

James

It is time to grow up!

Lesson 9

Faith or Deeds

James 2:14-26

What Good Is It?



The shadowy questions: What good is it?

- **Has there been a time in the last week where you doubted?**
- **We all have made a profession of faith sometime in the past but what about now?**
- **“The entrance fee into heaven is a gift of God, it costs us nothing, but the subscription rate requires everything”**
- **How do I know if I am doing deeds, acting, working, making enough effort to equal my faith?**
- **Where is the joy that James seems to tell me I must have in trials?**
- **What if my reaction to someone different than I is less than equal?**



What use is it, **my brothers and sisters**, if someone says he has faith, but he has no works? Can that faith save him? 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,” yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? In the same way, faith also, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.

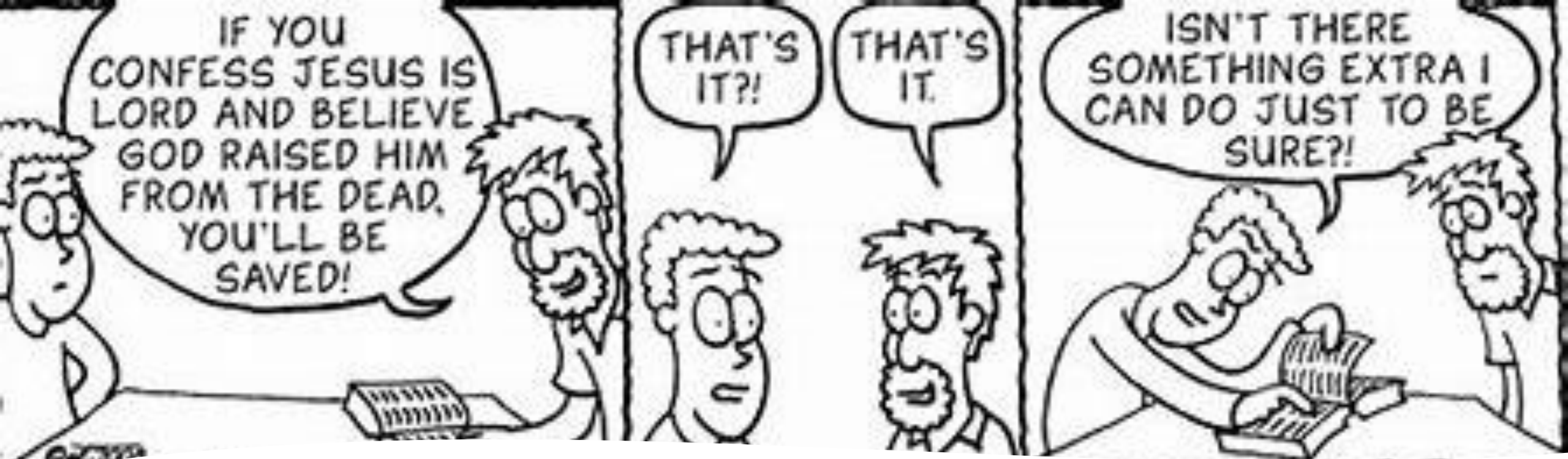
But someone may well say, “You have faith, and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works.”

You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. But are you willing to acknowledge, you foolish person, that faith without works is useless? Was our father Abraham not justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “And Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,” and he was called a friend of God.

You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone.

In the same way, was Rahab the prostitute not justified by works also when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way?

For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.



Roadmap time

- **13 verses = ½ a chapter, ~8.3% of the entire letter.**
- **Probably the most controversial section in the letter**
- **Break it down into four lessons.**
 1. First this overview Lesson #9 is of remainder of the second chapter.
 2. Lesson 10 will be looking specifically at verses 14-17. **Profession and Practice**
 3. Lesson 11 will be understanding James' ideas in 18,19. **Not "either or" , but both and."**
 4. Lesson 12 we will look at 20-26. **Proof of faith.**
- **We need to understand the whole before we look at the parts.**
- **controversy**

This study by default must look at it from James's point of view.

- **James the Brother of Jesus was a Jew**
- **He learned along side of his brother the rituals, customs, observances of the law.**
- **Some sources suggest James was a part of the Jewish sect of the Pharisees.**



Terms of Endearment

- **Belief**

- **Defined:**

- **The acceptance that a statement is true or that something exists.**

- **Characteristics:**

- **Based upon information.**
 - **An acknowledgement of a truth without necessarily leading to action.**

- **Faith**

- **Defined:**

- **Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.**
 - **Complete trust or confidence in someone or something.**

- **Characteristics:**

- **It is usually associated with God or a higher power than self.**
 - **Leads to action. The exhibition of faith is in deeds, acts, works.**

Key Points:

- Faith goes beyond belief, by influencing behavior and choices.
- Belief is accepting truth, and Faith is about trusting God and acting on that trust.
- Faith is like a bridge that connects belief to action

That which I do.

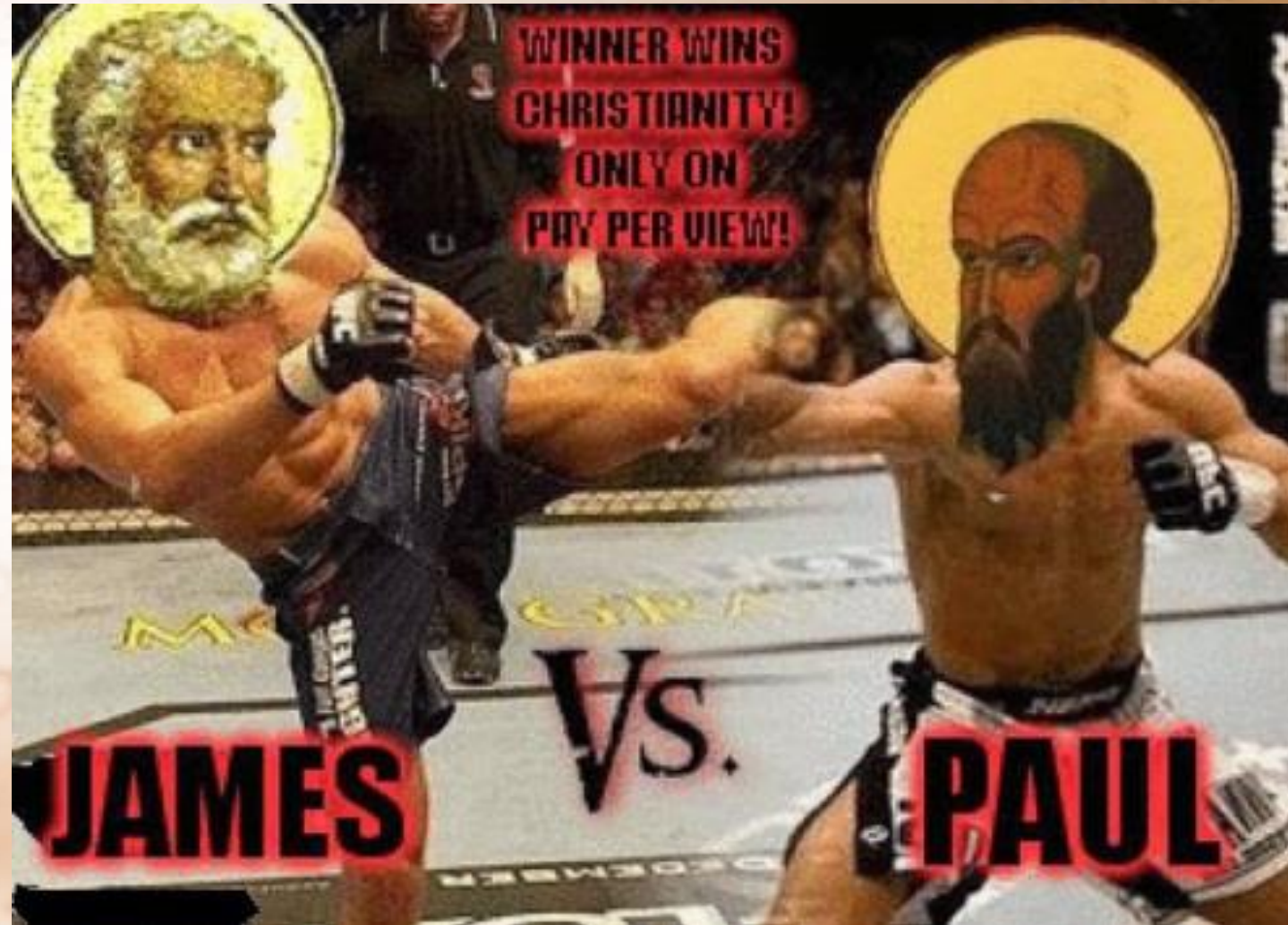
- 1. Deed** An action that is performed intentionally or consciously. A deed is a willful effort and not an automatic reaction to external circumstances.
- 2. Acts** Take an action or do something. A generic account or historical retelling of something done. Acts are the things done and remembered. Usually seen as turning point in personal history.
- 3. Works** Activity involving mental or physical effort done to achieve a purpose or result. Works are the result of an internalized want, need or desire which requires effort.

Division

- **The relationship between faith and works is a central topic in the Bible and is a source of division between Protestants and Catholics:**
 - **Protestants believe that salvation is achieved through faith in Christ alone, and that good works are evidence of that salvation. They believe that good works alone do not merit salvation, and that no one can "buy" heaven with good works.**
 - **Catholics believe that both faith and good works are necessary for salvation. They believe that good works are works of love, such as charity, and that they are not mere external deeds but faith itself.**

Controversy

- **Assumption that Paul and James disagree.**
 1. **Both faith and works are important in salvation. Believers are justified by faith, but works are evidence of genuine salvation.**
 2. **The debate shapes understanding of salvation, motivates moral living, guides engagement with societal issues, fosters spiritual growth, and influences relationships.**



Let's get ready to rumble!

- 1. Faith only saves “I said it and that is good enough”**
 - Assurance forever
 - I don't have to do anything else
- 2. Works are proof of salvation “I am just following the lead”**
 - 1. Abraham did something that proved his belief**
 - 2. Rahab did something that saved two men in a basket**
 - 3. Jesus did something that saved the world**
- 3. It is not one or the other, it is both. It is not about salvation but the result.**
 - 1. Two states of faith, Living faith and dead faith.**
 - 2. The issue is the extreme ends of the argument.**

Πίστις - PISTIS - FAITH

Keys to understanding

- 1. Understanding the context**
- 2. Understanding the language**
- 3. Understanding the message**

