

Is Your Faith Real?

James 2:14-26

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I'm sure that you're familiar with the common expression, "Your actions speak louder than your words." That's really the theme of the whole book of James, especially our text today. The topic of today's text is the central theme of the book of James, which is faith that works or faith that brings fruit into our lives. As it is in our day, so it was in the day of James: some claimed to have faith in Jesus, yet their life showed no evidence of that faith.

We've all known people who say, "Well, I'm a Christian, I believe in God, I go to church, I've been baptized, I've been confirmed, I've gone through catechism," but when you look at their life, the way they are living is inconsistent with what they are professing. So their practice doesn't match their profession. It's one thing to say, "I'm a Christian"; it's another thing to be a Christian. Anyone can profess to believe in God, but do they possess true, authentic, genuine salvation? So James is saying in our text, "Examine yourself to see if you are really a believer, if your faith is real."

Growing up, we used to sing in Sunday school, "If you're saved and you know it, then your life will surely show it." You can't just say you're saved; you need to be saved, and then you'll show it by the way you live your life.

In order to see if your faith is real, I want to ask three questions or give you three main points. They are questions we want to see answered in our text.

The first question: "Is your faith just an empty claim?" Or the opposite would be that your faith is not just a claim. It's one thing to say that I have faith; it's another thing to have true, genuine faith.

Let's look at James 2:14-17. "What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says..."—this is a key word, "says"—"...he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?" A better translation is, "Can that kind of faith save him?" What kind of faith? The kind that just says with the lips that "I am a Christian."

Verse 15, "If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,' but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead."

Anyone can say, "I have faith" or "I am a Christian." But if there are no works, it is just an empty profession. James is dealing with a person who is all talk and no walk. They talk the talk but they don't walk the walk. So James wants us to examine our lives to see whether we are truly in the faith.

There are some things about this empty profession I want to point out. Number one, it cannot save you, verse 14. "What does it profit, my brethren..." Notice in verse 1 of the same chapter, James is addressing the "brethren"; in verse 5, he says, "my beloved brethren"; and now in verse 14, he says, "my brethren." James is writing to believers, but he is warning those who are false believers to examine their faith.

Continuing in verse 14, "...if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith..."—or "that kind of faith"—"...save him?" The question is not "Can faith save him?" Rather it is asking, "Can that kind of faith save him?" The kind of faith James is talking about is professing faith without works. The kind that just talks without the walk. "Can that kind of faith save him?" The answer is "No." So James asks two rhetorical questions in verse 14, which demand negative answers.

There are a group of questions in this text I want you to note. In verse 14, there are two questions. And verse 16 ends with a question: "What does it profit?" The answer is "Nothing." So just a profession of faith cannot truly save you.

In verse 16, it says, "If someone says..." Notice the "says." Verse 16 says, "One of you says," and in verse 18, "Someone will say..." In my Bible I've circled the words "says" and "say." So the emphasis is on talk but there is no walk. Anyone can "say" that "I'm a Christian," but saying "I'm a Christian" is not the same as being a Christian, a true child of God.

John Bunyan wrote the famous allegory, *Pilgrim's Progress*. Next to the Bible, everyone should read *Pilgrim's Progress*. John Bunyan was in prison when he wrote this allegory many years ago. It is about a man named Christian, who is fleeing the city of destruction, and is on his way to the Celestial City. On his journey, he meets many other people and has encounters with them. One of them in this allegory is a man named Talkative. Christian meets Talkative, and he says about Talkative, "All his religion was only in his tongue." I like that. He wasn't a true believer. He just had the talk, but he did not have the walk. So that kind of faith does not save.

Notice also in verses 15-16, that kind of faith doesn't serve. So it doesn't save you, and there is no evidence of that salvation by serving others. And James gives us a hypothetical situation in these verses. "If a brother or sister..."—they are believers in the Lord—"...is naked..."—or "scantily dressed"; they don't have adequate clothes—"...and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,' but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?" The answer to this question is, "Absolutely nothing."

Then the application is in verse 17: "Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead." So if you go to In-N-Out and order a double-double with extra onion, mustard added with the spread and a grilled bun, you're stoked. You eat and you're filled, and then on your way out, you see a guy huddling over in the corner of the patio with no shoes or coat, hardly any clothes, he looks hungry and you say, "Haven't I seen you at Revival Christian Fellowship?"

“Yeah; I go to that church.”

“Well, good to see you. God bless you. Be filled. Be warm!” Then you get in your car, and as you’re driving away, you think, That guy looked pretty hungry. Maybe I should have offered to buy him some food. That guy looked cold. Maybe I should have given him my sweatshirt or helped him out. So what good are your words of “God bless you. Good to see you. Be warm. Be healthy. God watch over you. See you later,” if you don’t give them the things that are needful?

Notice that the activity that our faith should lead us to is to be philanthropic in our actions: feed the hungry, take care of those who are needing clothes. If you’re truly a believer, you should be moved with compassion. And compassion is not just pity, which weeps and walks away; it’s coming to help, staying to help and serving. If you don’t give them those things which they need, then “faith by itself...is dead.” So you’re not truly a believer, because your actions don’t show it.

1 John 3:17-18 says, “But whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word...”—there it is—“...or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.” Your religion shouldn’t just be on your tongue. You shouldn’t just have the talk; you should have the walk. If you see somebody in need, and you’re truly a believer, you should do your best to meet that need and to help. If faith is just an empty claim, then you’re not a true believer and, verse 17, your faith “is dead.”

For years, many people have felt that James, in this section of his epistle, is writing things that are contradictory to the epistles of Paul, where Paul says, “By grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” But Paul goes on to say that “We are His workmanship...”—which is “poiéma” in the Greek—“...created in Christ Jesus for good works.” So we are saved by grace, but the grace that saves is not alone; it will manifest or demonstrate works or fruit.

Even Martin Luther called the book of James an “epistle of straw.” He felt like it didn’t even belong in the Bible. So many mistakenly believe that James and Paul contradict each other. Paul says that we are saved by faith, and James teaches that we are saved by faith, and that faith results in works.

Whenever you find an obscure passage, like this one in James, which seems to be a contradiction, the unclear teaching of the Bible should always submit to the clear teaching of the Bible. The entire book of Romans, the entire book of Galatians, many parts of Ephesians—not just a passage or a verse—all teach that we are saved by grace.

The clear, overwhelming teaching of the Bible is that we are saved by grace alone through faith alone. Our works are not required for salvation; they are a result of our salvation. So don’t misinterpret our text as saying that we are saved by faith and works. Many make the mistake

that we believe in Jesus, but we have to work for it, as well.

If we were saved by grace plus works, then grace is no longer grace. You believe salvation's either by grace alone or you believe it's by grace plus works; you can't mingle the two for salvation. The truth is you are saved by grace alone.

Why would Jesus have to die on the Cross if we could just do good deeds and get to heaven? So Paul and James don't contradict each other; they complement each other. They are not from two different armies fighting each other as enemies. They are in the same army and back-to-back, fighting different enemies.

Paul is dealing with the salvation of our soul. And he's dealing with Jewish legalists, who believe that by keeping the works of the law of Moses is to be justified or to be declared righteous by God. Paul is teaching justification by faith.

James was dealing with people who say or profess to be Christian, but their life has no evidence of their Christianity. So he is challenging them as to whether they have a true or false profession.

So Paul and James are dealing with two, different issues. When James uses the word "justify," he's using it differently than Paul did in Romans and Galatians. Paul is talking about being justified before God in our salvation, in being declared righteous; James is talking about being justified before men, in them seeing our righteousness in the way we live, by seeing the evidence of our salvation. So when James uses the word "justification," it is more with the idea of vindication, or proof of our salvation. Works should follow true salvation, but they are not the cause of our salvation. Faith alone saves, but the faith that saves is not alone; it will manifest itself in works.

So with Paul, we have the root; in James, we have the fruit. So there are two, different issues going on here. When James talks about "works," he's not talking about the law of God or the law of Moses, he's talking about philanthropy or feeding the poor, taking care of the sick, showing love, mercy and grace or other philanthropic deeds in our lives. There are two, different ways they are using the same terms.

Paul says, "By the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin," Romans 3:20. But if you are truly saved, your life will manifest fruit. Jesus said, "You will know them by their fruits," Matthew 7:16.

Years ago, we had an orange tree in our backyard—I think it was an orange tree. We planted a little "orange" tree, watered it, took care of it for six years, but we never had any oranges. The tag said it was an orange tree. But the best way to know what kind of fruit tree you have is when it bears fruit. If it has oranges on it, it's an orange tree. If it has apples on it, it's an apple tree. If it has plums on it, it's a plum tree.

"You will know them by their fruits." If you're a Christian, you will bear fruit to the glory of God, in

the likeness of Christ. How much fruit and for how long will differ in individual's lives. But you are going to bear fruit, if you really have salvation and have been justified.

So I don't really believe that James and Paul contradict one another; they complement one another. John Calvin said, "Faith alone saves, but the faith that saves is not alone."

The point, then, is that genuine, authentic faith is not just an empty claim.

Here is the second question: "Is your faith just in a creed or in a doctrine that you believe?" We find that in verses 18-20. In these verses, James has an imaginary objector. This is a picture of someone he is imagining who would say just "say." Verse 18, "But someone will say, 'You have faith, and I have works.' Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish..."—or "vain" or "empty"—"...man, that faith without works is dead?"

Faith that has no works in your life is a demonic faith and is a dead faith. Real faith is more than believing a creed. James gives us an imaginary objector, in verse 18. And what they "say" is, "I have faith. I have faith. I have faith." That's wonderful. But let me see your faith by the way you live. You can't see faith, but you can see its effect. Someone said that it's like calories. Have you ever seen a calorie? No, but I've seen what it does. You don't see faith, but you see what it does.

Jesus healed the lame man when his friends, in faith, came to the house where Jesus was speaking. The place was packed out, so they go him up the outside stairs to the flat roof and tore a hole in the roof. I've always wondered whose house that was. Some say Peter's house, and Peter was freakin' out. "They're gonna pay for that roof!" As Jesus is speaking, daylight comes through the ceiling and on a mat, the friends are lowering the lame man down right in front of Jesus. There's a hush that falls over the room, and everyone is waiting to see what Jesus will do.

Then Luke 2:5 says, "Jesus saw their faith." He "saw" it. Then Jesus "said to the paralytic, 'Son, your sins are forgiven you.'" Jesus said to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." Then he picked up his mat and walked off.

Jesus saw their faith. What did he see? He saw the evidence of their faith. They had so much faith that they were willing to rip off the roof and lower their friend down, knowing that Jesus would heal him.

What about you? Can people "see" your faith? Can they "see" your compassion in action? Can they "see" your love for other people? Ask others, "Can you 'see' my faith? Is it evident in my life by my works?"

Verse 19 is a summary of the previous verses. James says, "You believe that there is one God. You do well." This is where I get the idea for the question, "Is your faith just an empty creed?"

James says it's good that this person is monotheistic; that he believes that there is only one God, Deuteronomy 6:4. He's orthodox. James says, "You do well." That's true. But big deal! "Even the demons believe—and tremble!" So the man says that he believes in God—no big deal. Even demons believe in God.

You can believe in all the right things and still not be a Christian. I believe in sound doctrine; I just preached a whole series on doctrine. There is nothing more important than sound doctrine. But believing it with your head, if you haven't trusted Jesus Christ with your heart and been born again, will not get you to heaven. You can have head knowledge of all the truths of the Bible and what is right, but if you don't trust Christ, you won't be saved. You can be close to salvation and still be lost. Close doesn't count.

I've asked people, "Are you a Christian?"

"Well, I'm almost a Christian. I'm kind of becoming a Christian."

You either are or you're not a Christian. And you can believe all the right things and still be lost.

By the way, in John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, there are many people who walked this road to the Celestial City, and right at the very end, at the gate of heaven, they go to hell, because they weren't saved. How sad.

