the body without the spirit is dead.

I remember when my grandfather died. I had a special relationship with my grandfather. He was very special to me. I was very close to him.

When he died. It was really difficult. I remember going to his funeral. And I was an adult by then. And I'm looking at my grandfather.

In the casket. And you know. I'll admit this to you. Perhaps you've done this too. When someone very. Very beloved has died.

I looked at him in that casket. And I kind of imagined that he moved. You ever done that? Just looking. And looking to see if he takes a breath.

[ 43 : 23 ] Maybe he's not really dead. A little movement of the eyes. Or something. You know. Just imagining that there. Was some movement.

I mean. I so much wanted him to be alive. But. His body could not move. Of course not. His spirit. Was gone. From it. And in a sense. His body was useless. At that point. Useless. Useless. And that's what the Bible says.

About workless faith. That's what you. This is a strong statement. As the body without the spirit is dead. So faith without works. Is dead. In the same way.

It's useless. Worthless. Whatever you say about it. And whatever you claim about faith. If it has no works.

[ 44 : 24 ] Actually it's not true faith. True saving faith. It's a useless kind. Worthless. It is not the saving kind of faith.

Now. Now. I'm not saying here this morning. That. If. You are not involved in the church.

In some ways. Because I know what some of you are thinking. Wow. Listen. You are trying to force us into something. Please.

I'm not saying that if you. Are not serving. In some way. In your church. That your faith is fake. That you are not really saved.

I'm not saying. That. Hmm. I'm not saying. And the truth of what James teaches in this passage. That's going to have to be worked out in your own heart.

[ 45 : 24 ] That's not my business. And so why this message. And why I preach this message. On this Sunday morning. When we are calling on everyone. To.

Every member to be connected in some way. To the work of the church. I'm doing that. Because the church is one of the best places. To let your faith.

Your true faith in Christ shine. One of the best places. Most productive place. Not only does God call us to that. But it's the best way.

Most productive way. Now listen. There are spiritual works. That justify our faith. Again. Remember. I'm talking about. Proving the validity of it.

There are many spiritual works. That ought to be true. And going on in your life. Spiritual works that no one else can see but you. That ought to be happening.

[ 46 : 19 ] Trusting God. Loving God. You know. Honoring His word. Worshipping God in your heart. And obeying His word. And believing in God's word.

And trusting Him. And prayer. And honoring God through personal purity. And holiness. In fact. Really. James begins this argument. In James chapter 1 verse 27.

Where he's talking about pure religion. Pure and undefiled religion. Before God the Father is this. He said. To keep oneself unspotted. Unstained from the world. That's a spiritual work.

It ought to be going on in your life. That's something that doesn't just happen here. In fact. More so. It's defined by what you do out there. In fact. It's more so defined by what you do when no one's looking.

When no one knows. That's a spiritual work. And if that's not present. Then your faith. Your faith not real. No matter what you might say about it.

[ 47 : 18 ] So there are spiritual works. They're unseen. They're not measurable. Many ways. And certainly James is addressing that. But there are also practical works.

Practical works. That we should be involved in. They validate. They verify. They prove the reality of your faith. In that same passage. In James 1 verse 27.

He also says. Pure and undefiled religion. Before God and the Father. Is this. To visit orphans and widows in their trouble. And that's just James way. Of kind of giving a broad.

Kind of generalization. Of the practical works of faith. That should be produced. In the body of Christ. In the church. We should all be involved in. That's pure and undefiled religion.

Before God. And before the Father. Serving. Working. Meeting needs. Ministry. And those. Are done within the body of Christ.

[ 48 : 17 ] Too many. And so. This church. Has many ways. Many ways. For you. To have your faith. Justified. By your words. That is.

Proven. By work. Vindicated. Proven. Genuine. Genuine. And so. If you're not. Connected to that. It's kind of my last word.

You're not connected to that. In any way. You can get connected. Get connected. And you're the one to gain.

Talk to anyone in this church. That is serving the Lord. Involved in some ministry. You'll know. Serving the Lord. Through his church. In his kingdom.

Is rewarding. Rewarding. Thank you.