

FAITH and WORKS (#2)

Request: “I have become confused regarding how believing and work fit into salvation. Could you shed some light on it for me?”

I am assuming that this confusion comes from a misunderstanding of passages like James 2:14-26.

James 2:14-26 is addressed to **church age Jewish believers** (Jms.2:14) – “My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism.” (Jms.2:1)

The Greek noun for faith (pistis) is used eleven times and the verb for believe (pisteuo) is used three times in our lesson text.

Note that there are six questions in our lesson text (Jms.2:14, 14, 16, 20, 21, and 25). The first three expect a NO answer while the last three expect a YES.

James uses Christian apologetics to answer some objections from legalists regarding faith verses works:

- Salvation (Phase I) (Acts 15:1, 11)
- The Christian Life (Phase II) (Jms.2:14-20) (if anyone says)

Then James will use two extreme examples to teach how faith works to complete the Word of God in the Plan of God, in a believer’s life. (Phase II)

- (Jms.2:21-24) Abraham
- (Jms.2:25-26) Rahab

This lesson will teach five aspects of how faith and works fit together in the plan of God.
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Question: Since our lesson text was addressed to believers, what did James mean by “What use (to ophelos) [profit or advantage] is it, **my brethren**, If (3cc) anyone says he has faith, but he has not works? Can (dunami / p.m.ind) faith save (sozo / a.a.infin) him?” (Jms.2:14) [negative rhetorical] (Greek word ‘me’/ **NO**).

1. It is important to understand that the Plan of God has three phases to salvation for the believer.

- **Phase One (Ph I) Salvation** The gospel of Jesus Christ (Saving faith)
(Rom.1:16; 1 Cor.15:1-4; Eph.2:8-9).
- **Phase Two (Ph II) The Believer in time** (CWL and CBD) (Working faith)
(Ps.34:6; James 2:14-26; Phil.2:12-13).
- **Phase Three (Ph III) The believer in eternity** - with the Lord (Eternal faith)
(2 Cor.5:6-10; Heb.11:6; Rev.7:10).

“Faith in Christian Way of Life (CWL) must have the Word of God (Categorical Bible Doctrine) as the working object to complete that faith (The faith cycle).”

2. In our lesson text, James compares working faith to dead faith (Jms.2:17, 26)

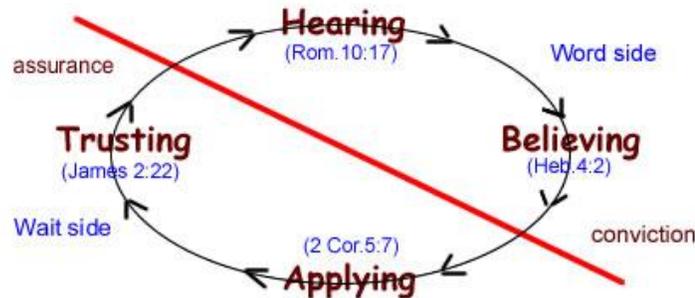
The CWL is not a works system for faith, but rather a faith system for works (Divine Production).

A working faith is productive according to the working object of the Word of God (Matt.13:18-23).

A working faith is based on the following formula:

- **Faith** must have a working object (W/O)
- **That** W/O is the Word of God, Categorical Bible Doctrine (CBD)
- **That CBD** must be cycled through the four stages of the Faith Cycle to completion
- **That completion** of a believer's faith is based on God's faithfulness and not his / her's!

3. **Proof of a working faith is divine production of the completion stage of the faith cycle.**



4. **James gives Abraham and Rahab as examples of working faith: and.**

- **(Jms.2:21-24) Abraham:** Here is an example of a spiritually mature believer's (Super Grace) faith being justified by divine production (works).
 - Faith exhales the Word of God (working object) through four stages of faith cycle (Jms.2:22) (**teleioo** /a.p.ind / vs.24). Note two different words for "see"(Jms.2:22) [blepo] and (Jms.2:14) [Horao).
 - Gen.22:1-17 occurred about 50 years after Abraham's salvation (James 2:21-24; Heb.11:17-19).
- **(Jms.2:25-26) Rahab:** Likewise (homoios) establishes the same formula for **Rahab**.
 - Rahab was a Gentile harlot of Jericho who got saved because God is responsible to God consciousness (Rom.1:18-32).

What's the answer to questions of:

- James 2:21? (Rom.4:2-3)
- James 2:24? (Rom.3:28)

Rahab is an example of a spiritually immature believer's faith being justified by divine production (Josh.2:1-21; James 2:24).

5. **Doctrinal principles:**

- The merit is not in the person, but in the working object (CBD) of his faith that vindicates God's Word and produces experiential Righteousness (+R) in the believer (James 2:22-24; Heb.11).
- The issue is not faith verses works, but the faith cycle producing divine works. Divine works vindicated CBD working through the faith cycle on the basis of the faithfulness of God to His Word (Rom.4:18-21; 1 Cor.1:9; Titus 1:9; Heb.10:23).
- Faith is not something we do for God but rather what we believe God will do according to His Word (CBD) for us (Heb.11:1; Rom.4:21-25).