

James 2:14-17

Introduction:

1. In his letter James addressed some important subjects relating to Christianity, including:
 - a. "facing temptations" (1:2-18)
 - b. "hearing and doing the Word" (1:19-27)
 - c. "respect of persons" (2:1-13).
2. In 2:14-26, James wrote about the relationship that exists between faith and works.
 - a. He showed repeatedly that faith without works is dead (vs.17, 20, 26).
 - b. He also showed how faith that is accompanied by works pleases God (vs.24).
3. This lesson is a study of the information revealed in 2:14-17.
4. The main point made in these verses is that there is no profit in having faith that is not accompanied by works.

Discussion:

- I. GENERAL INFORMATION RELATING TO FAITH
 - A. Faith is an essential part of Christianity.
 1. (Hebrews 11:6) It is impossible to please God without faith.
 2. Faith is essential; however, God requires His children to have a "working" faith.
 - B. A general definition of faith: "A conviction, full of joyful trust, that Jesus is the Messiah - the divinely appointed author of eternal salvation in the kingdom of God, conjoined with obedience to Christ" (Thayer).
 1. From its definition we learn that faith which lacks obedience is not true faith.
 2. This is the point emphasized by James.
- II. (vs.14) JAMES ASKED 2 QUESTIONS ABOUT FAITH AND WORKS
 - A. (#1) What profit is there for a Christian to claim to have faith that is not accompanied by works?
 1. This question was answered in ch.1.
 2. (1:22-24) One who is not a doer of the Word is not profited.
 3. (1:25) One who does the will of God will be profited.
 - B. (#2) Can faith that is not accompanied by works save anyone?
 - C. These 2 questions indicate that there is no profit or salvation found in faith that is not demonstrated by works of obedience.
- III. (vs.15-16) JAMES ILLUSTRATED THE POINT BEING MADE
 - A. Suppose a brother or sister needs clothing or food.
 - B. The situation involves a Christian tells this one in need to depart in peace and to be warmed and filled without supplying those things that are needed.
 - C. There is no profit in this for either person.
 1. The one in need has not profited because he is still in need.
 2. The other person has not profited because he has not obeyed God's will.
 3. This kind of faith will be condemned at the judgment (Matthew 25:41-46a).
- IV. (vs.17) JAMES CONCLUDED BY STATING: *"EVEN SO FAITH, IF IT HATH NOT WORKS, IS DEAD, BEING ALONE"*