



James

Living Right in a Wrong World!

Living Right with Living Faith!

James 2:14-26

Message #7 of 15 – S969

Sermon given on October 31, 2021



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

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Opening Comments

- Turn to **James 2**
- Today, we continue the series: **James - Living Right in a Wrong World!**
- If I said to you that I have a heart inside my chest, would you believe me? Yes! Why?
- Because we know enough about biology that to be alive you need a functioning heart
- But we could also verify that fact – you could put your ear to my chest and hear my heart beating
- You could put your finger on my wrist and feel the pulse of my heart
- You could put devices on me to measure my heart's rhythms
- People often refer to the heart as the center of our emotions
- I have been accused of not having a heart – because I don't always express my emotions
- But just because I don't express those emotions doesn't mean I don't have the feelings associated with the emotion
- James is going to say something similar about faith
- The fact that I might not express what I am feeling is only a problem to those who are emotionally minded
- James will tell us that true faith must be expressed
- In the wrong way world that is a challenge
- While there are people around me who love it when I let an emotion slip out
- There are people in this world who want me and all other Christians to keep our faith private
- Real faith, the kind of faith that saved you, is never private
- James will say today – a private faith is a dead faith
- What this wrong way world needs is living faith from God's people
- Let's pray and ask the Holy Spirit to breathe life into our faith
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **Living Right with Living Faith!**
- We are living in a world in which most people have rejected God and His Word
- I have said in the past that faith is what we believe about God and His Word
- Faith is grown through knowledge and experience
- The greater your faith becomes – the more biblical it is - the further you grow away from this world
- It is not that the world does not have faith – it has an unbiblical faith – their faith is in things that have no power to produce life
- An unbiblical faith cannot produce life or good
- Last week I talked about partiality – treating one person or group of people differently than another – James calls it sin
- This ‘us-versus-them’ attitude dominates our culture right now
- And it is obviously not creating good
- A biblical faith – a faith that is based upon the Word of God, is critical to living right in a wrong world
- James tells us that biblical faith can’t be private **James 1:22**
But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.
- Biblical faith must be doing something, or it isn’t real biblical faith
- That is James’ theme in today’s text
- **James 2:14**
- Rhetorical questions – both demand a negative response
- ‘Can faith save him?’ Some infer from this that James is saying that we must have works to be saved.
- There are some who believe ‘faith + works = salvation’.
- The apostle Paul taught clearly that this is not true **Ephesians 2:8-9**
For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.
- Paul taught the doctrine of ‘sola fide’ – faith alone for salvation.
- Faith leads to salvation. What James says is that faith that has led to salvation leads to good works.
- Not ‘faith + works = salvation’ but ‘faith = salvation = works’.

- Paul focuses on the time before salvation and James' focus is on the time after salvation.
- Paul is talking about the root of faith – James is talking about the fruit of faith.
- Paul is arguing for the priority of faith and James for the proof of faith.
- Just as a bird needs two wings to fly, Christians need two things, faith and works to live right in a wrong world.
- James then gives us a practical example
- **James 2:15-16**
- The assumption is that they believe the person needs help and they are in a position to help.
- They believe it would be right to meet their need but then they do nothing.
- **James 2:17-18**
- A workless faith is a worthless faith **John Calvin**
“It is faith alone that justifies, but faith that justifies can never be alone.”
- To be justified is to be in a right standing with God - accepted Christ's sacrifice – forgiven of sins – heaven-bound
- James is saying that we can examine what someone does to determine what is inside of them.
- Real faith will produce godly works.
- The absence of godly works suggests a problem of faith.
- James is pointing to the reality that Christianity is about both what we believe and what we do.
- In our culture the influence of Critical Theory and Critical Race Theory disregard both faith and works to determine what it describes as social justice.
- It divides the world into two groups – oppressed and oppressors.
- This worldview examines oppression from the past and then labels anyone who is in that oppressor group as irredeemably oppressors.
- For example, the ugly sin of racism has been a part of the human condition for thousands of years and shows up in every culture around the globe.

