

James 2:14-26. Faith and works

James' whole discussion revolves around the truth that faith leads to works of charity.

We are justified by the cross, faith begins there, but is lived out in works of charity.

- I. Js. 2:14-19.
 - A. Failure to care for the necessities of a brother or sister is to neglect Christ.
 1. See Mt. 25:31-46
 2. OT teaches a covenant relationship with God that covers the care of each other. Ex. 22:25-27
 - B. Demons have faith-believe in God but no charity.
 1. See Mt. 7:21
 2. Works demonstrate faith.
 3. It is lived obedience to God's commands.
- II. Js. 2:20-26
 - A. An empty person: intellectual and morally.
 1. Abraham is father based on promise but lived out in obedience
 2. See Gn. 12:1-3 and Gn. 22
 - B. A person is justified by faith-what they believe but is expressed in works of charity.
 1. Rahab-Josh. 2:1-2:1 justified by correct belief and by what she did: obeyed the Lord.
 2. Without works of charity=faith is not alive.
- III. Js. 3:1-12
 - A. The spoken word-whether through a teacher or in our speech is something we are held accountable for.
 1. See Rm. 12:7 and Proverbs and Wisdom literature.
 2. See Prov. 18:21.
 - B. With speech-fall short or to stumble; perfect is to be mature.
 1. Tongue reveals fullness of the heart.
 2. See Mt. 12:34-35. 12:36-37
 - C. To defile is to stain or pollute
 1. See Sir. 28:13-23
 2. James says the tongue is difficult to tame
 3. Speech is measured by our interior life. See 1Jn. 4:20
 4. Of 10 Commandments listed, 2 deal with speech.
 5. See 1Cor. 6:10 regarding slander

Reflection:

1. Why is the use of our speech a reflection of spiritual maturity or lack of it?
2. Define the connection between faith and works. Why is the logic of works of charity necessary to holiness?