

Bible Experience

James 2:14-26

Dear brothers and sisters, what's the use of saying you have faith if you don't prove it by your actions? That kind of faith can't save anyone. 15 Suppose you see a brother or sister who needs food or clothing, 16 and you say, "Well, good-bye and God bless you; stay warm and eat well" — but then you don't give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do?

17 So you see, it isn't enough just to have faith. Faith that doesn't show itself by good deeds is no faith at all — it is dead and useless.

18 Now someone may argue, "Some people have faith; others have good deeds." I say, "I can't see your faith if you don't have good deeds, but I will show you my faith through my good deeds."

19 Do you still think it's enough just to believe that there is one God? Well, even the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror! 20 Fool! When will you ever learn that faith that does not result in good deeds is useless?

21 Don't you remember that our ancestor Abraham was declared right with God because of what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see, he was trusting God so much that he was willing to do whatever God told him to do. His faith was made complete by what he did — by his actions. 23 And so it happened just as the Scriptures say: "Abraham believed God, so God declared him to be righteous." He was even called "the friend of God." 24 So you see, we are made right with God by what we do, not by faith alone.

25 Rahab the prostitute is another example of this. She was made right with God by her actions — when she hid those messengers and sent them safely away by a different road. 26 Just as the body is dead without a spirit, so also faith is dead without good deeds. NLT

Things you will need:

Your Journal
Box of Crayons (Many different colors)
Plain White Paper

1) Read it

Read the passage to yourself. Count how many times it talks about faith and action (good deeds) being connected. Do you think it's an important concept?

2) Write about it

Write down the main point of this passage. Include any thoughts that God gave you while you were reading. Record any images that came to your mind as you read the passage.

3) Make it personal

The main point of this passage is that genuine faith will produce good deeds. In other words, if you have faith, people should be able to see it. True, saving faith, should make a difference in how you live on a daily basis.

Now take your color crayons and paper and get ready to color. Let's say that it's now illegal to have faith in God. Make a list of all the things that you have said or done that could be used as evidence against you. Use a different color for each item.

Now honestly make a list of activities in your life that could be used by a defense attorney. My client can't possibly have genuine faith in God. Just look at... (Use a black crayon to make this list)

4) What's your verdict?

How strong is the prosecution's case against you? Would you go to prison or would the case be dismissed for lack of evidence? How strong is the case for the defense?

5) Back to your journal

Record your thoughts about this whole experience. Spend some time talking to God about your life. Write out a prayer asking God to help your life be a shining example of a vibrant, living faith. Be sure to ask for strength to remove some of the items from your list for the defense.

6) Take a risk

Consider showing your lists to another Christian that you trust. Ask that person to stand with you in prayer and help hold you accountable for living a genuine Christian life.