

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 3:21¹).²

Secondly, the New Testament churches, however, are also confined to particular places (1 Corinthians 16:19³); to individual local churches (1 Thessalonians 1:1⁴).⁵
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:

¹ “To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever.”

² 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.”

³ “The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.”

⁴ “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.”

⁵ Spiros Zodhiates, ed., “ἐκκλησία,” in *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, rev. ed. (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1993), 541.



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.
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 it (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:

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.

v. 23 For if, and it is true, anyone is a
 hearer of the Word in the *noús* and not a doer from
 the *kardía*, such a person, is like a nobleman who
 looks contemplatively at his facial features in a
 mirror;

v. 24 for once he had continued to
 contemplate himself intently in the mirror and
 departed, he has the existing result of immediately
 disregarding what kind of man he habitually and
 regularly was.

v. 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)

16. All believers have faith available. It is the divine policy for the function of the Law of Freedom but that faith must have an object which is resident doctrine in the soul activated by positive volition.
17. What James 2:17 is emphasizing is that faith without the working object of biblical truth will not result in production, consequently, in such a situation this man's faith is dead—*nekrós*.
18. From this we now have an expanded translation of the verse:



James 2:17 So also the faith, if it does not have a working object of Bible doctrine, it keeps on being observably dead, being by itself. (EXT)

Summary:

1. Faith has no legitimate production since, by itself, it has no innate merit. Therefore, faith must be dependent upon an object that has merit.
2. Therefore, faith is dead without a meritorious object. The Word of God has the power to produce divine good, but its power is inaccessible without faith plus positive volition directed toward pertinent doctrine.
3. This is easy to understand when an unbeliever depends on the innate merit of works for salvation, or of inconsequential personalities, erroneously contrived writings such as the *Book of Mormon*, The Muslim *Qur'an*, and the Hindu *Veda*, each an entry in the Dark Side's "doctrines of demons."
4. There are on two legitimate objects of one's personal faith: (1) Jesus Christ and Him alone for salvation and (2) The text of the *Holy Bible* for spiritual growth.
5. A subtle system that incarcerates millions of honest, law abiding, faithful people are those individuals, who at the youngest ages are indoctrinated into the mysteries of the Church of Rome.
6. Two "doctrines" that are blasphemous in context and deadly in their application are Mariolatry and the Immaculate Conception to which most Catholic parishioners are indoctrinated to believe and to which they place their faith. Both are heresies.
7. **Mariolatry** is based on the Greek word, **Θεοτόκος** (*Theotókos*): "mother of God," a heresy concocted at the Council of Ephesus in 431 overriding the biblically valid arguments of Nestorius. The **Immaculate Conception** is a demonically inspired heresy that asserts Mary was not imputed Adam's sin at her conception, nor did she commit personal sin in her life. This concoction out of thin Roman air originated in a papal bull, ex cathedra, from Pope Pius IX's chair in December 1854.
8. The last thing unbelievers need in their darkened condition is to be lied to. There have to be some exceptions somewhere among those who don the cloth, but the overwhelming majority of those who purport these and other lies, dominate the largest population of followers in the world.
9. There is no grace found in either of these defamations of Mary and the Word of God. They are being called out by James in James 2:17. These works require faith in doctrines that have human origins. Without biblical objects for one's faith, they are dead, being by themselves.



10. This is pointed out by the last two words of the verse, **κατα + ἑαυτοῦ** (*katá + heautoú*): “by itself,” which means that faith not placed in a bona fide object results in erroneous production. Unsuspected heresy legitimizes the lie although hopefully through ignorance by those who commit them.
11. A popular bromide to comfort one who is entangled in personal problems is, “Have faith.” This is meaningless since faith must have a legitimate object.
12. Even done biblically, the production of divine good is limited by the doctrinal inventory of the believer. Consistent and legitimate application to life and circumstances requires an inventory of biblical principles in the *kardía*.
13. I would impose the following necessity to every believer who wishes to develop a highly functional inventory of problem-solving devices in his soul. He must be *in cathedra*. He must be “in the chair.”
14. Faith must have an object for inculcation and application to occur. Faith in the veracity of the Word results in inculcation while faith in resident doctrine in the stream of consciousness results in application.
15. Failure of application results in no works since faith by itself is dead.