Our text speaks of what is called "a false profession." They believe they're saved, they confess they believe, they have sound doctrine, they're orthodox, but they're not born again, they're not saved. Jesus told Nicodemus, who was a religious Jew and a teacher of the Jews, "Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." You can be this close, but so far away.

Notice verse 19 says that "The demons believe" with their minds. They believe in one God and were orthodox. There are no atheistic demons. Demons are not atheists. There are some atheists who are demons, but there are no demons who are atheists. And there are no atheists in hell either. They know there is God. So the demons believe with their minds, they believe in one God, they have information that is true—they're orthodox—and they tremble, so they have emotions. But there is no indication demons can be saved.

People can tremble and cry. Sometimes we see someone cry at an altar call or in church. "Oh, they're repenting." Maybe, maybe not. Maybe they're shoes are too tight. Maybe they got in trouble for something. I don't know. So they can believe with their mind, they can have true, orthodox belief, they can tremble and have emotion, but what is lacking is the will, the choice to trust Christ.

The closing statement, in verse 20 is, "But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?" The statement, "Do you want to know," is an invitation to learn. It says, "Don't you want to learn? Don't you want to be trained, be educated?" And here, again, is a question mark. So all these questions expect a "No" answer.

I was raised in the church from the time I was a small boy. And I was dedicated in the church. And I still vividly remember being eight years old and walking down the aisle of a small church inviting Jesus to forgive my sins. I wept and I cried. But when I left that church, my life really never changed. I realized I was young. It just might have been an emotion—I don't know. But it wasn't until I graduated from high school I gave my heart and surrendered my life and yielded everything to Jesus. That's when I had assurance that I was born again.

You might say, "Well, I was raised in the church. My daddy is a preacher. I went to Sunday school. I believe the Bible." You can have all the trappings and creed and information, but if you aren't born again, you're not a child of God. Have you simply trusted Christ? Have you been born again? This is why we say, "It's by faith alone, in Christ alone through grace alone."

If you haven't trusted Christ and been born again, you can believe all the right things, but they won't make you a Christian. It involves more than just the mind, more than just the emotions; your will must be involved in trusting Christ.

So here's the point: genuine faith is not mere acceptance of a creed.

Now here's the third question I want to ask and answer from verses 21-26. "Does your faith produce an obedient life?" Starting with verse 21, "Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, 'Abraham believed God, and it...'—that is, "his faith or belief"—"...was accounted to him..."—or "imputed"—"...for righteousness.' And he was called the friend of God."

Now we see the conclusion, in verse 24: "You see then that a man is justified by works..."—this is works before men; the works of philanthropy—"...and not by faith only. Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

Here James gives us two examples of real faith. Not of dead faith. Not of the faith that demons have. True faith. The examples are of two, Old Testament characters. One is a patriarch, Abraham, and one is a prostitute, Rahab. What a contrast!

James illustrated that Abraham was saved, because we see it by his works. But remember that this example of justification is before men and not before God. Then James gives us the example of the prostitute, Rahab. One is a Jew; the other a Gentile. One is a man; the other a woman. One is a friend of God; the other belonged to the enemies of God. James used these two illustrations to show that anyone can have a saving faith. Even Abraham needed to believe in order to be saved. Even Rahab needed to believe in order to be saved.

In verses 21-24, we first have the patriarch, Abraham. Notice the demonstration of Abraham's faith, verse 21. "Was not Abraham our father..."—what a great example of faith did Abraham have!—"...justified..."—or the idea is "vindicated" or "shown to be upright"—"...by works when..."—or "in that"—"...he offered Isaac his son on the altar?"

Make note that this took place in Genesis 22. In this chapter, God told Abraham to take his son Isaac and offer him on a mountain He would show them. And the next morning, Abraham “rose early in the morning.” I would have slept in late! It doesn’t take a lot for me to sleep in late. My wife tells me I have the gift of sleep. So I exercise my gift quite a bit.

But Abraham got up early. He was obedient. He saddled the donkey. He got the wood, the knife and took his son Isaac. He journeyed to the land of Moriah. By the way, there is a beautiful picture there. God has told Abraham, “Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love...”—this is the first time the word “love” appears in the Bible—“...and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you,” Genesis 22:2.

