

## James 2:14-20

Intro: Here James provides characteristics of false faith that would produce the inconsistencies seen in how they judged the poor.

### VI. Dead Faith

#### A. Empty Confession - vs 14

1. my brethren
2. if someone says
  - a. refers to entire passage
  - b. Only referring to their claim of salvation
3. profitless faith
  - a. says he has faith
    - i. no particular kind of faith
    - ii. presumably the basics of the gospel
  - b. but does not have works
    - i. no particular kind of works indicated
    - ii. Works of which James has already spoken
      - endurance - 1:3
      - perseverance under trial - 1:12
      - purity of life - 1:21
      - obedience to scripture - 1:22-23
      - compassion for the needy - 1:27
      - impartiality - 2:1-9
    - iii. Works of which James will speak
      - acts of compassion - 2:15
      - control of the tongue - 3:2-12
      - humility - 4:6,10
      - truthfulness - 4:11
      - patience - 5:8
    - iv. verb form indicates continually without evidence of the claim made
4. Can that faith save him?
  - a. grammatical form of the question calls for a negative answer
  - b. professed faith without accompanied works cannot save
    - i. Mt 7:26 "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand:
    - ii. Jas 1:22-24 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 observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.

#### B. False Compassion - vs 15-17

1. illustration comparing faith w/o works to words of compassion w/o corresponding acts - Job 31:19-20; Lu 3:11
  - a. Hypothetical situation of a brother or sister
    - i. is naked
      - Means poorly or insufficiently
      - Suggests they were cold and miserable due to lack of proper clothing
    - ii. and destitute of daily food,

- Means insufficient nourishment for normal healthy living
- Deprived of necessities of life

2. Profitless response - 1Jo 3:18

- a. one of you says to them,
    - i. "Depart in peace, = to God Bless
    - ii. be warmed and filled,"
  - b. but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body,
    - i. An attitude of total disregard for the needs of the person
    - ii. what does it profit? Or what use is that? - parable of the good Samaritan
- Lk 10:30-35

3. Conclusion - faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

C. Shallow Conviction - vs 18-20

1. But someone will say - probably speaking of himself

- a. "You have faith, and I have works."
  - i. not speaking of faithfulness
  - ii. You are claiming to have faith and nothing else is necessary
  - iii. That your faith is enough to stand before God
- b. Show me your faith without your works, - Jas 3:13
  - i. faith always gives practical evidence
  - ii. You cannot demonstrate your faith b/c you have nothing to demonstrate it with
  - iii. Mt 7:21-23 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 'Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"
- c. and I will show you my faith by my works.

2. You believe that there is one God.

- a. You do well.
  - i. carries a touch of sarcasm
  - ii. Believing orthodox doctrine is insufficient for salvation
  - iii. Jewish orthodoxy was always centered in the belief of one true God - Deut 6:4
- b. Even the demons believe--and tremble!
  - i. Demons are orthodox in the sense of knowing and acknowledging the truth about God - Mt 8:29-31; Mr 1:24; 5:7; Lu 4:34
  - ii. *phrisso* - to "bristle" or chill, i.e. shudder (fear):--tremble.

3. But do you want to know, O foolish man,

- a. foolish - *kenos* - empty, (in) vain.
- b. that faith without works is dead
  - i. *nekros* - dead
  - ii. Other manuscript use *argos* - useless, fruitless, lack of productivity