James 2:17 So also faith, if it does not have production, keeps on being observably dead, being by itself. (EXT)

Paragraph. 2: The Principle of Vindication: James 2:18–20.

James 2:18 But someone may well say, “You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works. (NASB)

1. This paragraph is introduced by a debater’s technique. James introduces the straw-man technique: “An argument or opponent set up so as to be easily refuted or defeated.”⁶
2. James is going to utilize classical rhetoric to defeat the notion that works are primary to faith in the function of the Christian *modus operandi*. We will observe his use of the straw-man method of argument in verse 18.
3. A brief introduction to this system of argument is the subject of George A. Kennedy’s book, *Classical Rhetoric*, and its chapter, “Judeo-Christian Rhetoric”:

⁶ *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 5th ed., s.v. “straw man.”



Scriptural truth must be apprehended by the listener, not proved by the speaker. Somewhat surprisingly the early Church adopted the Greek word *pístis* [faith] to mean “Christian faith.” In classical Greek, the meanings of *pístis* range over the spectrum of “trust, belief, persuasion”; it was, however, the word used by Aristotle for proof in rhetoric, and this usage became standard among teachers of rhetoric. The acceptance of *pístis* to mean “Christian faith” by the early Church implied at the very least that faith came from hearing speech, and provided a future opening for the acceptance of classical rhetoric within Christian discourse.

Rhetorical criticism of the gospels and of the other parts of the New Testament has made great progress in the late twentieth century; a substantial body of scholarship is now available. An important goal of rhetorical criticism is to try to hear the biblical texts as an ancient audience would hear them, and that means an audience familiar with classical rhetorical practice whether from study in school or from experience of the secular world. Among the early Christians there were many simple people with little formal education, but there were many others who had had some formal training in Greek language and rhetoric, and in the sophisticated Greek-speaking communities of Antioch, Miletus, Ephesus, Corinth, Alexandria, Athens, and Rome most hearers would have had some expectations of how a speech should be arranged and delivered. The gospels and the epistles were read aloud in Christian churches, and necessarily received by the congregation as speech.⁷

4. James is obviously one of the pastors who knew the structure of Classical rhetoric and utilizes it in his argument against those who insist that works take priority over faith.
5. James’s argument begins with the adversative conjunction **ἀλλά** (*allá*): “But.” This is followed by the indefinite pronoun, **τις** (*tis*). It is masculine singular gender, but, since indefinite, it refers not to, “a man,” but to, “someone.”
6. Part of debater’s technique is to never address an individual by name, but anonymously. Therefore, the sentence begins, “But someone,” followed by the future active indicative of the verb **λέγω** (*légō*): “will say.”
7. The future tense is predictive summarizing the action indicated will happen in the future therefore it is asserted that, “someone will say this.”

⁷ George A. Kennedy, “New Testament Rhetoric,” in *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times*, 2d. ed. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 146–47.



8. This is followed by what James's Straw Man says, "You have faith," is the present active indicative of **ἔχω (échō)**: "You have." The present tense indicates what some other person claims to have as a continuing possession.
9. What is contended is that this other person claims to possess continuing "faith," the Greek noun **πίστις (pístis)**: "faith," a system of learning that results in placing confidence in a specific object, i.e., Bible doctrine.
10. An unusual circumstance regarding the noun *pístis* is the absence of the definite article. Its absence generally places great emphasis on the following noun. Further, in English its absence often indicates obscurity.
11. The absence of the definite article requires the translation to read, "But someone will say, 'I have *a* faith,'" but not '*the* faith.' This obscurity is further compounded by the absence of an object for this unparticular faith.
12. The next word in the verse is the grammatical term, crasis (krā'sīs), whose use is described by the following excerpts:

