

Proving Our Faith

Paul challenges us to prove ourselves, whether we be in the faith (**2 Corinthians 13:4**). We are to use the word of God (the system of faith that **Jude 3** says has been delivered to us once for all) as a mirror so that we can examine ourselves objectively and accurately.

We must use the standard of scripture to know how God wants us to be. We need to inquire diligently so that we will understand what the Lord requires of us. Scripture is the only source for this purpose (**2 Timothy 3:16-17**). We learn what we must believe, what we must do, and how we are to do it. By this we can know whether or not we are pleasing to God.

James 2 is a good place to start. Throughout the entire epistle, James is rebuking the double-minded man for his inconsistency. He is religious but loves the world. He says he has faith but does not act on it. He wants recognition as a leader but without accepting the responsibility that goes with it. He knows to do good but does not do it. He is a hearer of the word but does not practice what he hears.

James 2:14-26 talks about saving faith vs. dead faith. A great way to prove our faith is mentioned in this chapter. Verses **14-17** simply ask if our faith does any good without works. He then gives the illustration of merely wishing a needy person well instead of actually doing something to help him. It is necessarily implied in this passage that helping a needy brother is part of the faith (**1 John 3:17-18**). Then in verse **18**, James says how he proves his faith: *"I will show you my faith by my works."*

James is very practical in his message, and he gives three more examples. The devils believe and even tremble, but their recognition of God does not help them because they do not obey God. Abraham and Rahab both were blessed by their faith because their faith motivated them to act by faith in God's promise. Our obedience shows that we are truly in the faith.