

16th Sunday after Pentecost, 15th Sunday after Trinity – 2024

Saturday, 9/7 at 4:00 | Sunday, 9/8 at 9:00



“Faith is a living, busy, active, mighty thing!”

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther

Text: James 2:14-18 NAS 1995

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: How is a person saved?

- **By faith alone** OR
- **By faith + works**

I hope you answered, “faith alone”; however, *in today’s text*, the Bible says: **“Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead...”**

Think about that... ***faith without works is dead!*** So, it sounds like “faith alone” *must be wrong!*

Please listen carefully:

- To understand about your own salvation!
- To learn how to explain this apparent contradiction.

1. **A CLAIM of Faith, *But the Person has No Works*:**

a. The Text:¹⁴ **What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith** [*that is, claims to have faith*] **but he has no [$\mu\eta$] works? Can that faith save him?**

i. “faith”:

1. Note Carefully: The text is talking about someone who **SAYS** he has faith, *but does **NOT** have faith, he is merely CLAIMING to have faith!*
2. Multitudes of People: They **CLAIM** to have faith *and even believe they have faith*, but many are deceived – *and don’t even know it.*
3. What is faith? Here is an easy definition: **Forsaking All I Trust Him.**
 - a. Forsaking All: The HS enables us to put ***no trust for heaven in anything we have done.***
 - b. I Trust Him: The HS enables us to put ***all trust for heaven in Jesus.***

ii. The Questions and Answers in the Text:

1. The Text Contains Two Questions: **“What use is it...?”** and **“Can that faith save him?”**
2. What are the Answers? Both answers are **“No.”** How can we be certain? Because both questions in the Greek include the negative

particle, $\mu\eta$ (pronounced *may*), therefore, the answer to each question is “**No.**”

- a. What use is such faith? It is of **NO use, it is useless!**
 - b. Can such faith save a person from his sins? **NO!**
- b. The Example: ¹⁵ **If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food,** ¹⁶ **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?** // Again, from the Greek text, we know the answer: SAYING without GIVING is of **NO use!**
2. **When There Are No Works, Faith Is Dead:** ¹⁷ **Even so faith [that is, *the claim of having faith*], if it has no works, is dead, *being by itself.***
- a. Dead Faith Cannot Save: Dead faith is when someone *falsely claims to have faith.*
 - b. Dead Faith Cannot Produce Works:
 - i. Why? Works that are acceptable to God **MUST COME FROM FAITH!**
 - ii. **Hebrews 11:6** “And without faith it is impossible to please [God]...”
3. **Works Can Show Faith:** ¹⁸ **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.”**

- a. What Are Works? The Greek word is ἔργα (pronounced *erga*). Works are “a practical demonstration or proof of [faith] (BW, Friberg).
- b. “show me your faith without the works”:
 - i. Faith Is Invisible: *Only God can see our faith!* A person can CLAIM to have faith, but without works, *his faith is dead!*
 - ii. Think about a Person Lying Down: Someone may say, “He is alive!” However, if he has **NO breathing** and **NO heartbeat**, thus **NO evidence of life**, *then he is dead!*
- c. “I will show you my faith by my works”: **Let’s be careful here!** Some are true and some are false:
 - i. True Christian: A person **with** *godly sorrow* and *trust in Jesus for eternal life*, who OPENLY demonstrates *love for God and neighbor*.
 - ii. False Christian: A person **lacking** godly sorrow and/or trust in Jesus, but who OPENLY does good things. What did Jesus say about such people? “I know your deeds; you have a **reputation of being alive, but you are dead**” (Rev. 3:1 NIV).

Let Us Pray: Dear HS, grant us ♦saving faith and ♦the evidence of God-honoring works! For all who are deceived, ♦show them the truth and ♦give them the gift of saving faith!

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