

The Epistle of James

16

Morning Devotions

Select a passage in God's Word. Talk with the Lord as you read the passage, then go back and find one or two verses which the Lord has impressed on your heart and meditate on them.

Morning Study

Today we continue our study of James, this time reading through the second section, **2:1-26**. This section has caused concern to some readers, because it appears that James is contradicting Paul and advocating a works-based Christian ethic. But a close reading shows that there is no contradiction. James is not teaching against faith, but is teaching a faith "accompanied by action."

James is addressing what appears to have been a loose-living and shallow Christianity – Christians who thought that just believing the right thing was good enough. To them he states: "Do not merely listen to the word...*Do what it says.*"

This section is divided into two subsections. Read each subsection, answering for yourself the questions associated with it.

Read James 2:1-13

- How does James instruct the believers not to show favoritism? (**2:1-4**).
- What does it mean to become "judges with evil thoughts"? (**2:4**).
- What has God chosen the poor of this world to be? (**2:5**).
- What had many of the rich been doing to the believers? (**2:5-7**).
- What is the "royal law" found in Scripture? (**2:8**).
- Why do you think showing favoritism is breaking the law (i.e. the royal law of **2:8**)? (**2:9**).
- Who is guilty of breaking the whole of the law? (**2:10-11**).
- To whom will judgment without mercy be shown? (**2:13**).

Read James 2:14-26

- Explain why faith without accompanying action is dead (**2:14-18**).
- How did James say that he showed his faith? (**2:18**).
- What is the point that James is making in **2:19**?
- What two examples does James give of "faith and...actions working together"? (**2:20-26**).

Memory Verse

As the body without the spirit is dead,
so faith without deeds is dead.

James 2:26

Here are a few suggestions that may help you to memorize your memory verse:

- ➡ Ask the Lord to help you remember his Word (see [John 14:26](#)).
- ➡ Use the version of the Bible you are most familiar with. What you normally read in your Bible is what you need to be memorizing.
- ➡ Don't just memorize the contents of the verse; memorize its "address" (the verse reference) as well. You can do this by following this pattern: Step 1: **reference**; Step 2: **verse content**; Step 3: **reference**. Then repeat steps 1-3. Note that you are quoting the reference twice as many times as you quote the actual verse content. This gives the verse a clear "reference tag."
- ➡ After you have read your memory verse out aloud several times, try going through your memory verse *without* reading your computer screen.
- ➡ Look up your memory verse in your Bible. Look at its immediate context and read the verses that come before and after your memory verse.
- ➡ Print out your memory verse or jot it down on a piece of paper. Take this paper with you when you go to work or do other daily activities. Meditate on the meaning of the verse throughout the day.
- ➡ During your noon appointment with the Lord, take out your memory verse and go over it again. Talk to the Lord about what this verse means to you personally.
- ➡ In the evening (at either your evening study or your evening devotions), see if you can quote your memory verse from memory. Then, without looking at the memory verse itself, see if you can find it in your Bible.
- ➡ The next day, before you begin committing a new verse to memory, rehearse your previous day's memory verse and see if you can remember it (without cheating!).
- ➡ Finally, at the end of the week (possibly on the Sunday), collect all your week's memory verses, rehearse them and see if you can recall them without reading them. Spend a little extra time on any verses you have difficulty recalling.
- ➡ Remember: Don't just memorize a verse. Put it into practice ([James 1:22](#)). It is not being able to quote a verse from memory that counts. It is His Word *abiding* in your heart that counts ([John 15:7](#)). When you actually apply a verse consistently to your daily life, that is when you *truly* know that verse!