

4. This is the circumstance we have already observed in:

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)

5. Faith with a working object results in the production from divine guidance from a believer's inventory of ideas and empowerment by the Holy Spirit.
6. However, James is setting up a debater's technique by introducing the thinking of the Straw Man who emphasizes works, but refuses to recognize the necessity of doctrine as the working object of one's faith.
7. Those who put works as top priority for believers do not understand how divine good is produced, consequently their criticisms sound good to the untrained ear, but they are the arguments of spiritual childhood.
8. The basic reproach is to criticize the predominance of time spent in Bible study as compared to the little amount of time in application.
9. James's effort is to characterize works as the incidental result of those who have spent significant time in Bible study.
10. The issue James is stressing is that Bible study develops an arsenal of biblical principles and doctrines that serve as the working object of one's faith.
11. When a believer does not consistently develop an advancing biblical inventory of ideas, then his faith does not have a working object and his works are human good and potentially evil.
12. The "works-first" approach also infiltrates into the doctrine of salvation. The working object of one's faith for salvation is Jesus Christ, but the "works-emphasis" approach has developed the false doctrine of doing "good works" for salvation.
13. Whether a person is saved, or not, this "works-emphasis" philosophy distracts from the grace plan of God. The working object of a believer's faith is the ever-increasing inventory of divine categories of absolute truth resident in his soul.
14. It is from this inventory that enables a believer to produce divine good under the mentorship of the Holy Spirit. The end result of the philosophy of showing one's faith by his works is the subtle elimination of the working object which is the Word of God.



15. Without an active, advancing inventory of divine thought resident in the soul, then the “works first” approach must depend on human viewpoint to guide the person’s activities thus producing human good instead of divine good.
16. When the working object of one’s faith is human viewpoint, then the working object, which is the Word of God, is ignored.
17. There is a subtly positive element in the uninformed believer’s “works first” approach. When involved in evangelism and he quotes verses containing the gospel message, then some people will get saved. This is a legitimate, bona fide, activity
18. Reason? Because the Word of God is alive and powerful even when it is conveyed by a works-oriented believer. The message itself has divine power and can convict the unbeliever of its veracity by the common grace ministry of the Holy Spirit.
19. Doctrinal application associated with daily contact with others is quite different. The resource for this is doctrine resident in the soul and functional under the filling ministry of the Holy Spirit.
20. In this circumstance, doctrine is the working object. What such an inventory produces is a growing inventory of Bible doctrine from which the believer produces divine good.
21. Nevertheless, the works-oriented believer will say:

James 2:18a But someone will say this, “You have a faith without an object and I have works; you demonstrate to me your faith, apart from the works ...

1. The verse continues with the future active indicative of the verb **δείκνυμι (deiknumi)**: “demonstrate.” Here we have a contest: **(1)** “You demonstrate to me your faith apart from works” and **(2)** “I will demonstrate to you my faith by my works.”
2. The key to understanding the error in this exchange is to expose the missing element in each of these quotes. The missing element, unstated twice, but if inserted it would be, **ὁ λόγος (ha logos)**: “the Word.”
3. Faith must have a working object. In salvation it is in Jesus Christ through faith alone; in the believer’s spiritual advance it is in *ha logos*, the Word.
4. Here is the expanded translation of the entire verse:

James 2:18 But someone will say, “You [**Imperative mood #21**] keep on having faith (in the working object of the Word), and I will keep on having faith in the working object of my works; demonstrate to me faith without the works, and I will demonstrate to you my faith from the source of my works.” (EXT)

5. The Straw Man cannot win this debate because he chooses to ignore or does not know about the working object of a believer’s faith is the Word of God.
6. Because it is self-fulfilling to “be involved in working for Jesus,” he prefers the aggrandizement he gains from physical effort over against the drudgery of slugging it out in boring, tedious, exegetical Bible classes that last for as much as an hour.
7. Because I am forbidden to criticize a worker bee such as he, under the Royal Law I cannot berate him for his ignorance, so I’ll just allow James to provide a descriptive phrase:

James 1:22 But keep on becoming [**IM #13**] doers of the implanted Word, and not only hearers who deceive themselves due to self-induced stupidity. (EXT)

8. The key word for the worker bees is not the Word but the works. The Bible is clear about what we believers are required to do:

2 Peter 3:18a Grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

9. Mr. Straw Man is involved in working for Jesus rather than knowing Him first. Divine good, accomplished by the application of resident knowledge about Jesus and the Word of God, is imperative for the believer to pursue in order for his works to be classified as gold, silver, and precious stones at the Evaluation Tribunal of Christ.
10. Works without them being underwritten by the Word is human good. James is constantly pointing this out in his first chapter. He builds a crescendo toward the end of chapter 1 with his emphasis on being a doer of the Word rather than a hearer only. Remember this?

James 1:25 But the one who looks with an earnest desire to absorb in detail the perfect law of freedom, and continues to live in close proximity to it, not having become a forgetful hearer only, but a doer, this man shall acquire unalloyed happiness by the production of divine good. (EXT)

11. Faith must have a working object in order for the believer to be a doer of the Word. This principle is expressed by Paul in:

Romans 10:17 Consequently, faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the preached Word of Christ. (NET)

12. Further confirmation that faith must have a working object and that working object for the believer is the preaching of the Word of Christ to positive volition believers.

