

**James 2:14-18** – “Show Your Faith”

- A. Salvation by faith and the role of good works is big diving point between Roman Catholics and Protestants.
- B. Concerning good works, the major difference between the writings of James and Paul was a matter of audience.

God calls you to show your faith by your works	I. A DEAD OR FALSE FAITH II. A LIVING, EVIDENTIAL FAITH
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I. **A DEAD OR FALSE FAITH** → **vv14-17**

- A. Using this rhetorical question, James implied the answer— a person who professes faith yet has a life void of works cannot be saved. That is no true faith at all.
  - 1. Christians are saved only by the completed work of Christ on the cross.
    - a. Jesus washed us clean from all our sin— past, present, and future.
    - b. His perfect obedience— His righteousness is imputed or accounted as our own when one has saving faith which spiritually unites us to Christ.
    - c. This is why Paul wrote in **Eph 2:8-9** **“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.”**
  - 2. If God truly has given you salvation through such a faith that Paul spoke about in **Eph 2**, it will always produce fruit in some measure.
    - a. In the parable of the four soils, it was only the good soil that represented a true believer.
      - 1) That person produced fruit which is the same as the works James spoke about.
      - 2) The good soil— the true believer— **“yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty” (Mat 13:8).**
    - b. Jesus also taught the necessity of bearing fruit or good works in **Jn 15:1-11**. Turn there.

B. James gave an example of a dead works. → **vv15-17**

- 1. This is not just anyone on the side of the street begging for food. James said this is **“a brother or sister”** in need of clothing and daily food (**v7**).
  - a. Jesus said that to the extent that you provided care **“to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me” (Mat 25:40).**
  - b. The Savior also warned us: **“Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’ These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”<sup>1</sup>**
- 2. James wanted us to imagine a Christian meeting another Christian in need and responding by only offering them a blessing of sorts: **“Go in peace, be warmed and be filled” (v16).**
  - a. To pray for these things to come out of thin air when you could be the means to provide them doesn’t make much sense.
  - b. At least among Christian circles in the southern United States, there is a kind gesture we have of telling others, “I will pray for you.”
    - 1) James tells us we should do more than merely pray for those in need.
    - 2) I would appreciate it if our deacons can join me by watching or listening to episodes of “The Reformed Deacon” on opc.org

<sup>1</sup> Mat 25:45-46.

## II. A LIVING, EVIDENTIAL FAITH → **v18**

A. Good works are the "fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith" according to WCF 16 → Trinity Psalter Hymnal, p. 928

1. All of these sections are supported by an immense amount of Scripture. You can go to [opc.org](http://opc.org), "Standards" and then "Confession and Catechisms" to view this online or download a pdf file. Look for the documents saying, "...with Scripture proofs."
2. It is from passages like **Ja 2:18**. the writers of the WCF describes good work as "evidence of a true and lively faith" as opposed to a dead faith that cannot save.

B. God created fruit trees to bear fruit. He created the wheat and barley plants to produce grain.

1. If you are truly a new creation in Christ. He caused you to be born again for the purpose that you bear much fruit.
2. **Eph 2:10: "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."**
  - a. In His parable of the fruitless fig tree in **Lu 13:6-9**, Jesus warned us what would happen if we did not fulfill our purpose for which He made us.
  - b. **Mat 7:17-18: "Every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit."**

Review, further application, and conclusion: