

40. The Greek of this last sentence gives us a clue from a word that is not translated into the English, but is very important to the translation. Here is how it appears in the Greek text: **μή δύναται ἡ πίστις σῶσαι αὐτόν (mē dúnatai hē pístis sōsai autón)**: literally, “Not can the faith save him?”
41. The negative particle **μή (mē)**: “not,” is not translated, but with the aorist active infinitive of the verb **σῶσαι (sōsai)**: “save,” it indicates a question that demands a negative answer. Here’s more on the subject:

**Μή (mē). As an emphatic interrogative particle which has lost its own negative power, but expressing a degree of fear or anxiety and implying the expectation of a negative answer. With the present indicative (James 2:14).<sup>2</sup>**

42. The presence of the untranslated particle **μή** in the last sentence of the verse requires another sentence to be added, “No, it cannot.”
43. The lifestyle of the believer who produces divine good by means of his thoughts, decisions, and actions can gain the attention of an unbeliever and with that response use the opening to present the gospel.
44. This is the expression of soul integrity under the leadership of the Holy Spirit. It enables this believer to use the opportunity to communicate truth to an unsaved person.
45. For him, faith in doctrine, plus a receptive environment, provides the opportunity evangelize an unbeliever.
46. Here is the expanded translation of:

**James 2:14** What advantage, my fellow members of the royal family, if anyone alleges he has faith in the Bible, but keeps on not having production? Is faith alone able to evangelize his neighbor? No, it cannot. (EXT)

### Principles on Operational Death:

1. Faith has several objects in Scripture:
  - (1) For unbelievers, Jesus Christ is the object of one’s faith for salvation. The faith of an unbeliever does not result in salvation unless it is directed to Jesus with the understanding that his faith alone in Christ alone results in eternal salvation.
  - (2) Faith is one of three systems of perception:

<sup>2</sup> Spiros Zodhiates, ed., “μή,” in *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, rev. ed. (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1993), 9779.



- a. Rationalism: The theory that reason is in itself a source of knowledge superior to and independent of sense perception.
  - b. Empiricism: The practice of relying on observation and experiment especially in the natural sciences. A theory that all knowledge originates in experience.
  - c. Faith: A non-meritorious system of learning. The subject never has the merit but rather the object. The issue is not the one who believes but what he believes in. The Christian maintains that the only objects of faith which hold merit are Jesus Christ for salvation and the Bible for divine guidance.
- (3) The object of the believer's faith is the Bible. We accept the fact that we trust it by faith, but since it is certified as absolute, immutable truth from the mind of God, then our faith is empowered by its innate immutability.
2. In James 2:14, the apostle presents the faith of an unbeliever in the presence of a believer who is unable to function from biblical guidance due to a weak inventory of doctrines and functioning outside the bubble.
- Unbelievers know nothing about the Bible because it must be understood through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit otherwise what they may have acquired from it is clouded by human viewpoint.
- Believers must present themselves to society filled by the Holy Spirit and alert to both speak and act by means of divine motivation and divine guidance. Unbelievers' faith is based on what they see and hear to which they may respond positively. It is at this point that the gospel is best presented.
3. In verse 14, we noted, "Is faith alone able to evangelize his neighbor? No, it cannot." The point is that the believer in question has placed his faith in Jesus Christ for salvation but he has not grown in grace to the point that his behavior patterns in society are empowered by doctrine in his soul.
- The unbeliever is therefore unable to discern if this person is a Christian by his comments and behavior. They cannot see into his soul, they can only evaluate from his externals.

4. From the unbeliever's standpoint, he evaluates this person not from a profession of faith but on his production of divine good which is expressed by what he says and/or what he does. If each category is under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, then the unbeliever is left with the obligation to evaluate him. He has free will and therefore must undertake his evaluation with the Law of Freedom.
5. The failure to apply doctrine in the soul is operational death. To make good decisions from a position of strength, the believer must first acquire divine viewpoint from Bible study, after which he applies it to life and circumstances.
6. From this analysis, we are able to conclude that only faith alone in Christ alone can result in a person being saved.

**John 20:31** These have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

**Romans 1:16** I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Goyim.

**Romans 5:1** Having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Galatians 3:26** For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus

7. In James's example, it is obvious that faith in Christ results in salvation. However, this is a fact that is inconceivable to an unbeliever. He is incapable of knowing this since it is a spiritual phenomenon and invisible to the naked eye.