Κρᾶσις [krásis]: mixing, blending of things. Grammar, *crásis*, i.e. the combination of the vowels of two syllables into one long vowel or diphthong.⁸

Crasis: Greek grammar. The combination of the vowels of two syllables, especially at the end of one word and beginning of the next, into one long vowel or diphthong; as in **καὶ ἐγώ** for **καὶ ἐγώ** [*kagō̄: kai egō̄*].⁹

Crasis Form: **καὶ ἐγώ:** A crasis form of **καὶ + ἐγώ;** a personal affirmation adding to or confirming a previous statement: "and I."¹⁰

13. The unbeliever would say, "You have a faith without an object **and I (καὶ ἐγώ [kagō̄])**." This crasis is a form taken from Classical Greek and used as a debater's technique. It also indicates James's knowledge of the formal structure of debate.¹¹
14. Following *kagō̄* is the present active indicative of the verb, **ἔχω (échō)**: "I have," followed by the plural noun, **ἔργον (érgon)**: "works." In this debate, the unbeliever asserts he has numerous works while the believer has a little faith without an object.
15. This opening salvo is simply the set-up for the Straw Man which follows.

⁸ Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th ed., rev. Henry Stuart Jones (New York: Oxford University Press, 1940), 990.

⁹ *Oxford English Dictionary*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), s.v. "crasis."

¹⁰ Rodney J. Decker, *Reading Koine Greek* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 244.

¹¹ The development of the grammatical form, crasis, is thought to have originated from the Greek's aversion to pronouncing too many vowels in a row so they blended two words to form one.



16. The Straw Man’s argument begins with the aorist active imperative¹² of the verb **δείκνυμι** (*deiknumi*): “to prove or make clear by evidence or reasoning, *explain, prove something*; James 2:18.”¹³
17. The aorist tense is ingressive, “used to stress the beginning of an action or the entrance into a state.”¹⁴ This lends urgency to the statement, therefore it is translated, “You begin to show me your faith—**πίστις** (*pístis*)—without an object now.” This is the beginning of the argument’s Straw Man technique aimed against his opponent’s inability to perform works.
18. The active voice requires immediate action to occur by the Straw Man accompanied by the imperative mood which is a command to demonstrate his faith, which we know does not reference a biblical inventory.
19. If the Straw Man does not place his faith in Scripture, then he will not be able to produce any works. This is brought out next by the proposition of separation **χωρίς** (*chōrís*): “by itself; without.”
20. The challenge is for the Straw Man to show his faith “without the works” or “by itself.” “The works” is the definite article **τῶν** (*tōn*), plus the ablative of separation of **ἔργον** (*érgon*): “the works.”
21. Notice that in the argument the word “faith” has an indefinite article: “a,” indicating “any” faith, while the word “works” in plural and has a definite article “the” indicating “several” works.

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 ...

Summary so far:

1. The principle that is missing in the Straw Man argument is the requirement of a working object for faith. The noun **πίστις** (*pístis*) and the verb **πιστεύω** (*pisteúō*) are transitive and demand a working object for the production of divine good.
2. The working object of faith in any Christian’s life is his resident inventory of biblical knowledge. An advancing knowledge of concepts, categories, and doctrines in the stream of consciousness for application to life and circumstances that result is in the production of divine good, or in our context, “works.”

¹² This is imperative mood 21 in the Book of James.

¹³ Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, 3d ed., rev. and ed. Frederick William Danker (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 214–15.

¹⁴ Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 558.



3. Faith that is without a working object is dead. This occurs in the soul of the believer who avoids serious Bible study, does not know the process of learning it under the Spirit-filled system, and thus has no meaningful inventory to apply.
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.

(End JAS2-27. See JAS2-28 for continuation of study at p. 271.)

