

Faith and Works

The Christians James was addressing in his letter seem to have forgotten what real faith was. Maybe they never really knew. They tried to practice a counterfeit faith and they ended up being counterfeit Christians. That's why James attacks the issue of faith so hard in the most famous - or maybe infamous - passage in his letter. He is trying to get his readers to see that the faith they're so proud of is a sham, and he wants to help them understand instead what real faith is like and how works and good deeds correctly relate to faith. Today on Groundwork we study James' description of real faith together and discuss how it applies to us.

AWARENESS Before listening reflect on what you already know or understand about topics we'll cover in the episode.

- How would you describe the relationship between faith and works/deeds? What place or purpose do actions, works, or deeds have in a person's faith life?
- Why is it important for us to know and understand the identifiable characteristics of real faith?



LISTEN TO THE EPISODE: [Faith and Works](#)

READ [James 2:14-26](#)

REFLECTION After listening, consider the following questions:

- Identify ways your behavior has already transformed as a result of your faith in Christ Jesus. Celebrate these accomplishments and give praise to God for his gift of faith.
- Consider a recent interaction. Would you say your behavior during that interaction accurately reflects what you profess to believe? What would you celebrate? What would you like to do better in the future?
- Are there specific situations in which you find it harder to behave and act in ways that are consistent with the faith you profess? Consider the details of these situations; what traits can you ask God to develop in you that would help you in similar future situations?

RELATED PASSAGES for further study

[Galatians 2:16](#), [Micah 6:6-8](#), [Hebrews 11](#), [Galatians 5](#)

CONCLUSION

Remember that faith is a journey, not a destination. Honestly reflecting on the consistency between your faith and actions is an opportunity for growth, for seeing God at work in your life, and for asking forgiveness if necessary. It is not meant for scorekeeping or earning points. God is a good and just God; he takes us as we are, but he does not leave us as we are. In Christ, he redeems us and then continues to transform us into his image. Remember [Matthew 7:7-8](#):

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.”

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