**2 Corinthians 3:2** You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone,

**v. 3** revealing that you are a letter of Christ, delivered by us, written not with ink but by the Holy Spirit of the living God, not on stone tablets but on tablets of human hearts. (NET)

- The only way a believer can gain the attention of the unbeliever is by what he says or does. Paul and his companions know of those who are saved and have doctrine in their souls. Unbelievers cannot comprehend this.
8. When a person expresses faith alone in Christ alone but learns no significant amount of doctrine afterwards, he has no production of divine good. This is operational death. He has no production although he has all the assets available for him to do so.
  9. Operational death is a sign of reversionism. The illustration for this condition is the Chazzan. No unbeliever would be impressed with his acts of partiality as a workman in the synagogue in which James is pastor-teacher.
  10. The believer in operational death is unconvincing and due to his spiritual darkness is not qualified to witness. He would be a failure should he even try because it is the Holy Spirit that performs the act of salvation, the person witnessing is only the bearer of the message.
  11. When a believer is in Operational Death he is in reversionism. He is in need of spiritual recovery which would require rebound, a return to Bible class, and have the patience and humility to start the learning process over until spiritual momentum is renewed.

**James 2:14** What advantage, my fellow members of the royal family, if anyone alleges he has faith in the Bible, but keeps on not having production? Is faith alone able to evangelize his neighbor? No, it cannot. (EXT)

**James 2:15** If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, (NASB)

1. Verse 15 provides an illustration which begins with the protasis of a third-class condition, indicated by the particle **εάν (eán)**: “If.” This is followed by the identification of two subjects, an **ἀδελφός (adelphós)** and an **ἀδελφή (adelphḗ)**: “a brother and a sister.”
2. These two words do not necessarily indicated they are related. They are terms used to identify members of the Royal Family of God. We are all brothers and sisters in Christ.
3. The word “brethren,” or *adelphós*, is used 224 time in the New Testament the great majority of them refer to fellow believers, in this case men. This is its meaning as is that of *adelphḗ* in, James 2:15. Both lack basic necessities.

4. This is indicated by the plural present active subjunctive of the verb, **ὑπάρχω (hupárchō)**: “to exist.” This is accompanied by the plural noun, **γυμνός (gumnós)**: “naked.”
5. The word **gumnós** does mean to be completely naked, but it also includes the concept of being destitute and therefore poorly clothed which is the case here.
6. Their destitute status is confirmed by the plural present passive participle of **λείπω (leípō)**: “destitute.” This destitution is further confirmed by the lack of daily food.
7. This is introduced by the adjective **ἐφήμερος (ephēmeros)**: “that which is necessary for daily sustenance.” We normally consider these as necessities such as food, clothing, and shelter.
8. James does not mention shelter although that may be considered as being implied. What he does cite is food, the noun, **τροφή (trophē)**: “food or nourishment.”
9. This protasis introduces an illustration of how a believer can help fellow members of the royal family of God. James sets up a situation so a believer comes into the knowledge that these believers are in need of assistance.
10. There are a number of ways that this situation could have occurred without the man making poor decisions. Loss of his job, a sickness in the family requiring expensive medical treatment, fire burned down their house including all their food and clothing, his legal bills used up all his money when the F.B. I. arrested him for colluding with the Russians.
11. Or, being human, he could have made poor decisions from a position of weakness. It doesn’t matter. They are fellow-members of the Royal Family of God and fellow believers are required to reach out a helping hand.
12. Verse 15 is the protasis that sets up the apodosis that begins in verse 16. Here is the expanded translation of verse 15 followed by the NASB translation of verse 16:

**James 2:15** If [ **protasis** ] a couple, fellow members of the Royal Family of God, is destitute, being poorly clothed and without proper daily nourishment, (EXT)

**James 2:16** and one of you says to them, [ **apodosis** ] “Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,” and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? (NASB)

1. The opening phrase, “and one of you says to them,” followed by this person’s comment to the destitute couple, “Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,” identifies him as a believer in reversionism.
2. This believer is not destitute and who has sufficient funds to assist this couple in their time of need. This man is in reversionism, first indicated by the aorist active subjunctive of λέγω (*légō*): “might allege.”
3. This man is going to grant them good tidings. The couple is poorly clothed, in need of food, out of money, and therefore destitute. The believer to whom they plead does not give them money, take them to Walmart for clothes, and to IHOP for some bacon and eggs. Instead he wishes the well: “Go in peace, be warmed and be filled.”

