

**Recap of 9/1/24 message by Pastor Joe Ricchuiti
(James 2:14-26 “Fruit-Bearing Faith”):**

1. James is writing to believers, urging them to be productive in their faith. Faith should be growing, active, vital, not dead, useless, atrophied

- “A believer whose faith produces not works is unproductive in his/her faith.”

2. James is not teaching salvation by works or by some combination of faith and works. He is in agreement with Paul’s teaching about salvation by grace through faith (the Acts 15 Council found them in agreement over the terms of salvation. They agree, as well, that faith should be followed by works which God prepared in advance for believers to do (Ephesians 2:8-10; 2 Timothy 3:16,17).

3. James calls for “obedient faith” or fruit-bearing faith.” Faith that is active.

4. Presuppositions necessary to the proper interpretation of James 2:14-26 (Hullinger, Hodges)

-James is addressing Christians (not non-Christians).

-To interpret properly, we must understand that when we find the word “saved” in Scripture it doesn’t always refer to eternal life.

-In wisdom literature, (which James is), salvation most often means being delivered from the temporal consequences of sin (as in 1 Corinthians 11), ultimately physical death (see James 5:20).

-James speaks of justification in the sense of validation before men of the reality of our faith.

-a dead faith does not refer to a faith that is not present, but to a faith that is not active.

-James is admonishing Christians to practice their faith.

-In summary: “It is possible for a Christian to have a dead faith, in the sense that their faith is not operative,” when it was once active.

5. “Whenever a Christian ceases to act on his faith, that faith atrophies and becomes little more than a creedal corpse. ‘Dead orthodoxy’ is a danger that has always confronted Christian people, and they do well to take heed to this danger. But the antidote is a simple one; faith remains vital and alive as long as it is being translated into real works of living obedience.” (Hodges)