

James 2:18-26

Introduction:

1. In his letter James addressed a number of important subjects relating to Christianity.
2. In ch.1-2 he wrote about:
 - a. "facing temptations" (1:2-18)
 - b. "hearing and doing the Word" (1:19-27)
 - c. "respect of persons" (2:1-13)
 - d. "faith and works" (2:14-26).
3. We pointed out previously from 2:14-17 that there is no profit in having faith that is not accompanied by works.
4. James continued his discussion of faith and works in 2:18-26 by dealing with:
 - a. an objection that he seems to have anticipated (vs.18)
 - b. 3 examples of faith (vs.19-26).

Discussion:

- I. (vs.18) JAMES SEEMS TO HAVE ANTICIPATED AN OBJECTION
 - A. (vs.14-17) He clearly showed that faith without works is dead.
 - B. Someone might respond by saying, "You have faith, and I have works."
 1. It appears that this objection would come from someone believing that faith can be separated from works.
 2. He believes that God will accept "faith only" or "faith accompanied by works."
 - C. James' response: "Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works."
 1. Faith cannot be touched or handled.
 2. However, there is a sense in which it can be seen because it is demonstrated by the works that a person does (Mark 2:1-5).
 - D. By examining various examples of faith we can determine which kind pleases God.
- II. (vs.19-26) 3 EXAMPLES OF FAITH
 - A. Example #1: the faith of demons (vs.19-20).
 1. (vs.19a) One who believes that there is 1 God does well (Hebrews 11:6); however, just believing that there is 1 God will not save anyone.
 2. (vs.19b) Demons believe that there is 1 God, and they even tremble (Luke 4:33-35); however, demons are doomed to torment (Matthew 8:28-29).
 3. (vs.20) From the faith of demons we learn that merely believing that there is 1 God will not save anyone.
 - B. Example #2: the faith of Abraham (vs.21-24).
 1. (Genesis 22:1-14) God tested Abraham by telling him to offer Isaac as a burnt offering.
 2. Abraham demonstrated his great faith by obeying God's instructions (Hebrews 11:17-19).
 3. Consequently, Abraham was called "the Friend of God."
 4. (vs.24) From Abraham's faith we learn that we are justified by an obedient faith and not by faith only.
 - C. Example #3: the faith of Rahab (vs.25-26).
 1. (Joshua 2) Rahab protected the spies who were sent to Jericho by Joshua.
 2. She also demonstrated her faith by her actions (Hebrews 11:31).
 3. (vs.26) From Rahab's faith we learn that a living faith is accompanied by works.