

5. The reversionistic believer is approached by a couple that is in need of clothing and nourishment. He dismisses them with insulting remarks. He has not only left them in their status quo, he also left them with a negative opinion of him: unkind and uncompassionate.
6. If the man had been an advanced believer, he would have offered a helping hand. He could have done so without it harming him individually or economically. But he didn't.
7. He enjoyed comfortable clothing with a full stomach and as such he would have been able to go to Bible class with a sharp mind and willing ear to grow in grace. He had neither because he is a hearer, but not a doer.
8. So we have a couple who needed assistance with regard to the needs of the body who were left to survive in the devil's world. The believer enjoyed these same physical necessities, yet he was in the same position spiritually as they were.
9. He had placed his personal faith in Jesus Christ for salvation and eternal life. He had the opportunity to grow in grace and may have done so at some point in the past, but now his faith in Christ was all he had.
10. As James put it in verse 14, "Is faith alone able to evangelize his neighbor? No, it cannot."
11. What we otherwise discern from this verse is that the soul is located in the body and to function it must coordinate with the brain. For the advancing believer it is imperative that the body be physically able to sustain concentration on the teaching of Bible doctrine.
12. For the presentation of the gospel to be understood, it requires the unbeliever to have the mental clarity to process incoming information from which a decision can be reached.
13. Unbelievers are destitute spiritually. Some are destitute physically and mentally. This combination requires the latter situation to be resolved before the former can have a hope of being effectively addressed.
14. The intended effectiveness is for the unbeliever to have clarity of thought when hearing the gospel in order to make an objective decision. Some people will respond positively while others negatively.
15. This is the result of the Law of Freedom. The unbeliever is a free agent and has the option to accept or reject the gospel message.
16. The body can have a negative effect on the soul. When these circumstances occur, it can often lead to negative volition when the gospel is presented because the body's deficiencies are not addressed first.



17. So by commanding the couple to, “Go! Be warm! Be filled!” James concludes the verse by asking the question, “what use is that?” The word “use” is the noun ὄφελος (*óphelos*): “advantage.” Here is the expanded translation of the verse:

James 2:16 If a believer should say to a couple who are unbelievers, “Go in peace [שלום *shalom*] Halak shalom]. Be warm and be filled,” but you do not provide for them what is necessary for the body, what advantage is that? (EXT)

The Problem of Operational Death

James 2:17 Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself. (NASB)

1. It is personal faith in the veracity of biblical principles that allows the Holy Spirit to retain biblical thought in the believer’s soul, specifically in his stream of consciousness.
2. However, doctrine retained does not become active unless it is made operational by personal volition. Those who know a lot of doctrine, but do not consistently apply it; suffer from periods of Operational Death.
3. It is the application of the Word of God that facilitates its principles into paths of least resistance. Applying biblical principles fulfills the proclamation found in Hebrews 4:12, “The Word of God is alive and powerful.”
4. All legitimate production in the Christian’s life is only possible by knowledge of doctrinal concepts applied under the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. All else is human good which can decline into evil.
5. Although the believer who functions under the Spirit’s power may produce divine good, the power is in the veracity of the Word not the physical energy of the believer.
6. The advanced believer, under the power of the Spirit, should consider himself a conduit of divine power released into the scrum of the Angelic Conflict.
7. We are warriors who are making the advance in the Lord’s phalanx. We are trained by the Holy Spirit. We learn to use the artillery contained in the divine armory of ideas.
8. The weapons found there are for personal internal and external application into the devil’s world. The Holy Spirit is the drill Sergeant; we are combatants in the Lord’s army.



9. The crisis that plagues Christendom today is the failure to function under the enabling power of the Holy Spirit through application of Bible doctrine resident in the souls of the saved.
10. This predicament has produced the problem of Operational Death due to a breakdown in the spiritual mechanics of believers. Failure to understand the doctrine—the basic doctrine—of the filling of the Holy Spirit is what allows this operation to occur.
11. Associated with this failure is the inability to process doctrine into the soul's *kardía*. Some know some doctrine, but its intrinsic power cannot be applied if the Holy Spirit is not the catalyst behind its application.
12. All production in the believer's life is dependent upon an inventory of biblical truth and its application under the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. Human energy, enthusiasm, and action are not—crossed by the absence of the Spirit's guidance and power.
13. Well-intentioned “good works” are neutralized by the fact that energy of the flesh can only produce human good and its protégé,³ evil.
14. This occurs when a believer is in the throes of emotional revolt, a subject eloquently discussed by R. B. Thieme, Jr., in his book, *Reversionism*:

Emotional activity is designed to operate in subordination to the absolutes of Bible doctrine that reside in the mentality of the soul. If the [*kardía*] contains doctrine, the emotional response is appreciation for truth and divine viewpoint. The result is capacity for life, love, happiness. However, if the [*kardía*] is controlled by the sin nature, the authority of doctrine is rejected and the emotions react with wide mood swings—irrationality, egocentricity, instability, imbalance.
(pp. 26–27)

Corrupted emotion is always the result of the sin nature's refluxing in one of three areas: the area of weakness, which produces personal sins; the lust pattern which produces trends toward legalism or antinomianism; or the area of strength, which produces human good.

Emotional revolt is tantamount to the emotion fornicating with the sin nature and with Satan's policy of good and evil.⁴ The true function of the emotion as responder is reversed.

³ “One who is protected or trained or whose career is furthered by a person of experience, prominence, or influence” (*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (2003), s.v. “protégé.”)

⁴ In our study of *James: Chapter One*, we depicted emotion functioning as a pimp for the sin nature tempting the soul's volition. When volition responds to the temptation, the Holy Spirit exits the soul, causing resultant fornication to produce a ménage à trois: “When the lust pattern's agent provocateur copulates with free will, it creates a ménage à trois resulting in a pregnancy and, when sin gives birth, it delivers a child born dead” (James 1:15, EXT).

