

The Meaning of Faith without Works (Part 3):

Dr. John Niemelä

Water of Life

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Introduction

1:1: The Readers of James (Part 1):

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.

Acts 8:1 And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.

1:18: The Readers of James (Part 2):

Of his own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

James 1:19-20: The Outline of the Book:

¹⁹ So then, my beloved brethren, let every man

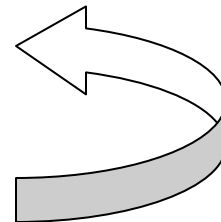
[1] be swift to hear (heed), (1:21-2:26) -----

[2] slow to speak, (3:1-18)

[3] slow to wrath: (4:1-5:6)

²⁰ For the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

In which outline section is the faith-without-works passage (2:14-26)?



The Issue in James 2:14: One who has faith, but does not have works. Faith will not save him.







What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not [*mē*] have works? Can faith save him?

The underlined question (in Greek) is written as a leading question. Let me illustrate:

1. You are Coloradans, aren't you? (Leads to an expected "Yes!" answer?)
2. You aren't Russians, are you? (Leads to an expected "No!" answer?)

James 2:14b (as a leading question) would be: *Faith cannot save him, can it?*

Two Possible Meanings for "faith without works" (2:20, 26)

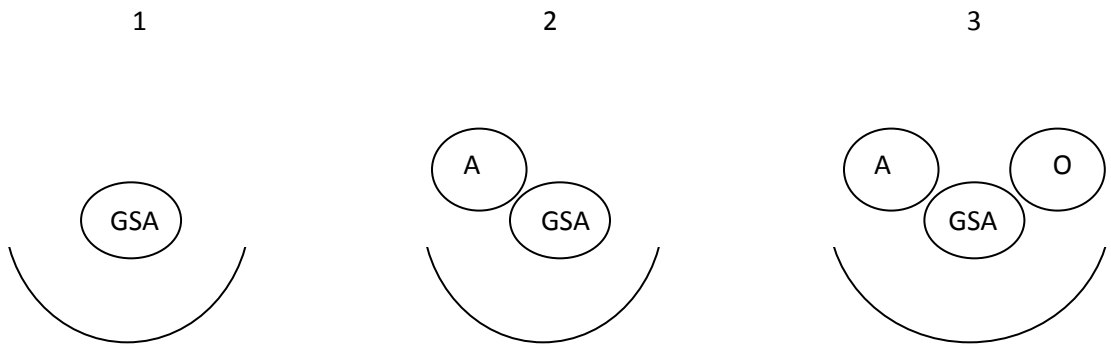
Subtraction Model	Addition Model
<p><i>Faith</i></p> 	<p><i>Faith</i></p> 
<p>— <i>Works</i></p> <p>—</p> 	<p>+ (<i>0 × Works</i>)</p> <p>+</p> 
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1. Most people understand “faith without works” from a subtraction model standpoint
They say a bicycle w/o a frame goes nowhere (like faith w/o works)
2. “Faith without works” should be understood from an addition model standpoint
A bicycle w/o a rider goes nowhere (like faith w/o works)

If a verse says “faith saves,” ask “Faith in **what** _____ **saves** _____ **whom** _____ from **what** _____?”
In James 2, Believing **God’s word** + application of God’s word delivers **believers** from **sin** in their lives.”

Apples and Oranges Illustration of the Addition Model versus the Subtraction Model:

1. Faith alone in Jesus Christ alone gives everlasting life (Granny Smith Apple).
2. Faith alone in Christian-way-of-life-truths does not deliver us from deadliness of sin (Apple).
3. Applied faith in Christian-way-of-life-truths delivers us from deadliness of sin (Apple + Orange)



Let every man be **swift to hear,** **slow to speak, slow to wrath.**

Prologue	Theme	Body (1:21-5:6)	Slow to speak	Slow to Wrath	Epilogue
1:1-18	1:19-20	Swift to Hear 	3:1-18	4:1-5:6	5:7-20

- | | | | | |
|------|--------------------|------------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| I. | Prologue | (1:1-18) | | |
| II. | Thematic Statement | (1:19-20) | | |
| III. | Swift to Hear | (1:21-2:26) | | |
| | a. | Hear and Do | (1:21-27) | [Add application] |
| | b. | No Improper Partiality | (2:1-13) | [Add application] |
| | c. | Faith and Works | (2:14-26) | [Add application] |
| IV. | Slow to Speak | (3:1-18) | | |
| V. | Slow to Wrath | (4:1-5:6) | | |
| VI. | Epilogue | (5:7-20) | | |

Dealing with the so-called anaphoric article in 2:14b

Many translations **WRONGLY** add a word in front of **faith** in 2:14b (underlined below)

that faith (ASV, ESV, NAB, NAS, NJB, NLT YLT); such a faith (BBE).

Their basis for adding the word is the absence of a Greek article in 2:14a (highlighted) and the presence of a Greek article ("the") in 2:14b (highlighted).

[] means that the English word is supplied. Word order in Greek can differ significantly from normal English. Subscripted numbers show the order that my translation follows. Each set of lines follows the same format: Line 1 = Greek, Line 2 = interlinear, Line 3 = flowing English.

