

Wade Street Church – Sunday 6th May 11am service

Talk Notes – Faith in Action

Reading: James 2 v14-26

Background

James is one of 21 NT letters. It is attributed to James the brother of Jesus who is mentioned in Galatians 1:10.

It may have been written by James in about 49AD, or it may be of a later date as the Greek is rather polished. The oldest surviving copy of these verses is dated to the 3rd Century – Papyrus 20 is held in Princeton University.

James focuses on living a Christian life consistently in a hostile world. It's a straightforward handbook that is applicable today as much as it was 2000 years ago.

There is no mention of death, the resurrection or the divinity of Jesus – these are already known facts to its early readers.

The letter took sometime to be accepted as being part of the New Testament canon and Martin Luther referred to it as an 'epistle of straw'. Why?

James 2 concentrates on putting your faith into action. Luther took the stance that being justified by faith was all that was needed (Ephesians 2 v8-10). This is not surprising as the Catholic church concentrated on works as being the way to salvation.

The thrust of James 2 and good works boils down to 'we are not saved by God works but for good works!'

Points to consider:

- Are James 2 14- 26 and Ephesians 2 8-10 compatible?
- What do you think about the statement 'being a Christian is not just a Sunday leisure activity? Does your life reflect this?
- How can you as a group/individual 'let your light shine before others that they may see your good deeds and glorify your father in heaven'? Matt 5:16
- What has God done for me in the last week?
- What will I do for him?
- How can we work more effectively with other Christians in Lichfield to 'shine God's light in the city'?

Rick Hill