

AM 02-15 Show Me Your Faith

Springboard Scripture

John 15:8. This passage prepares the audience by directing attention to the necessity of visible fruit and God-centered outcomes before approaching James's demand for demonstrable faith.

Hook

Life is full of talk. People make claims, talk about what they believe, and say what they stand for. But groups don't hold together because of talk. They hold together because people do what they say.

The same is true with faith. It's easy to learn religious words. It's easy to say you believe. The hard part is living it in a way people can see. A faith that only talks never proves anything. The real question isn't how sincere you sound. The real question is what your life shows.

The church lives in public. People are watching. They notice how we live, and they make up their minds. The issue isn't being perfect. The issue is being real. Real faith leaves signs. Real loyalty changes choices. Real trust moves you to act.

This passage doesn't let faith hide behind words. It doesn't let belief stay private. It calls faith out into the open to be seen.

Introduction

James is writing to people who could talk a good game and still have empty faith. He doesn't attack faith. He tests it. He doesn't lower the value of trust in God. He demands proof of it.

The question isn't whether faith exists in your heart. The question is whether it shows up in your life. The passage puts two ways side by side and makes

the difference clear. One way talks. The other way shows. One stays in words. The other moves into action.

James makes this public on purpose, because following Jesus is lived out in public. People see how we live. They weigh it. They remember it. This text doesn't let us hide in definitions or private claims. It calls for proof that can be seen.

This protects the church from empty talk and protects God's name from being carried by lives that deny Him. The point is simple and strong: faith must be shown, and it must be shown by works. Anything less leaves faith untested and unproven.

This sermon follows that path—showing the contrast, the demand, and the decision the text presses on us.

Thesis

Faith is demonstrated, not declared, and its reality is proven by visible obedience.

Lesson Alignment (Bloom's Taxonomy)

1. The claimed contrast between faith and works

A. Two claims placed side by side

I. Two positions

- **Clear difference** — The verse shows two claims next to each other. One talks about faith. The other talks about works. The problem is not what God wants, but how people talk about their faith. The text is not asking for words. It is

asking to be shown. In real church life, this means what we say we believe has to match how we live.

James 2:18 (NASB 1995)

But someone may well say, “You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works.”

The verse does not let faith stay private. It demands proof you can see.

- **Direct comparison** — One side is told to show faith without works. The other side says it will show faith by works. The issue is not two different people, but two different ways of proving something. In homes and in the church, this calls for our actions to match our words.

James 2:18 (NASB 1995)

But someone may well say, “You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works.”

II. A split that is assumed

- **Claimed split** — The statement assumes faith and actions can be separated. James does not teach that. He challenges it. He treats that idea as something that has to be tested.

When families or churches accept this split, their witness gets weak and their lives drift.

James 2:18 (NASB 1995)

But someone may well say, “You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works.”

- **Real-life tension** — This is not just theory. One way cannot show proof. The other way can. The verse settles it by putting the weight on action. In daily life, this is settled by obedience, not by excuses.

James 2:18 (NASB 1995)

But someone may well say, “You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works.”

Truth: If faith cannot be seen in action, it is still just a claim.

II. The demand to display faith without works

A. Call for demonstration

1. Requirement of evidence

- a. Public showing — The command to “show” places faith in the public arena. The text does not permit faith to hide behind private

assertion. The requirement is evidence that can be observed. This shapes the culture of the church toward accountability and visible obedience.

James 2:18 (NASB 1995)

But someone may well say, "You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works."

Matthew 7:20 (NASB 1995)

So then, you will know them by their fruits.

The text trains the eye of the disciple to look for evidence rather than slogans.

b. Verifiable display — Visibility is God's intention for good works, not self-display but God's glory. This calls households to order daily life so that obedience is neither hidden nor neglected. > ****Matthew 5:16 (NASB 1995)**** > Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

2. Absence of visible proof

a. Unseen claim — The text presents a spoken response without corresponding action. Words exist, but need remains. The question exposes the emptiness of speech without supply and presses the church toward tangible care rather than verbal sympathy.

James 2:15–16 (NASB 1995)

If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,” and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that?

b. Unproven assertion — *The absence of deeds leaves the assertion unproven and warns against teaching speech without practice, especially across generations.*

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If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,” and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that?

Truth: *A claim that produces no*

visible obedience proves nothing about the heart.

III. The resolve to display faith by works

A. Chosen means of showing

1. Method of proof

a. Visible action — The text states the method plainly: works show faith. Discipleship is active obedience.

James 2:18 (NASB 1995)

But someone may well say, “You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works.”

James 2:21 (NASB 1995)

Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar?

b. Observable conduct — Obedience appears in concrete decisions across varied circumstances.

James 2:25 (NASB 1995)

In the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when

she received the messengers and sent them out by another way?

2. Visible evidence

a. Demonstrated reality — Daily conduct, especially speech, reveals the governed heart.

James 3:2 (NASB 1995)

For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well.

b. Established credibility — Observed deeds glorify God and silence accusation, shaping congregational witness in the community.

1 Peter 2:12 (NASB 1995)

Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.

1 Peter 2:15 (NASB 1995)

For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men.

Truth: Faith proves its reality by

obedient action that can be seen and tested.

Conclusion

James leaves no room for a hidden, untested faith. The passage presses belief into action and places confession under the light of obedience. Where faith lives, works appear; where works are absent, the claim stands exposed. The call is simple and severe: show faith by works, and let obedience carry the weight of testimony before God and men.

Invitation

The text calls for more than words. It calls for obedience that proves trust. If faith has remained only a claim, let it become a life. If confession has not yet taken form in obedience, let obedience begin now. Turn from empty profession and commit to a faith that is shown, not merely said.

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