

Studies in James



Key verse: James 2:14

What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him?

Kick Off

Study five



Big Idea: Profession without practice is pointless. Living faith is seen in actions expressed through love.

Do you agree with this quote? ***In Australia we do not lack the ability to solve poverty; we lack the will. And the richer we become as a society the more unwilling we are to sympathise with those at the bottom of the heap.*** (Affluenza, C. Hamilton and R. Denniss)

STUDY

Read James 2:14-26.

1. What is the underlying problem James is addressing in this section?

If at the end of this study all we achieve is an enjoyable theological discussion how guilty would we be?

2. What is the claim of the so called Christians James is rebuking in v14 and how does his illustration in vv15-17 refute such a claim?

Is the experience of emotion (such as sympathy for the suffering) without action wrong? give examples.

3. What is the objection James anticipates in v18a and how does he refute it in 18b?

4. Do the demons really understand God correctly v 19? Is there any similarity between the behaviour of the demons and the behaviour of those James is correcting?

5. Abraham is held up as the illustration of a believer in action. What was said of Abraham by scripture before he did any action v23?

How did believer Abraham's action, justify God's declaration of his righteousness?

6. From patriarch to prostitute. How is Rahab an illustration of living faith?

7. James is not refuting the truth that we are justified by faith alone... he is refuting the nonsense that faith can stand alone. Living, true faith is never alone. Look up these verses and discuss how Jesus and Paul teach this same truth in different words.

Jesus in Matthew 7 7:15-20.

Paul in Galatians 5:6

THINK AND APPLY

Faith and deeds are the flip sides of the same coin. One without the other is empty religion. An inactive faith is impotent.

Reflect on the following.

How profitable is my faith by the test of James' illustration in vv15-17? See also 1 John 3:18

How does my faith differ from that of the demons?

What words would describe the life impact of the faith of Abraham and Rahab?

How is your faith impacting your life in relation to cost, sacrifice and risk?

PRAYER

What can you pray about arising from this study?



**For next week
Read
James 3:1-18**