1. *Ti* _____ *to* *ophelos,* *adelphoi* *mou,* *ean* [] *pistin*
2. What [is] the profit, ₂brothers ₁my, if [] ₅faith
3. What [is] the profit, my brothers, if

1. *legē tis* *echein,* [] *erga* *de* *mē* *echē?* (2:14a)
2. ₂says ₁someone ₃to ₄have, [] ₆works ₁but ₄not ₂he ₃does ₅have?
3. someone says to have [e.g., "he has"] faith, but he does not have works?

1. *Mē* *dunatai* *hē* *pistis* *sōsai* *auton?* (2:14b)
2. ₈not ₇is ₉able ₅The ₆faith *to save* *Him, is it?*
3. The faith is not able to save him, *is it?*

Why (since the word the is in the Greek) should it be left untranslated in 2:14b?

Subjects of Greek sentences normally have an article ("the") even with words that English uses no article ("the"). E.g., the NT often says like: "the Jesus said," "the love is;" English omits "the."

Normally, English translations follow that procedure. However, theologians often justify making a point of the article ("the") in 2:14b, because they find it surprising that James did not put an article ("the") in front of "faith" in 2:14a. That is a fair question.

Unfortunately, those who assume a subtraction model of "faith without works" **merely assume** that James did not use an article ("the") with faith in 2:14a, because he wanted to highlight his use of "the faith" in 2:14b to brand it: **SUCH A SUBSTANDARD FAITH (that lacks works)**.

I would dare say that those theologians would have benefitted from looking up each and every one of the 710 uses of *echō* ("to have") in the NT. What they would have discovered is that direct objects of *echō* rarely have an article. The few times that it does are easily explainable. In other words, my contention is that we do not expect articular direct objects for *echō*.

Direct objects for the verb *have* (Greek = *echō*). The direct objects are underlined.

"I have a car," "He has a wife," "He has faith," "He does not have works."

In Greek, none of these would include the article ("the"). Please note that the last two are part of James 2:14a. Note also my star (above).

Why don't theologians notice the lack of an article with works (starred above)? It is my impression that most of them do not know that the article hardly ever appears with direct objects of *echō*.

[1] *Ean* *tais* *glōssais* *tōn* *anthrōpōn* *lalō* *kai* *tōn*
 if 3with 4the 5tongues — 6of 7men 1I 2speak and —

aggelōn, *agapēn* *de* *mē* *echō,* *gegona* *chalkos*
 of angels, 5love 1but 3not 2I 4have. I have become [as] brass

ēchōn *ē* *kumbalon* *alalazon.* [2] *Kai ean* *echō* *prophēteian*
 sounding or 2cymbal1 clashing. And if I have prophecy

kai *eidō* *ta* *mustēria* *panta* *kai* *pasan* *tēn* *gnōsin,* *kai*
 and I know — mysteries all and all — knowledge, and

ean *echō* *pasan* *tēn* *pistin* *hōste* *orē* *methistanein,*
 if I have all — faith so as 3mountains 1to 2remove,

— *agapēn* *de* *mē* *echō,* *outhen* *eimi.* [3] *Kai ean*
 — 8love 4but 6not 5do 7have, 11nothing 9I 10am. And if

psōmisō *panta* *ta* *huparchonta* *mou,* *kai* *ean* *paradō* *to sōma* *mou*
 I dole out all — 2possessions 1my, and if I hand over — 1body 2my

hina *kauthēsōmai,* *agapēn* *de* *mē* *echō,* *ouden* *ōpheloumai.*
 that I may be burned, 5love 4but 1not 3do 2have, 9nothing 6I 7am 8profited.

[4] *Hē* *agapē* *makrothumei,* *chrēsteuetai,* *hē* *agapē* *ou* *zēloi,* *hē* *agapē*
 — love is patient, is kind, — love 2not 1does 3envy — love

ou *perpereuetai,* *ou* *phusioutai,* [5] *ouk* *aschēmonei,*
 2not 1does 3boast, 2not 1is puffed up, 2not 1does behave disgracefully,

ou *zētei* *ta* *heautēs,* *ou* *paroxunetai,*
 2not 1seeks — its own [benefit], 2not 1is provoked to anger

ou *logizetai* *to* *kakon;* [6] *ou* *chairei* *epi* *tē adikia,*
 2not 1does reckon — evil; 2not 1 rejoices over — unrighteousness,

sunchairei *de* *tē* *alētheia,* [7] *panta* *stegei,* *panta* *pisteuei,*
 2rejoices 3with 1but the truth, 2all 3things 1bears, 5all 6things 4believes

panta *elpizei,* *panta* *hupomenei.* [8a] *Hē* *agapē* *oudepote* *ekpiptei.*
 2all 3things 1hopes, 5all 6things endures. — love never fails.

1. Arrows point to places where the direct object of *echō* lacks the article ("the") in Greek.
2. The triangle shows the one place where the direct object of *echō* has the article ("the"). However, the reason it has the article is that *pas* + the article means "all," but *pas* without the article usually means "every." Paul wanted to say "all faith," not "every faith." Thus, verse 2b is not really an exception.
3. Ovals show subjects of verbs. Each and every time in this passage that a verb has a noun for its subject, the subject has an article.