

24. The end result is exposed by the phrase, ἡ (*hē*) + πίστις (*pístis*): “the faith.” This indicates he had faith, but faith is useless if it does not have an object and the object of faith for a believer is the Word of God.
25. When salvation is in view, the object of one’s faith must be Jesus Christ. Faith in anything else is useless. Faith in one’s morality—useless. Faith in one’s financial contributions to a non-profit—useless. Faith in walking the aisle, feeling sorry for you sins, joining the church, getting baptized, tithing, giving your testimony, and faith in doing good works—useless. Faith in one’s accolades from others because of doing these things—useless.
26. It is interesting that James’s epistle is the first entry in the New Testament canon. His theme so far has to do with taking in the Word of God and applying it to life and circumstances.
27. At the same time he is arguing about those who hear the working object of their faith which is the Word of God taught by James, but not placing their faith in the Word resident in their souls as the working object for its application to others.
28. The absolute summum bonum of the Christian way of life is not just the hearing of the Word, but the application of the Word. The phrase, *hē pístis*: “the faith,” must have a working object from resident doctrine in the soul.

Summary of the phrase, ἡ (*hē*) + πίστις (*pístis*): “the faith”:

1. This term refers to what is believed and in Scripture it has two major applications: (1) the working object of faith is Jesus Christ for salvation and (2) the working object for spiritual growth is Bible doctrine.
2. There are two underlying principles that pertain to both of these objects: (1) the grace of God as opposed to human works and (2) the rejection of human merit or virtue.

Romans 4:16 For this reason it is by means of faith, in order that it might be in accordance with grace; that the promise of salvation might be valid to all humanity; not only to those from the law, but to those Gentiles from Abraham’s faith⁶; who is the pattern with reference to all of us.” (EXT)

3. Because the noun *pístis* and the verb form πιστεύω (*pisteúō*) are transitive and demand objects, then their function is associated with absolute grace.

⁶ Abraham was saved when he was a Semitic Gentile, living in the third dynasty of Ur around the year of 2100 B.C. (Genesis 11:28, 31). He did not become a Jew until he was 99 years old (Genesis 17).

4. Therefore, in the act of salvation, the object of one's faith must be directed toward Jesus Christ for it to be efficacious. After salvation, the object of one's faith must be directed toward Scripture for it to be efficacious in the spiritual life of the believer.
5. Therefore, the result of faith when directed toward these two objects is a nonmeritorious function. The one who places his faith in either of them receives no credit for the benefits derived but rather unmerited grace.
6. The spiritual growth of the believer is illustrated by the visual that goes by two titles, **(1)** Grace Apparatus for Perception and **(2)** Operation Z. Its diagram develops the process by which an unbeliever or a believer comprehends information from the infinite Word of God.
7. The unbeliever is able to understand the gospel of Jesus Christ by the common grace ministry of the Holy Spirit, Who serves as a human spirit in order to communicate the gospel message so the unbeliever can consider the divine process for obtaining eternal life.
8. The gospel must be communicated in such a way that the only object to which the unbeliever may direct his faith is Jesus Christ. The unbeliever must be allowed to exercise his Law of Freedom to decide whether he believes the gospel's message or not.
9. Once salvation is acquired through faith in Christ, the next order of business is to find a local church that teaches the Bible. It is clearly stated in Hebrews 13:17 that unless you put yourself under the spiritual authority of a pastor-teacher, you will not be able to fulfill the divine objective of growing in grace.
10. The current dispensation is referred to as the Church Age because the local church is the divinely instituted base of operations for believers in the Church Age to grow in grace.
11. The local church is the classroom for believers in Jesus Christ both of which are identified in the New Testament by the noun, **ἐκκλησία (ekklēsia)**: "called out." The noun has two applications:

First, all who were called by and to Christ in the fellowship of His salvation, the church worldwide of all times; the body of Christ (Ephesians 3:21⁷).⁸

⁷ "To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever."

⁸ See also, Ephesians 4:4–5, "There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism."



Secondly, the New Testament churches, however, are also confined to particular places (1 Corinthians 16:19⁹); to individual local churches (1 Thessalonians 1:1¹⁰).¹¹

12. The reason for the church existing in the Church Age is for the instruction of the Word from a qualified pastor-teacher to the body of Christ assembled. Electronic contrivances make it convenient in the twenty-first century to ignore this requirement.
13. However there is a dynamic in face-to-face communication that is diminished outside the environment of the local assembly, therefore whatever causes one to opt out of church attendance needs to be minimized whenever possible.
14. Most Doritos are absent because they do not live in the general vicinity of Grace Doctrine Church. Electronic devices are advisable over no communication at all. Those who live in the greater St. Louis metropolitan area have face-to-face teaching available and are under divine mandate to be present according to:

