

# Dead Christian Life Faith

*James 2:14-26*

## 1. Dead Christian Life Faith

- 1.1. The subject of James 2:14-26 is Christian life faith, not eternal salvation faith.
- 1.2. This faith will apply Bible doctrine and so will save or deliver the believer during life.
- 1.3. Both God and people see this active or living faith.

## 2. Verse Explanation

- 2.1. James 2:14: James asks a question about non-working faith. This question expects a “no” answer. He concludes that non-working faith cannot help you in life.
- 2.2. James 2:15: Illustration: A believer needs clothes and food, so he asks another believer – one who says he has Christian life faith – for help.
- 2.3. James 2:16: This believer with non-working faith answers, “Good luck and God bless you” but gives no help.
- 2.4. James 2:17: By answering this way he shows his non-working faith or faith without works. His faith does nothing; it is separated from what is going on in life and so is dead.
- 2.5. James 2:18: Then someone – a believer – now questions the person with non-working faith. He says, “How can I see your faith when all you say is ‘go in peace?’ I, on the other hand, can show you my faith by helping out this one who needs food and clothes.” Works or Christian service display Christian life faith.
- 2.6. James 2:19: The questioner continues by saying that the believer with non-working faith acts just like demons act. The demons believe the correct doctrine – that the Lord is unique – but they do not love Him (Deuteronomy 5:4-5). Now, this believer believes that God can provide food and clothes, but he does not follow up his belief by doing what God has asked believers to do for others that need help.
- 2.7. James 2:20: James steps back into the discussion and asks the believer with non-working faith for a decision. James asks if he has gotten the point that a faith that does nothing is useless for the demands of life. This conclusion was illustrated by the believer who refused to help the one who needed food and clothes and also by the demons that believe the doctrine of God but do not love God.
- 2.8. James 2:21: This question about Abraham expects a “yes” answer. Abraham had been a believer for some time when this Isaac event took place. His work – applying his faith in God’s statement that God will bless the nations through Isaac – justified him or proved that he was living his faith.
- 2.9. James 2:22: Abraham followed up his faith with action. His action or application of what he believed engaged his faith so the faith became better, stronger, and more complete. This was just the opposite of the believer who said, “Go in peace,” and of the demons.
- 2.10. James 2:23: Abraham began with faith in the promise of God. Through faith at that point, he gained salvation (salvation justification by faith [Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:1-5]). This same faith then began to work in his life and he then became God’s friend because he and God walked together with the same purpose, interests, and values – which is true of friends (Christian Way of Life Justification by Works).
- 2.11. James 2:24: There are, then, two kinds of justification. God and people declare you justified because you demonstrated your faith through the application of Bible doctrine. Every believer who consistently obeys the Lord as a result of his faith – serves the Lord based upon the filling of the Holy Spirit and Bible doctrine – is God’s friend.
  - 2.11.1. Justification by faith in Christ apart from any work for eternal salvation, God justifies the believer and gives him eternal salvation.

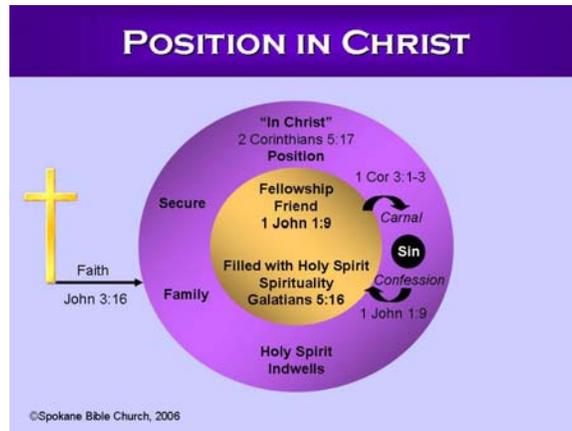


2.11.2. Justification by works based upon the filling of the Holy Spirit and Bible doctrine during the Christian life.

2.12. James 2:25: Rahab's case was the same as Abraham's: she staked her life and reputation on her belief. She hid the Hebrew scouts from Jericho's people, then helped them to escape unseen. Why? Because she believed God was with Israel and that Israel was worth helping. Hers was a working faith – one that continued working after her initial faith decision in the God of Israel.



2.13. James 2:26: Without a human spirit, a physical body is dead or no good. It is just a mass of tissue. Christian life faith is just like the body. The body needs the human spirit to live and function. Faith needs works (application of Bible doctrine in Christian service) to stay alive and useful.



### 3. Summary Principles

- 3.1. James's subject in James 2:14-26 is Christian life faith, not salvation faith.
- 3.2. James does not question the presence of salvation faith in the life of a person with dead Christian life faith. He does question the usefulness in life of the faith that refused to do what it ought to do, namely, take God at His Word so that His Word directs our life.
- 3.3. Just as the human body is enlivened by its human spirit, so faith is enlivened by divine good works.
- 3.4. A working faith is very useful in our life. This working faith demonstrates what we believe; people see this demonstration and say that our faith really means something to us; God sees our working faith and calls us His friend.
- 3.5. Put your faith into action in all of your life. Apply Bible doctrine through the Holy Spirit and faith.

### 4. An Active or Life Faith Will

- 4.1. Deliver believers from being controlled by tests and problems of life (James 2:14).
- 4.2. Put divine love (source dependent love or unconditional love) into action for others (James 2:15-16; 1 John 3:17-18).
- 4.3. Witness about your beliefs (James 2:18).
- 4.4. Justify or demonstrate your Christian way of life to God and people (James 2:21, 23-25).
- 4.5. Cause your faith to grow (James 2:22).
- 4.6. Make you God's friend (James 2:23).