

Real Faith (James 2:18-26)

- **Romans 3:28** “For we hold that **one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.**”
- **Ephesians 2:8-9** “For **by grace you have been saved through faith.** And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, **not a result of works**, so that no one may boast.”
- **We are justified merely by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.** Christ’s perfect righteousness is imputed/given to us. It is Jesus Christ plus nothing! **What Jesus Christ has done on the cross for us is enough, we don’t have to and we actually are unable to add anything to that.** To try to add anything to the work of Christ is actually an insult to our King and Savior.
- **So what is James talking about in James 2:14-26? He is talking about the importance that real faith can only be a living, active faith.** If it is not active, not living, then this is proof that it has never been real faith in the first place.
- James 2:17 “So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.”
- James 2:26b “so also faith apart from works is dead.”
- James 2:14 “Can that (kind of) faith save him?” (a faith that does not care about the poor – see **v. 15**).
- Inconsistency between what one claims to be and what one actually is: **Rousseau illustr.**
- Kent Hughes: “similar conduct in the church, such as the pious disregard for the poor.” There are over 2000 references in the Bible that we are to care for the poor.
- 1 John 3:17+18 “Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.”
- True faith requires compassion and action.
- **True living faith produces fruit.** Jesus in the sermon on the mount: “**By their fruit you will recognize them.**” And also: Jesus: “**Likewise every good tree bears good fruit.**”

- Kent Hughes: “**Tragically hell will have its share of people who are monotheistic, Trinitarian, orthodox and lost.**”
- **Real faith is more than mental assent to truth.** (James 2:19 “Even the demons believe – and shudder.”)
- **Real faith involves the heart (you are trusting in Christ) and is marked by a life that is lived for Christ.**
- **Two illustrations for real, authentic faith: Abraham and Rahab** (James 2:21 + 25)
- The illustration of Abraham (a patriarch) and Rahab (a prostitute) demonstrate the importance of active faith. **Their faith produced astounding action!**
- Martin Luther: “**Faith is a living, bold trust in God’s grace, so certain of God’s favor that it would risk death a thousand times trusting in it. Such confidence and knowledge of God’s grace makes you happy, joyful and bold in your relationship to God and all creatures.**”
- God is building His kingdom and He works through His children to accomplish this.
- The book of **Ezekiel** ends with these prophetic words:
“And the name of the city from that time on will be: THE LORD IS THERE”
 It is God’s intention for Matthews/Charlotte that the Lord will be there.
- Robert Linthicum: “Are Christians really different in their attitudes and life-style from non-Christians? How far has the church faced, and grasped, the wholeness of Scripture? In short, how far has the Kingdom, or rule, of God become embodied and made real in the people of Christ?
 This is the underlying question facing the church in Matthews/Charlotte (and everywhere else). **How far has the kingdom of God become embodied and made real in the people of God in Matthews/Charlotte?** God’s primary intention for Matthews/Charlotte is to bring God’s kingdom into Matthews/Charlotte – to permeate its political, economic, and religious structures, to transform the lives of its inhabitants, to exorcise evil and unrepentant principalities and powers, and to place over Matthews/Charlotte Christ who would gather this city to Himself. It is God’s intention to transform every city into the city of God by making of that city the embodiment of God’s rule.”