Hebrews 10:24 Let us concentrate on one another for the purpose of encouragement from the source of virtue love from the source of divine-good application,

v. 25 not forsaking the assembling together, as the habit is of certain ones, but even so much more, as you see the day [**physical death or the Rapture**] approaching. (EXT)

15. We have no knowledge of when our individual lives will end, but that day is appointed for everyone not decreed to be in the Rapture generation. The collective advance of believers assembled together is a constant encouragement for everyone to continue his active pursuit of the truth.
16. Those who place their faith in any concept, rationale, philosophy, or theology that does not have Jesus Christ as the object of their faith are destined at physical death to be transferred to the Torments compartment of Hades and ultimately judged before the Great White Throne in heaven with subsequent incarceration in the lake of fire.

⁹ “The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.”

¹⁰ “Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.”

¹¹ Spiros Zodhiates, ed., “ἐκκλησία,” in *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, rev. ed. (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1993), 541.



17. Faith, whose object is Jesus Christ, is a conduit through which the believer may appropriate what God has done for him. The power of faith is not in something we do, but what God does for us through His policy of grace.
18. Therefore, faith begins with nonmeritorious perception of the Word of God which builds an inventory of divine ideas in the *kardía* of the soul. It is from that inventory that faith links up with grace to produce divine good.
19. Faith alone produces nothing. Faith alone in the object of Jesus Christ produces salvation and afterward, faith alone in the Word of God produces spiritual growth.
20. A believer, such as the man in our context who has expressed faith in some of James's teachings, but whose evanescent divine dynasphere has long since popped, is not able to produce divine good.
21. Because of his removal from the playing field of the divine dynasphere, he now functions within the Dark Side's environment of Operational Death.
22. No matter how glowing the world's accolades directed toward this person's "good works" may be, they are looked on by God as human energy producing human good which will ultimately be evaluated as "wood, hay, and straw."
23. The Lord has a stark evaluation of our acts of human good which Millennials would certainly agree is an unacceptable way for Him to speak about their twenty-first century behavior patterns:

Isaiah 64:6 We are all like one who is unclean, all our so-called righteous acts are like a menstrual rag in Your sight. We all wither like a leaf; our sins carry us away like the wind. (NET)

1. James 2:17 so far reads, "Even so the faith," This is followed by the protasis of a third-class conditional clause, **ἐάν (eán)**: "if," which indicates a potentiality, maybe it does not and maybe it does.
2. Here the negative concept is introduced by the negative conjunction **μή (mē)** followed by the present active subjunctive of **ἔχω (échō)**: "if (faith) does not have."
3. What is being referenced is the situation just analyzed in verse 16. The man who was approached by the destitute couple only had meaningless yet insulting commandments for them: "Go! Be warm! Be filled!"



4. James has developed a fictitious personality that clearly displays the failure to apply the Word of God to unbelievers. Yes, he has formally placed his faith in biblical principles, but he is not applying what he knows to the present situation.
5. What his faith does not produce is the plural noun, **ἔργον (érgon)**: “works.” The analysis contends that, “Even so, the faith once placed in biblical principles, if it does not produce divine good”
6. This is followed by the apodosis, “is dead,” the present active indicative of the verb **εἰμί (eimí)**: “is,” followed by the noun **νεκρός (nekrós)**: “dead.”
7. The static present indicates a condition that is perpetually existing. This man is in locked-in carnality, functioning in the cosmic systems. The active voice places the responsibility on him and his negative volition to doctrine, while the indicative mood certifies this as the present reality.
8. There are eight words in the New Testament that may be translated “death.” In this context it does not refer to physical death, but is metaphorical for a person whose spiritual life is inactive and inoperative, therefore his ongoing status is locked-in negative volition inside the cosmic systems.
9. No believer who resides outside the bubble is capable of producing divine good. The believer can discern this by a person’s modus operandi—what he says and what he does indicates his failure to apply doctrine.
10. The unbeliever does not have this attribute of spiritual discernment; but he does associate what he sees and hears from this man as someone who is not willing to help those in need.
11. The biblical analysis is that he fails to execute the Royal Law by loving those in his periphery with unconditional love from personal integrity.
12. This man’s faith, his former perception of the gospel to which he responded for salvation, and his faith in biblical exposition as absolute truth, is dead—nonoperational.
14. Faith in the soul remains in the soul after salvation, but that faith is required to produce divine good through application of the Word of God to circumstances in life.
13. This final phrase of the verse is the preposition **κατά (katá)**: “by,” followed by the pronoun **ἑαυτοῦ (heautoú)**: “itself.”
14. Post-salvation faith must have a working object. That is doctrine applied to life and circumstances.
15. Appeals to this principle have already been noted in James 1:

