

Discussion Questions:

How would you describe the relationship between faith and works?

Name 3 areas of your life that your faith is being demonstrated through your works.

What are some areas where your practice does not match your belief?

What can you do to address those areas this week?

Are you more zealous about growing in your understanding of truth or your application of truth? Which is harder for you? What can you do to bring them into balance?

Fooled by Faith, pt. 1

James 2:14-20

From scams to hoaxes, trends to pranks, people are fooled everyday. Sometimes the result is simply amusement, but other times it brings devastating consequences. Some men are fooled about the nature of faith; they misunderstand what true, genuine faith really is.

True faith is more than an announcement of assent (v.14). Talking about faith is a popular thing to do; it is a buzzword that everyone uses. Declaring that you have faith means nothing. True faith produces works, and the works declare that your faith is real.

True faith is more than a statement of sympathy (v.15-17). The world is filled with causes. Fundraisers, telethons and infomercials tug at the heartstrings, hoping to elicit some sympathy. True faith is more than just an emotional response to some type of appeal for charity. True faith does the difficult work of loving people and then helping them.

True faith is more than the declaration of doctrine (v.18-20). Some base their claim to be a Christian on the fact that they can pass a theology exam. "Because I know what the Bible says," they declare, "then my faith must be genuine." But words and knowledge do not show that faith is genuine. True faith always produces action; faith without action is no faith at all.