

TODAY, ~ we'll begin looking at James' 2<sup>nd</sup> mini-essay ~ in section of 4 mini-essays, ~ 2:1 - 3:18.

AND I.E., ~ HIS DISCUSSION ~ OF FAITH AND WORKS. ⇨⇨ James 2:14-26.

OUTLINE.

VS 14, ~ JAMES' PREMISE.

▶▶ And i.e., ~ a claim of faith ~ without the tangible evidence of its reality ~ cannot save.

▶▶ Genuine Christian faith ~ always ~ displays the tangible evidence of its reality.

▷▷ It may start out small, ~ when a person is first saved.

↳↳ But as a genuine Christian matures spiritually, ~ tangible evidence piles up.

▶▶ We should note here ~ that ~ a genuine believer ~ will never become sinless in this life.

▷▷ Will be times gen believer shrink back into sin. ⇨⇨ E.g., ~ David ~~~ Abraham

↳↳ But looking at their lives overall, ~ tangible evidence will be unmistakable.

▶▶ Again, ~ James' premise in 2: ~ 14-26: ~~ 77

▷▷ a claim of faith ~ without the tangible evidence of its reality ~ is not genuine saving faith.

↳↳ And James then spends the rest of the ¶ ~ proving his premise. 1/14 11

VSS 15-16, ~ COMPARES FAITH ~ WITHOUT THE CORRESPONDING DEEDS ~ 11

▶▶to a case of goodwill ~ without the corresponding deeds.

▷▷The conclusion: ~ neither ~ does any good.

IN VS 17, ~ JAMES APPLIES THE GENERAL PRINCIPLE FROM HIS COMPARISON.

▶▶I.e., ~ saying ~ or claiming ~ something ~ without the corresponding actions ~ is of no value.

IN VSS 18-25, ~ JAMES CONTINUES TO ARGUE HIS CASE ~ USING THE STYLE ~ 11

▶▶of a dialogue with an imaginary objector.

▶▶In this dialogue, ~ two Scriptural examples, ~ Abraham and Rahab, ~ 11

▷▷to show ~ that a faith ~ without tangible evidence of its reality, ~ is a useless and non-saving faith.

↪↪Both examples illustrated James' premise.

→→In that ~ they both ~ proved their faith was genuine ~ by their works.

THEN IN VS 26, ~ JAMES SIGNALS THE END OF THIS MINI-ESSAY ~ BY OFFERING AN illustration from daily life.

▶▶Breathing ~ is an evidence of life.

▷▷So too, ~ good works ~ are the evidence of genuine faith. 2/14 11

## TODAY.

### COVER VV 14-17.

▶▶Premise: ~ A claim of faith ~ without the tangible evidence of its reality ~ cannot save.

▶▶And his comparison of ~ faith without the corresponding deeds ~ ¶¶

▷▷to ~ a case of goodwill without the corresponding deeds.

### JAMES IS SOMETIMES MISUNDERSTOOD ~ BECAUSE PEOPLE READ HIS WORDS ~ ¶¶

#### WITH PAUL'S DEFINITIONS IN MIND.

▶▶This is unfair to both authors.

▶▶And not a good way to conduct Bible study.

▶▶In studying James, ~ the question is ~ not ~ how does Paul ~ use these words?

▷▷But, ~ how does James ~ use these words ~ in his epistle?

▶▶James's handling of the relationship between faith and works ~ does not ~ ¶¶

▷▷contradict Paul's statements ~ on the same subject.

▶▶Paul's statements ~ answer the question ~ of what it takes to justify a sinner before God.

▷▷And the answer is ~ "faith alone." 3/14 ¶¶

▶▶ James asks ~ the very different question ~ ¶¶

▷▷ of what proves or justifies the genuineness ~ of a person's claim to faith.

↪↪ And the answer to that question is ~ good deeds, ~ or, ~ tangible ev. of reality.

▶▶ Paul actually lays out both sides in Eph. 2:8-10.