The Doctrine of Faith

A. Definition.

1. There are three systems of human perception:
 - (1) **Faith** is a non-meritorious system of perception based on confidence in the authority and the veracity of another. Faith is not based on one's own knowledge, as is rationalism or empiricism.
 - (2) **Rationalism** is reason from the source of knowledge in itself, superior to and independent of any other source of perception. Rationalism says that reality is what you think to be true. Rationalism requires a high I.Q., from which systems of philosophy are often developed.
 - (3) **Empiricism** is knowledge from perception by observation and experience rather than by theory. All ideas are derived from some sensuous experience using the eyes, ears, nose, touch, and taste having no innate or preconceived notions.
2. Perception by faith is always non-meritorious. It depends on the authority, veracity, and ability of someone else. Faith requires authority.
3. Faith also means a system of doctrine or a creed perceived by faith; i.e., what is believed.



B. Etymology.

1. Hebrew:

- (1) The verb אָמַן (*'aman*) means to believe, to support, to use someone as a prop, a crutch; to use someone else to be supported. The root meaning is a foundation on which you build something.

In Isaiah 28:16, the Hiph'il means to cause to believe. The Hiph'il in Genesis 15:6 uses *'aman* for the salvation of Abraham, meaning to use God as a prop and foundation.

Further, *'aman* means to prove oneself, to stay faithful to, to remain or continue.

Metaphorically, *'aman* means to be faithful, trustworthy, and sure, as in Proverbs 19:8; Genesis 42:20; 1 Kings 8:26; Hosea 5:9.

- (2) The noun אֱמוּנָה (*'emunah*) means faithfulness, security, or that on which security is based, e.g., the integrity of God.
- (3) The noun אֱמוּנָה (*'emun*) means integrity, fidelity, reliability, trustworthiness.
- (4) The noun אֱמוּנָה (*'omen*) means doctrine, truth, faithfulness.
- (5) The noun אֱמוּנָה (*'emeth*) means faithfulness, integrity, stability.
- (6) The verb בָּטַח (*batach*) is a wrestling term, which means to trust in the sense of slamming your troubles on God; this has a faith-rest connotation. In Psalm 37:3 and 91:2, it also means to confide in someone.
- (7) The verb חָסָה (*chasah*) means to hide in the cleft of a rock, as a rabbit does when chased by a fox. This verb is used for suffering and adversity. It means to trust in the sense of taking shelter or taking refuge in Bible doctrine; to believe in the integrity of God, Psalm 57:1, 2:12, 5:12, 25:20, 7:1.



- (8) The verb **יָחַל** (*yachal*) means to trust the Lord in time of great pain or disaster, Lamentations 3:21, 24. In Job 13:15, it means to have hope and to wait. It is used for faith under great pressure, intense suffering, and pain.
- (9) The verb **קָוָה** (*qawah*) is the strongest word for faith, used in Psalm 25:3. It depicts a fine thread woven into a giant rope that cannot be broken. It is used in Isaiah 40:31 for the faith of a mature believer. In Lamentations 3:25 it means to wait. This word means that faith which gets its strength from outside of itself, connoting the non-meritorious aspect of faith. All merit lies in the object of faith.

2. Greek:

- (1) The noun **πίστις** (*pístis*) is used as an attribute. *Pístis* is what causes trust or faith, reliability, faithfulness, or integrity, Titus 2:10; 2 Thessalonians 1:4.
- (2) In the active sense, *pístis* means faith, confidence, and trust as a recognition of and acceptance of Bible doctrine. In the active sense, faith is used in three ways:
 - (a) Saving faith, Ephesians 2:8; 1 John 5:4–5, (b) the three stages of the faith-rest drill, Romans 3:20; Hebrews 4:3, and (3) the inculcation of Bible doctrine which is the working object of faith.
- (3) The passive meaning of *pístis* is Bible doctrine, meaning that which is believed, i.e., doctrine, the body of belief, which is obedience to authority. *Pístis* is translated “doctrine” in such passages as Galatians 1:23; 2 Peter 1:5; 1 Timothy 1:19, 4:1, 6; Hebrews 11.
- (4) The adjective **πιστός** (*pistós*) in the passive sense means being trustworthy, worthy of trust, faithful, dependable, and inspiring trust. In the active sense, it means trusting or believing.
- (5) The verb **πιστεύω** (*pisteúō*) means to believe, to trust something to someone, to use someone as an object of faith, Galatians 2:16. It only takes a little more than no faith at all to be saved, Acts 16:31.

(End JAS2-77. See JAS2-78 for continuation of study at p. 771.)



- (6) The verb **πείθω (peíthō)** in the passive means, to come to believe, to obey, to be persuaded, or convinced. The perfect passive means to have confidence, to be absolutely convinced, to be certain.

The active voice, as in Galatians 1:10, means to convince, to persuade, to appeal, to win over. The perfect tense with a present meaning indicates dependency on someone, to trust in someone, to have confidence.

- (7) The verb **πιστόω (pistóō)** means to show oneself faithful, to be convinced, to have confidence, 2 Timothy 3:14.

3. Biblical Use of “Faith” or *Pístis*:

1. *Pístis* is used for doctrine in:

Hebrews 11:1 In fact, doctrine is the reality from which we keep receiving confidence, the proof of matters not being seen.

v. 2 For by means of doctrine, men of old gained approval.” (EXT)

2. A description of faith is found in:

2 Corinthians 4:18 “We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen [the essence of God]; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. (NASB)

Faith is the means by which we perceive reality in the invisible essence of God.

3. Sometimes both the faith-rest technique and doctrine are described in the meaning of *pístis*, as in:

2 Corinthians 5:7 We walk by faith and not by sight— (NASB)

Your eyes are in your soul, and your soul must have Bible doctrine. We see the unseen through doctrine. Doctrine gives us a relationship with the integrity of God which sustains us in time of disaster. We see the justice and integrity of God through doctrine.

