

# SHOW JAMES

PART FIVE

*faith that works*

JAMES 2:14-26

## Key points

Think back through the message.  
What stuck out?

### The Law of Liberty

- James 2:12
- The Law of Moses = rewards and punishments
- Luke 15:31

### Faith without works is dead (negative)

- vs.14
- Faith is connected to trust and loyalty
- Two words for faith in Latin
  - Fides = fidelity / trust
  - Credo = to believe / mental assent
- vs.17
- vs.20
- We are not saved by doctrine or theology, no more than we are saved by good deeds
- We are saved by the grace of Jesus Christ
- vs.15-16

### Faith without works is dead (doctrinal)

- vs.18-19
- The Shema: *"Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God, the LORD is one"*
- Now that Jesus Christ has come the Shema is insufficient
- The devil and his demons have the right doctrine, but do they have the right faith

### Faith without works is dead (positive)

- vs.21-23
- Faith is progressive and needs completion
- True faith results in actions / sacrifice / effort / inconvenience
- The absence of faith makes everything feels like a horrible burden
- vs.25-26
- James is not prescriptive, it is diagnostic
- *'Is your service to Jesus out of religious obligation, or is it a pleasure to serve the Lord?'*

## A DEVIL'S FAITH

### A FAITH THAT DOES NOT SAVE IS THE FLAVOR OF FAITH TODAY

In James 2:18-19 there is a debate recorded about whether faith is genuine if does not motivate a person to good works. The protagonist is arguing that a faith of "word" only is sufficient to be called genuine faith. That is as long as you profess belief in the right things, it really doesn't matter how you live. James opposes this view with three powerful arguments. First by his own example (vs. 18). Second by pointing that even demons respond to what they believe, by shuddering (vs. 19). Third, by point to past experiences in Jewish history where the faithful acted boldly because of their beliefs (vs. 21-25). Sandwiched between two pieces of historical evidence; i.e. personal experience and the historical experience of the Jews, it seems unlikely that James was appealing to imaginary creatures when he tells us about the shuddering demons.

My intent isn't to be negative, it's simply to point out the massive chasm that exists between who we identify ourselves as a people, and the behaviour which tells a different story. We are a nation that professes Christianity (over 50% of the population) - some would say that makes Australia a Christian nation - without the corresponding works and fruitfulness of life that the Bible says marks a genuinely born-again person.

What's my point? It's simply to make this assertion "Does the Bible motivate to action?" If not, you may be worse off than the demons. They have enough common sense to shudder at what they know. How much more should we be motivated to bold, faithful, joy-filled living than they who know God perfectly, and perfectly know what their end will be. This is that point that James is making, "Faith without works is dead" that is faith that is in word only, that is verbal only and not backed up with conviction and life transformation.

Learn from the demons and respond to what you know and you will be better than them as demonstrating and life that is shaped in response to the Scripture. You have an opportunity they never will have, you have an opportunity to respond positively to the message of the Bible. You have an opportunity to see it's Gospel transform your life, unlike they who were shown no mercy and who have no hope. That is a plot twist that even the best Hollywood movie could never imagine. That is something that is truly worth shuddering over!

Adapted from: [www.anchoredchurch.org](http://www.anchoredchurch.org)

