

Faith missing in Action

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Subtitle: Action missing in Faith

James 1:2–3 (NLT) *Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. **3 For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.***

When we, as believers who have faith, experience troubles of various kinds, our faith is being tested. We find ourselves in the “action” of spiritual warfare, and we overcome our troubles by the faith that God has given us.

Psalm 34:19 (NLT) *The righteous person faces many troubles, but the Lord comes to the rescue each time.*

It is implied here that “the righteous person” walks by faith.

However, non-believers don’t have faith, and when they get into the action of spiritual warfare they are ill-equipped – for them, “faith is missing in action”. They rely on sheer willpower, on their intelligence or their smarts, but spiritual warfare isn’t won by willpower, intelligence or by smarts - it is won by faith.

John 16:33 (NLT) *I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world.*

1 John 5:4 (KJV) *For whatsoever is born of God overcomes the world: and this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith.*

We overcome our troubles in this world by the faith that God has given us.

Action missing in Faith:

James 2:17 & 26 (NIV) *In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. ... 26 As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds (actions) is dead.*

James was the half-brother of Jesus.

He devoted half a chapter in his letter to his fellow-believers to explain, that, “if action is missing in their faith”, their faith is only a “dead faith”.

We have learned in previous sessions that, although “faith” is a single Bible truth and an individual spiritual force, it has several parts to it.

Faith can be compared to a motor car, which is a single unit that functions as an integrated mechanical machine, yet it has several basic components such as an engine, a body, wheels and a steering mechanism.

The different parts (pillars) of real bible faith:

- Faith believes
- Faith speaks
- Faith acts
- Faith is energised by love

Anyone of these individual components of faith alone doesn't constitute complete faith, any more than a car engine constitutes a whole motor car.

James 2:22 (NLT) *You see, his (Abraham's) faith and his actions worked together. **His actions made his faith complete.***

Evidently, faith without actions is incomplete faith.

Faith isn't complete until it has the component of action added to it.

Faith without action is dead faith.

A description of dead faith:

- Dead faith (claims that it) **believes God's Word**
- (but its claimed belief is only a mental assent to the word of God)
- Dead faith **speaks**
(it makes all the right noises ...)
- Dead faith refuses to **act** on God's Word
(I know what the Word of God says, but ...)
- Dead faith doesn't feel obliged to **love** all people

From a distance, dead faith looks and sounds the same as real bible faith. Yet it misses the vital component of **corresponding action** which means it is only a dead faith instead of a living, functioning faith.

James 2:26 (NIV) *As **the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds (actions) is dead.***

Mixing the Word we hear with Faith:

Whenever we hear the Word of God proclaimed, God wants us to mix that Word with faith (believe, speak, **act** and walk in love).

Hebrews 4:2 (NKJV) *For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but **the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it.***

This is speaking of the Israelites who heard the word of deliverance preached to them, along with the promise of entering into the Promised Land.

Even though they heard the Word proclaimed, they refused to mix it with faith.

- They didn't **believe** it
- They didn't **speak** it
- They didn't **act** upon it
- They didn't walk in **love**

Their unbelief hindered them from entering the Promised Land.
All of them perished in the wilderness (except Joshua and Caleb).

- The whole nation of Israel heard the Word preached by Moses
- 12 men were sent in to spy out the land and report back
- 10 men brought an evil report by saying it couldn't be done
- Joshua and Caleb believed the word and said it could be done
- Sadly, those 20 years and older sided with the 10 spies and believed their evil report

Numbers 13:32 (AMP) *So **they brought the Israelites an evil report of the land which they had scouted out**, saying, *The land through which we went to spy it out is a land that devours its inhabitants ...**

Numbers 14:6–9 (NKJV) *But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; **7** and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying: "The land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. **8** If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, 'a land which flows with milk and honey.' **9** Only **do not rebel against the Lord, nor fear the people** of the land, for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the Lord is with us. Do not fear them."*

James 1:22 (NKJV) *But **be doers of the word**, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*