

## Vicarious Faith Without Works - James 2

September 28, 2017

James 2:14-26 ESV

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

*When the Word of God is received individually and personally, in a submissive heart by the illumination of the Spirit of God, it is impossible for supernatural transformation not to occur.*

Romans 10:16-18 ESV

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?"

17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

18 But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have, for "Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world."

Hebrews 4:12 ESV

12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Isaiah 55:10-11 ESV

10 "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,

11 so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

Ephesians 2:8-10 ESV

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

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

1 Corinthians 6:9-10 ESV

9 Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality,

10 nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

**James 2:14-26 ESV**

15 If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food,

16 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?

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

*We are a vicarious culture in the western world. Human nature assumes a very vicarious identity.*

- PTSD / STSD
- Sports Fans
- Entertainment (ie romance, pornography, violence)

*We assume that what is true in the group we identify with, the group we surround ourselves with, is also true about us individually and personally.*

*Vicarious faith is both rampant and deceitful. God's intent, and the purpose of the Holy Spirit, is for every believer to own and possess his/her own faith individually and personally - without it you cannot be saved.*

*James 1:22-24 ESV*

22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror.

24 For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like.

*Matthew 7:18-23 ESV*

18 A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit.

19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

20 Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

22 On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, DID WE NOT prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?'

23 And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

*Acts 4:32-35 ESV*

32 Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common.

33 And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

34 There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold

35 and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

Acts 5:1-5 ESV

1 But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property,

2 and with his wife's knowledge he kept back for himself some of the proceeds and brought only a part of it and laid it at the apostles' feet.

3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land?

4 While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God."

5 When Ananias heard these words, he fell down and breathed his last. And great fear came upon all who heard of it.

James 2:14-26 ESV

18 But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.

19 You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe--and shudder!

20 Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless?

21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar?

22 You see that faith was active along with (*synergeō - to work together, put forth power together, partner in labor*) his works, and faith was completed (*teleioō - carry through completely, accomplish, finish, make complete*) by his works;

23 and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"--and he was called a friend of God.

24 You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone.

*Remember that when you stand before the Lord in judgment, you will stand individually and personally, not in a group.*

1 Corinthians 3:13 ESV

13 each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.

1 Corinthians 4:5 ESV

5 Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God.

*Do I own my faith individually and personally, or am I living vicariously through others?*

- *Do you have times of personal worship, when you are alone with God, or is the only time you worship is in church?*

- *Do you pray for the church, your Christian brothers and sisters, on your own initiative, by your own compassion, or do you have to be prompted by a church prayer request?*
- *When was the last time you studied God's Word for doctrine or guidance of your own initiative, or do you live off of sermons you hear in church?*
- *Do you sense God's presence wherever you are, or just when you're in church?*
- *Do you share Jesus with unbelievers because you are touched with compassion for them or because you were told to at church?*

**James 2:14-26** ESV

**25 And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way?**

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

*We are saved by grace through faith alone, not by works. We are not saved by works, but we can't be saved without works.*

*Ephesians 2:8-10* ESV

*8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

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