



TIME OF GRACE®

Gracenotes

guides for personal Bible study

What's Got to Change in Your Life?

James 2:14-26: ¹⁴“What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? ¹⁵Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. ¹⁶If one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? ¹⁷In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. ¹⁸But someone will say, ‘You have faith; I have deeds.’ Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. ¹⁹You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder. ²⁰You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? ²¹Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? ²²You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. ²³And the scripture was fulfilled that says, ‘Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,’ and he was called God’s friend. ²⁴You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone. ²⁵In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? ²⁶As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.”

Points to Ponder

1. Read James 2:14-17. According to this section, what good is faith without deeds?
2. James gives a couple examples of faith in action. How was Abraham’s faith “made complete” by what he did?
3. Your faith and your actions work together. What does that mean?

4. How does what James says here fit with the rest of the Bible that says we aren't saved by our works?

5. Are there areas in your life where you could change your actions to align more closely with your faith?

Blessed by God's grace for your salvation, you are able to believe it and have faith through the power of the Holy Spirit. Now having been saved, your life changes to a life of faith in which your beliefs are displayed in your actions as you live to serve and please God. Faith without deeds is dead. Your actions show that faith is in your heart. Faith and deeds of love and compassion and mercy and obedience to God are one and the same—they flow back and forth to each other.

What else does God say?

Ephesians 2:10: For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Matthew 5:16: Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.