▷▷ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ~ ¶¶

↪↪ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

NOW LET'S LOOK AT THE DETAILS OF VSS 14-17.

VS 14, ~~ PREMISE.

AND I.E., ~ A CLAIM OF FAITH ~ without the tangible evidence of its reality ~ cannot save.

<sup>14a</sup> What good is it, my brothers [and sisters], if someone says/claims he has faith ~ but does not have works? ~ ~ <sup>14b</sup> Can that faith save him?

▶▶ We should pay careful attention ~ to the exact wording James uses.

▶▶ He does not begin with ~ if someone has faith.

▷▷ Instead ~ James writes, ~ if someone claims to have faith.

↪↪ A deceived ~ self-declaration. 4/14 ¶¶

▷▷It seems that James refuses ~ to entertain the possibility ~ that inactive faith ~ ¶¶

↪↪is a real thing to be had.

▶▶The faith ~ that the person is claiming to have ~ is a faith ~ in Jesus for salvation.

▷▷IOW, ~ claim to be a Christian.

▶▶What's more, ~ James uses deeds/works in this ¶ ~ in a specific sense ~ to refer ~ ¶¶

▷▷to actions done ~ out of love for Jesus ~ and for His glory.

▶▶He is framing his discussion of faith and works ~ in regard ~ ¶¶

▷▷to a person's claim to have faith ~ and ~ how such claims are validated.

▶▶James insists throughout this ¶ ~ that mere profession of faith in Jesus ~ ¶¶

▷▷without visible good fruit, ~ i.e., ~ good deeds, ~ does not save ~ is not genuine.

↪↪Vs. 14, ~ What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him?

↪↪Vs 17, ~ So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

↪↪Vs 26, ~ For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.

▷▷Repetition shouts importance. ⇔⇔ And drives the point home. 5/14 ¶¶

▶▶ Mere profession of faith in Jesus ~ without the tangible evidence of its reality ~ is as useless ~ ¶¶

▷▷ as uttering kind words to a needy fellow Christian ~ while doing nothing to help.

↳↳ Vv 15-16, ~ If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, ~ ¶¶

→→ "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?

▶▶ Faith is ~ invisible, ~ yet authenticating deeds ~ make true faith ~ visible.

▷▷ Vs 18b, ~ Show me your faith apart from your works ~ [impossible], ~ and I will show you my faith by my works.

▶▶ By contrast, ~ mental assent, ~ such as confessing the unity of God ~ 19a, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ is inadequate, ~ for even the demons confess that.

↳↳ And they're not saved.

→→ Vs 19b, ~ Even the demons believe this . . . .

OK, ~ BACK TO VS 14 AND JAMES' PREMISE.

▶▶ What good is it, my brothers, if someone claims he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him?

▷▷ Notice, ~ James asks ~ two piercing ~ rhetorical questions ~ in vs 14. 6/14 ¶¶

IF SOMEONE CLAIMS HE HAS FAITH ~ BUT DOES NOT HAVE WORKS?

▶▶ Word ~ *good* ~ means ~ an advantage derived from someth., ~ *benefit*, ~ *good*.

▶▶ Tense of vb.

▷▷ Continuing claim ~ to faith ~ without ~ the complementary actions.

▶▶ Express it this way.

▷▷ My brothers and sisters, ~ what benefit is it ~ for a person who continues to claim to have faith in Jesus ~ but has no corresponding deeds?

▶▶ James structured the question ~ to expect the answer ~ none.

▷▷ What benefit is it, ~ James asks.

↳↳ None whatsoever ~ is the expected answer.

▶▶ James boxes us in.

▷▷ IOW, ~ there is absolutely ~ no scenario ~ in which mere profession of faith ~ ¶¶

↳↳ without visible good fruit ~ is beneficial.

→→ I.e., ~ beneficial for salvation. 7/14 ¶¶

2<sup>nd</sup> PIERCING RHETORICAL QUESTION IN VS 14.