It’s interesting that the first time “love” appears in the Bible, it is in the context of a father’s love for his son. John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

This is a little side note, but I believe that the same mountain Abraham was to offer Isaac on is the same mountain on which Jesus died. Where Jesus died on Mount Calvary was the same Mount Moriah where Isaac was to be offered.

Then the Lord stopped Abraham from plunging the knife into Isaac. There was a ram caught in the bushes nearby. Abraham took Isaac off the altar, took the ram and substituted it for his son Isaac and slew the ram. This is a picture of the Cross; Jesus took our place. Jesus died in our stead.

Now the point of James telling this story of Abraham is that Abraham’s actions indicated genuine faith. And in Hebrews 11:17-19, it says Abraham knew that God promised that through Isaac, all the world would be blessed, Genesis 22:18. The seed is Jesus Christ. So Abraham believed that God, even if he killed Isaac, would have to raise Isaac up from the dead to fulfill His promise. That shows Abraham’s genuine faith and obedience. Obedience is the fruit of genuine, authentic faith. So in verse 21 of our text is the demonstration, and the vindication, of Abraham’s faith.

Verses 22-23 continue, “Do you see that faith was working together with his works...”—the action here is habitual—“...and by works faith was made perfect?” “Perfect” means “proven” or “manifested.” Then James says, “And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, ‘Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.’ And he was called the friend of God.” This is a quote from Genesis 15:6.

So Genesis 22 is the background of James 2:21. And James 2:23 says that Genesis 15:6 was fulfilled 40 years earlier. Verse 23: “And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, ‘Abraham believed God, and it...’—“his faith” or “his belief”—“...was accounted...”—or “imputed”—“... to him for righteousness.’ And he was called the friend of God.” So Abraham “was made perfect” in his obedience, and he fulfilled Scripture, verse 23.

Abraham was saved or “it was accounted to him for righteousness” at the time of Genesis 15:6, and this was 40 years before he offered Isaac on the altar. In Genesis 15:5, God told Abraham, “‘Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.’ And He said to him, ‘So shall your descendants be.’” In those days, they didn’t have smog or pollution. You could actually see the stars at night. Pretty cool!

And at this time, Abraham was 75 years old. I just want to sit down reading this story. Whew! At 75, he’s going to have all these kids! What’s Sarah going to say? We’ll have to put a room addition on the tent! God promised Abraham he would have his own children, and He was promising Abraham that the Messiah would come through Abraham’s lineage.

So the response of Abraham to what God told him is in verse 23: “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” God had told Abraham, “See all those stars? That’s how many kids you’re going to have.” And Abraham said, “Yes, God, I believe it.” And then God imputed righteousness to him. That word “imputed” means that “God put it to his account.” God gave Abraham righteousness.

This, Paul says in Romans 4, is exactly the same way God saves sinners today. Not by good deeds. “Not by work of righteousness” Titus 3:5. Salvation comes by believing that Jesus died on the Cross for our sins, and God imputes the righteousness of Christ to us. The Bible says, “He made Him...”—that is, “Christ”—“...who knew no sin to be sin for us...”—on the Cross—“... that we might become the righteousness of God in Him,” 2 Corinthians 5:21. So when you put your trust, your faith, your belief in Jesus Christ, God imputes righteousness to you. You are then declared righteous before God and are saved. That’s imputation.

And that is your position in Christ, which cannot be changed. As you go on to live your Christian life, what takes place is practical righteousness or sanctification. There is positional righteousness imputed by faith, and there is practical righteousness imparted by the Spirit of God working through the child of God to make us into the image of Jesus, the Son of God. Don’t get those two mixed up.

Abraham was declared positionally righteous 40 years before, verse 21, when “He offered up Isaac his son on the altar.” So Abraham wasn’t saved because he offered up Isaac; he offered up Isaac because he was already saved and justified. It was the manifestation of his faith. “And he was called the friend of God,” verse 23.