**(End JAS2-15. See JAS2-26 for continuation of study at p. 251.)**



4. These are three imperative moods expressed by the reversionist. We have been charting the imperative moods in the Book of James, but those that occur in quotes James assigns to individuals to expose their erroneous thoughts and expressions are being ignored. These three fall into this category.
5. “Go in peace” is not what this reversionist says. The verb “go” is the present active imperative of **ὑπάγω (hupágō)** and in context contains the idea of a repetitive statement.
6. What follows is the prepositional phrase, “in peace,” the preposition **ἐν (en)** plus the noun **εἰρήνη (eirēnē)**: “in peace.” This phrase, “Go in peace” is a Jewish expression that has been used historically to wish someone goodbye. The Hebrew equivalent of this saying is, **הלך שלום (Halak shalom)**: “Go in peace.”
7. This is the Jewish way of saying, “Have a great day.” Generally intended as a friendly wish and farewell, its use here is hypocritically used to “blow the couple off,” which is an English idiom meant, “to refuse to take notice of or to deal with; to ignore.”<sup>1</sup>
8. This is said in the form of a command that is repeated for emphasis, “Go in peace. Go in peace.” A person who is cold and hungry does not have peace at the moment. Therefore, this is an insulting comment.
9. Remember, James is painting a picture to depict a believer who is in reversionism while dealing with an unbeliever who is destitute. If this couple is going to respond positively to this man, he must display compassion and benevolence to them.
10. Some believers who behave this way are referred to by unbelievers as hypocrites. This man is not a hypocrite. This word is defined as, “a person who acts in contradiction to his or her stated beliefs or feelings.”<sup>2</sup>
11. Instead, this man is a believer who is in reversionism. Without divine guidance from the Holy Spirit, the two people who are destitute cannot see his faith, but rather his reversionistic behavior. While in the cosmic systems, he expresses who he really is.
12. And he is not done yet. His next comment is the present passive imperative of the verb **θερμαίνω (thermaínō)**: “be warm.” If two people who are in need of warm clothing are told by their hoped for benefactor to “be warn,” they are going to think he is either crazy or ridiculous.

<sup>1</sup> Meriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 11th ed., s.v. “blow off.”

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., s.v. “hypocrite.”





13. The environment both are experiencing is cold and discomfort. They are in need, they approach a man of means to plead for his assistance and he tells them, “Be warm.”
14. Not that this man has any interest in evangelizing these two people, he could not even if he were to try. Cold people need to be warm in order to concentrate on the communication of supernatural information which he unable to communicate while in reversionism.
15. Principle: Unbelievers cannot concentrate on biblical subjects until their physical needs are met. Even then, only a few will respond to the gospel after these needs are met. The same may be said about those who are hungry.
16. This is the next thing the carnal believer has to say, the present passive imperative of the verb **χορτάζω (*chortázō*)**: “be filled.” This couple is obviously not starving to death, but they are malnourished and in need of food.
17. What the verse reveals in its second half is the failure of the reversionist to meet their current need for warmth and food. Therefore, the issue of evangelizing them is not top priority at the moment. Top priority is the provision of warm clothing and a nourishing meal.
18. This would be an expression of compassion and benevolence to which the man and woman would be most grateful. Their gratitude for such assistance would increase their chance of listening to their benefactor’s presentation of the gospel.
19. The gospel would obviously require the clear message of faith alone in Christ alone. What follows would be from the free wills of the couple: neither of them, one or the other, or both might respond. The additional information that they would be citizens of God’s family to whom the Father would provide their necessities would be the next biblical truth to follow.
20. Some might conclude from this sequence of events that one person is unable to provide these necessities for everyone which is true. However, it is not “all the needy” that are at issue, but just those the divine decree provides with the opportunity to engage.
21. The believer in this scenario is in reversionism. He cannot respond to this situation like a person who had grown in grace and learned the principle of loving unconditionally those in his periphery.
22. This circumstance presents the opportunity for grace to provide logistics with the hopeful denouement of winning their souls for Christ. Instead, this man fails the test of grace.





23. In the circumstance presented by James, the two unbelievers are not impressed with the man's thoughtless comments.
24. There are some principles that emerge from this example that apply to every believer in his advance in the grace plan of God. We will illustrate a few issues which we all face in the ongoing process of growing in grace.

### Issues that Hinder Evangelism and Prevent Efficient Growth in Grace

1. Food is not a luxury, but a necessity for the sustenance of physical life. Those who are hungry because they are destitute do not have the physical or mental stability to concentrate on supernatural information for the salvation of their souls.
2. The unbeliever's top priority is food for the stomach's sake. His condition is not just the fact he is hungry, but the mental stress over his inability to consistently acquire necessities.
3. The Lord presented a dissertation on the necessities of life in:

**Matthew 6:31** "Do not worry, then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?'

**v. 32** "For the Gentiles eagerly keep on seeking all these things [ **details of life** ]; for your heavenly Father knows [ **in the divine decree** ] that you habitually need [ **customary present active indicative of χρῆζω (chrēzō)** ] **all of these things.**

**v. 33** "But seek first the kingdom of God [ **through the study, retention, and application of His Word** ] and His righteousness [ **through the filling of the Holy Spirit** ], and all these things [ **logistical grace support** ] will be supplied to you for your advantage.

**v. 34** "So stop worrying about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself [ **the principle of one day at a time** ]. Each day has enough trouble of its own." (EXT)

4. So the key to the guarantee of divine logistics is to be a member of the Royal Family of God. Unbelievers have no access to that promise. To do so they must have some stability of thought for concentration on the solution which is the gospel.