VS 14b, ~ CAN THAT FAITH SAVE HIM?

▶▶ More specifically, ~ Can that kind of faith, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ i.e., ~ a claim to have saving faith ~ without the tangible evidence of its reality, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ can that kind of faith ~ save them?

▶▶ Please understand.

▷▷ "Save" here ~ does not refer ~ to some kind of rescue ~ from earthly danger or trial.

↳↳ That is a misinterpretation ~ that has been taught by some.

▷▷ No, ~ "save" here ~ is in relation to God's wrath.

▷▷ In 1 Thess., ~ Paul says that Jesus ~ rescues genuine believers ~ from the coming wrath.

▷▷ James is asking, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ "Can a claim to have saving faith ~ ¶¶

→→ without the tangible evidence of its reality, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ save them from the wrath of God? 8/14 ¶¶



▶▶ And, ~ like the 1<sup>st</sup> rhetorical question, ~ James boxes us in here as well.

▷▷ He again structured the question ~ to expect an answer of ~ no.

▷▷ IOW, ~ there is absolutely ~ no scenario ~ in which ~ 77

↳↳ mere profession of faith ~ without visible good fruit ~ 77

→→ can save someone from God's wrath.

FOR THE SAKE OF CLARITY, ~ GOING TO RUN RISK OF REDUNDANCY HERE.

▶▶ We don't want there to be any misunderstandings.

▶▶ It should be pointed out ~ that James ~ was not arguing ~ for two salvation requirements.

▷▷ Faith plus works.

↳↳ Nowhere ~ does the Bible teach that.

▶▶ He was not saying ~ that some people have only arrived at the halfway point.

▷▷ And now they must add appropriate works ~ to their faith.

▷▷ Neither was he contradicting Paul, ~ as though Paul taught ~ salvation by faith, ~ 77

↳↳ and James taught ~ salvation by works. 9/14 11

▶▶ What James was contrasting ~ was true faith, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ which inevitably produces good deeds because it is alive, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ versus ~ a mere claim to faith, ~ ¶¶

→→ which is profession only ~ and has no life-changing power.

▷▷ Such a claim ~ is spiritually dead. ⇔⇔ It is powerless to produce any works.

▷▷ It is not a faith ~ that entrusts the soul ~ to God's provision of grace in Jesus.

IN VSS 15-16, ~ JAMES PRESENTS A HYPOTHETICAL SITUATION ~ TO COMPARE ~ ¶¶

FAITH WITHOUT THE CORRESPONDING DEEDS ~ TO A CASE OF GOODWILL ~ without the corresponding deeds.

▶▶ The point is ~ neither one does any good.

▶▶ If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?

▷▷ No one in their right mind would think ~ that this would be beneficial.

A SITUATION OF REAL HUMAN NEED ~ ¶¶

▶▶ that is addressed solely by good wishes and warm sentiment ~ is certifiably inadequate.

▷▷ The real need ~ is in effect ~ ignored. 10/14 ¶¶

▶▶Despite the words and sentiments, ~ it doesn't work, ~ 77

▷▷precisely because ~ nothing is done ~ to actually remedy the situation.

▷▷The situation that provokes the need ~ is unchanged.

↪↪They're still hungry and poorly clothed.

▶▶It may be that ~ the expression of care and well-wishes ~ could be sincere and well intended.

▷▷Indeed, ~ the needy persons themselves ~ might be momentarily cheered by them.

↪↪But ultimately ~ nothing of significance happens to alter the need.

▶▶Words alone ~ cannot solve the problem.

▷▷Something more than talk is required ~ to meet the need of our hypothetical brother or sister.

### THE GENERAL PRINCIPLE HERE IS THIS.

▶▶Saying ~ or claiming ~ something ~ without the corresponding actions ~ is of no value.

▷▷Words alone ~ are ~ lifeless, ~ inactive, ~ and ~ useless.