The conclusion, which many feel seems to contradict Paul, is in verse 24. “You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.” If you read this verse, to the exclusion of Romans or Galatians or the other epistles of Paul, you might say, “Well, we’re saved by works.” No.

And with all due respect to the Roman Catholic Church, they make a big mistake. They mesh together justification and sanctification. They believe that you’re not just saved by grace alone, but you have to have the sacraments, good works, confession, communion, confirmation and

baptism in order to be saved. This is why the Protestant Reformation came about. Salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

So many people are confused and think, “Well, I just can’t believe and expect to go to heaven unless I behave!” But behavior doesn’t have anything to do with getting saved. Rather, your good behavior is the fruit of or byproduct resulting from your salvation. We are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. Don’t confuse grace and works.

James here isn’t saying that we are saved by grace plus works. If you were saved by a combination of grace, faith and works, then why would Jesus have to die on the Cross for us? His death would be insufficient and inadequate if we needed good works in order to be saved. Jesus cried on the Cross, “It is finished!” He meant that. It was a done deal, where our salvation is complete in Christ. It means that all we have to do is trust Him now. So if you had to work for your salvation, it would no longer be by grace, and Jesus would have died on the Cross unnecessarily.

So don’t be confused into thinking that verse 24 means that works here are works of the law in order to be righteous before God. Rather they are works of philanthropy, vindication before men shown by our works.

The second illustration, in verse 25, is of Rahab, the harlot. So the first illustration was of father Abraham. Now you have the harlot, Rahab. “Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way?”

This story is taken from Joshua 2, when the Israeli spies were sent into Jericho before the Israelites took the city. Rahab hid the spies on the roof under stalks of flax, so when the soldiers of Jericho came and asked her where the men were, she said she didn’t know where they went. The soldiers took off in pursuit in the wrong direction, then she uncovered the spies and told them to go the opposite direction. Rahab risked her life by hiding the spies, and this was evidence of her faith.

It’s interesting that you go from Abraham, the patriarch, to the faith of Rahab, the prostitute. Rahab is mentioned in Hebrews 11, the faith chapter, in verse 31: “By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.” And she is mentioned in Matthew 1:5 in the genealogy of Jesus: “Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab.” So Rahab was also a woman of faith.

Rahab needed to be saved, because she was a condemned person. The nature of her faith was her mind—she heard about the God of Israel, Joshua 2:11; her emotions—her heart “melted,” Joshua 2:11; and she also acted. So she heard, she believed and she acted. Her reward was that she and her family were saved, she became part of the nation of Israel, she is in the lineage of Messiah and she is mentioned in “the hall of faith,” Hebrews 11. And both Abraham and Rahab are in Hebrews 11. Basically they are examples that God saves us by our faith. But faith that saves is not alone—good works result.

The point is that genuine faith produces an obedient life, a life pleasing to God. Verse 26 is a closing summary of our whole passage, verses 14-25, and also is an illustration. It says, "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." Here we have a definition of physical death. Physical death happens when the spirit and soul leave the physical body. And faith without works is just like a dead corpse.

I've done a lot of funerals in my time, and many of them with open caskets. I can't tell you how many times I've had people say, when looking at the body, "Don't they look good?" And I've seen a lot of good-looking corpses. But don't forget that they're dead. And a lot of people look at professing Christians and say, "Don't they look good?" So I've looked at a lot of people like good-looking corpses. They look good, they walk the walk and talk the talk, but they're dead. There is no spiritual life in them. As a body without the spirit is dead, they have faith, but it's not genuine.

Thus, there are three categories of faith. You can have a dead faith, which is only words; you can have a demonic faith, which is only your mind believing the right things, your creed; or you can have a dynamic, genuine faith.

Which is it? Do you have just a profession of faith? Do you believe intellectually in a creed or code of conduct? Is it just a mental assent to facts and information? Or have you truly trusted Christ as your Savior?

I like the hymn which says,

"Nothing in my hand I bring.

Simply to Thy cross I cling."

We come to Christ naked, poor, wretched and blind. We have nothing to offer to God. We are saved by His grace, through faith, in Christ alone.