

## Sermon or Lesson: James 2:25-26 (NIV based)

[Lesson Questions included]

TITLE: Sufficiently Informed, Exhorted, And Warned

INTRO: Have you ever seen videos of people driving their car around barricades that have flashing lights and warning signs of deep water on the road? Ignoring the multiple warnings proves disastrous for them as they plow their car into the quickly deepening water, which then causes their car to start floating out even farther into deeper water where it begins to sink. Their heedless choice has put them and their car in a costly and sometimes fatal situation.

Do we tend to ignore the multiple warnings that God gives us in His Word? Well, let's closely and seriously study our next passage in James, which is the concluding verses for us to be sufficiently informed, exhorted, and warned about our faith in relation to good deeds.

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READ: James 2:25-26

READ AS BACKGROUND INFORMATION: the account of Rahab - Joshua 2:1-24; 6:16-17,21-25

(NOTE: Extra emphasis can be placed on the evidence of Rahab's faith - Joshua 2:9,11, and on the evidence of Rahab's faith in action - Joshua 2:4-7,15-16.)

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### v.25 - READ

James 2:25 is another example of alive faith being cited in response to the anticipation of wanting more evidence, as raised in verse 20.

[Lesson Question: How does the example of Rahab compare to the example of Abraham in verses 21-23?]

(NOTE: You can diagram the elements of this comparison on a dry-erase board or on PowerPoint slides.)

SECTION POINT: Even though in personal character Rahab and Abraham were extreme opposites, both had faith in God and then acted in accordance to that faith.

- - Abraham was a major O.T. figure, Hebrew, "father" of Israel, honorable, wise, heroic, highly respected and esteemed by the Jews; He obeyed God by proceeding toward sacrificing his only and beloved son Isaac. (v.21, Strong's #3962)

- - Rahab was a minor O.T. figure, Gentile, woman, formerly pagan and foolish, formerly a prostitute and sensual, who would have been greatly despised and considered sub-human by the Jews; she "gave lodging to the spies" and protected them from being apprehended by the authorities. (v.25)

- - In terms of personal character, Rahab and Abraham are extreme opposites.

- - In terms of faith and actions, they both had faith in God and then acted in accordance to that faith. And in these cited examples, they both were taking a major risk to themselves personally and/or their loved ones.

- - Thereby, now in James, both Rahab and Abraham have been "shown to be justified" (Strong's #1344) or "considered righteous" (vv.25,21, NIV) by their deeds;
  - - This suggests that even though their situations were very different and their backgrounds extreme opposites, God accepted and regarded them both "in the same way" (v.25) in respect to their faith accompanied by deeds, and for this they both earned commendations by God in the Scriptures.
  - - Both Abraham and Rahab are distinguished in righteousness distinctly for their faith, and distinguished in righteousness distinctly for their deeds. (Abraham - in James 2:23 and 2:21; Rahab - in Hebrews 11:31 and James 2:25). These 2 distinctions of righteousness for their faith and righteousness for their deeds are harmonious because "[their] faith and [their] actions were working together". (v.22)
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#### v.26 - READ

Verse 26 is a closing restating of verse 17, but an analogy about the body is added.

[Lesson Question: How does this analogy relate and contribute to this discussion about the relationship between faith and deeds?]

SECTION POINT: Like the body is dead when its spirit is dead, so too one's faith is dead if there are no accompanying good deeds.

- - This analogy in verse 26 is being presented to add illustrated clarification, suggesting an effort is being made to further enhance persuasion for the objecting or hesitant reader.
  - - Considering the depth, quality, and scope of the examples of Abraham and Rahab, no more evidence should be needed (v.20) after this illustration, plenty of evidence has herein been provided sufficiently.
  - - The analogy is based on the general principle that the state of being dead is reality when one vital element necessary for life is not present.
  - - The state of being dead for the human body is reality when the spirit is not present, a vital element necessary for that life. This dynamic is just like the reality of one's faith being dead when deeds are not present, a vital element necessary for the life of that person's faith.
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#### IMPLICATIONS:

- - By implication, God will accept and regard each of us in the same way as He did with Abraham and Rahab when we have faith, and our faith is working together with our actions.
  - - By implication from the example of Rahab, God makes available righteous standing before Him even if you have been living a godless or wicked life in the past.
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BIG IDEA: From the study of these verses in James 2:14-26, for those of you who claim to have faith but are without accompanying good deeds, you have now been sufficiently informed, exhorted, and warned that your faith is dead !!

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APPLICATIONS:

The time has come to make some major corrections and changes in your life in regard to faith and good deeds. You have heard the information, exhortations, and warnings from James 2:14-26 and perhaps you are now ready to agreeably respond to God:

(PAUSE)

- - Take a few moments right now in prayer to confess to God that you have failed to produce good deeds in accordance with faith. (PAUSE)
- - With complete sincerity and openness, now tell God the reasons why you choose to fail to produce good deeds. (PAUSE)
- - With honesty and determination, express to God that you are now turning away from these reasons you fail, and you are **not** going to allow those reasons to hinder or stop you anymore from producing good deeds. (PAUSE)
- - Next, express to God that you are now and henceforth completely committed to regularly doing good deeds in accordance with faith, and you are going to start looking for and pursuing the doing of good deeds this week. (PAUSE)
- - Thank God for forgiving you for your sinful failures, and for sending His perfect Son Jesus to die on the cross to pay the penalty for **your** sins.
- - Ask God to open an opportunity in the coming days for you to do good deeds in accordance with faith. Amen. (PAUSE)

Current opportunities to help or serve in doing good deeds in accordance with faith are:

- \_\_\_\_\_ - contact person: \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_ - contact person: \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_ - contact person: \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_ - contact person: \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_ - contact person: \_\_\_\_\_
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Works Cited:

Bible. "The Holy Bible: New International Version." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

"Strong's Greek Dictionary." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

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