▶▶Back to the example of the needy believers.

▷▷Someone cannot be warmed or fed ~ with affirming words about ~ being warmed and fed. 11/14 11

▶▶ Again, ~ words without the corresponding actions are ~ lifeless, ~ inactive, ~ and ~ useless.

▶▶ In James' hypothetical situation, ~ affirming that words without actions are useless ~ ¶¶

▷▷ paves the way ~ for him to apply this general principle ~ ¶¶

↳↳ to the more specific issue ~ of claiming to have faith ~ ¶¶

→→ but without the tangible evidence of its reality.

### IN VS 17 ~ JAMES THEN APPLIES THE GENERAL PRINCIPLE.

SO ALSO ~ [OR, ~ IN THE SAME WAY] ~ FAITH BY ITSELF, IF IT DOES NOT HAVE works, is dead.

▶▶ Again, ~ the general principle is this.

▷▷ Saying ~ or claiming ~ something ~ without the tangible evidence of its reality ~ is of no value.

### JAMES' ASSERTION ~ IS THAT ~ ¶¶

▶▶ just as expressions of sentimental concern, ~ no matter how sincere, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ cannot meet the need of the poorly clothed and hungry believer, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ faith ~ that is unaccompanied by tangible evidence of its reality ~ ¶¶

→→ will ultimately prove ~ inadequate as well. 12/14 ¶¶

THE TWO PHRASES ~~ BY ITSELF ~ AND ~ IF IT DOES NOT HAVE WORKS ~~ are almost redundant.

▶▶ By using both ~ James highlights/emphasizes that he is talking about faith ~ ¶¶

▷▷ that has no authenticating works whatsoever to go with it.

FURTHERMORE, ~ THE CONDITIONAL CLAUSE ~ IF IT DOES NOT HAVE WORKS, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ indicates ~ that works are not something added as extra to faith. ⇒⇒ They go together.

▶▶ There is no intention to have a contrast between ~ "faith" and "works."

▷▷ The real contrast is between ~ "faith that has works" ~ and "faith that has no works."

▶▶ For James ~ faith must be accompanied by validating works.

▷▷ One cannot exist without the other.

▶▶ For the faith that does not have tangible evidence of its reality ~ is ~ in the morgue ~ on the slab ~ dead.

TPID, ~ FAITH THAT IS PROFESSION ONLY ~ CAN FURNISH NO SIGN THAT IT EXISTS.

▶▶ It is ~ a mere thought, ~~ a creed with no transforming power, ~~ a faith in name only.

▶▶ It's dead.

▶▶ There is ~ no activity, ~ no sign of life, ~ no functioning beyond mere assertion. 13/14

SO, ~ JAMES' REINFORCES THE EXPECTED ANSWER TO HIS QUESTION IN VS 14b.

▶▶ Can that kind of faith, ~ i.e., ~ a claim to have saving faith ~ without the tangible evidence of its reality, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ can that kind of faith ~ save them from the wrath of God?

▶▶ No, ~ that kind of faith, ~ i.e., ~ faith without the corresponding deeds, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ absolutely ~ cannot save anyone from the coming wrath.

▶▶ Because that kind of faith is dead.

▷▷ And something that's dead, ~ cannot do anything.

↪↪ Faith without the tangible evidence of its reality ~ will shield no one ~ from the wrath to come.

ONCE AGAIN, ~ WE SEE THE LOVING HAND OF OUR HEAVENLY FATHER.

HE DOES NOT WANT US TO HOLD TO ERRONEOUS THEOLOGY. ⇔⇔ Spells out clearly

▶▶ We are saved ~ by grace alone ~ through faith alone ~ in Christ Jesus alone.

▷▷ And genuine faith ~ always results ~ in the tangible evidence of its reality.

▶▶ Again, ~ it may start out small, ~ when a person is first saved.

▷▷ But as a genuine Christian matures spiritually, ~ tangible evidence will pile up. 14/14