- Racism is the belief that one race is superior to another and the ‘works’ of racism are discrimination and persecution.
- Historically, it has also led to slavery. There are millions (40.3 million) of people in slavery today around the globe.
- According to CRT, it doesn’t matter what you believe or what you do that makes you a racist.
- The color of your skin is what determines whether or not you are a racist – which is a very racist thing to believe.
- As Christians, or really anyone, you are not what other people say you are.
- You are what God says you are.
- You are what you believe and what you do based on those beliefs.
- You are not a racist, or a bigot, or a white supremacist, or any other ‘ist’ just because someone who believes the false ideology of CT and CRT says you are.
- Someone is a racist if they believe one race is superior to another and then act upon those beliefs.
- One of the works of faith that James is calling Christians to is to stand on the truth of God’s Word and stand against the lies of the devil.
- There is a push to teach the racist ideology of CRT to our children in the public schools.
- The people who want this are so deceived as to believe that the only way our nation will be able to heal from its ugly past mistakes is to teach this hateful doctrine to children – it teaches children to hate.
- If it is allowed to continue, it will lead to division, hate, and violence like this nation has not seen before.
- We must teach our children to love their neighbor, regardless of their skin color, or gender, religion, political affiliation, or any other external thing.
- We must teach them that they are not what others say they are – they are what God says they are – a beautifully crafted masterpiece of a loving God, created in His image to bring Him glory.
- Teach them the best way to show the world that God loves them is by loving others – even if they hate us in return.

- The only hope this nation has is if God's people wake up and stand for what is right against the forces of evil who seem to be winning right now.
- In the end God wins – believe it and act like you believe it!
- **James 2:19-20**
- The demons believe in the reality of God's existence and even in His mighty power.
- They choose to rebel against God and disobey what they know to be truth.
- Simply believing will not save anyone.
- Someone who truly believes in God and the truth of His Word will yield themselves to God's will and do godly works of faith.
- James then gives two biblical examples of working faith
- **James 2:21-24**
- God promised to make Abraham the father of an innumerable multitude and then gave him only one son through whom that nation would descend.
- Then God told Abraham to sacrifice his only son.
- The promise of a great nation and the command to sacrifice Isaac seemed to be contradictory – both couldn't be true.
- But Abraham believed God's promise and obeyed God's command.
- The book of Hebrews tells us that he believed something that was humanly impossible **Hebrews 11:17-19**
- **By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, 18 of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," 19 concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.**
- Abraham proved what he believed by doing what God said.
- **James 2:25**
- Abraham, the great patriarch of the Jewish people is the greatest example of faith working.
- Just in case that was too high of an example for some to relate to James uses Rahab the harlot as a second example.

- Rahab believed that God was going to give the land of Canaan to the people of Israel and her work of faith was to hide the spies from the people of her city.
- **James 2:26**
- The stench of spiritual death hangs over many Churches, Christians, marriages, and families because faith is not growing or working.
- The lack of living biblical faith is why so many churches and denominations are turning away from God's Word – and getting involved in godless activities like embracing the LGBTQ+ agenda, even ordaining gay clergy.
- Many are embracing the false religion of CT and CRT and bowing at the altar of Global Warming
- Some are taking the simple pure gospel and adding man's ideas
- The pope can talk about a future where all religions are united into one unholy alliance in the name of unity.
- What we do in this life matters.
- It matters to God, and it matters to the world around us.
- The world is going the wrong way and many Christians and churches are going the same wrong way as the world.
- We are called by God to know Him and to trust in Him and then do works of faith that prove to the world that there is a holy God who loves them and wants them in His family.
- It fills me with awe and a sense of wonder that Mighty God cares about my life and how I live it.
- And the Bible says that God loves me, and the whole world, so much that He sent His Son Jesus to die for our sins
- I am so thankful for all God has done for me
- It makes me want to get to know Him better and better
- And the better I get to know Him, the more I want to do what He says
- When we do what God says, He is glorified, others are blessed, and faith grows all around us
- Your faith matters – but only if it is showing up in how you live your life out in this wrong way world
- **Pray**