



Grace Assembly Of God

CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER BIBLE READING DEVOTIONAL

Scripture:	James 2	Title:	Real or Counterfeit Faith?
Author	Ps Peter Lim		
Summary of Chapter	James uses several examples to illustrate the point that real faith must show itself in practical deeds of love and obedience – just like how a body that is alive must breathe. Good works is not a prerequisite for our salvation, but a natural consequence of genuine faith. Conversely, there is such a thing as dead faith. Such counterfeit faith may appear pious, wishing others well verbally, but is in fact, hypocritical – there is no genuine concern for others.		

Key Verse(s) NLT	How does it speak to me?
<i>²⁶Just as the body is dead without breath, so also faith is dead without good works.</i>	<p>This chapter provides an excellent diagnostic tool to show us whether our faith is real or otherwise. And we need to be brutally honest with ourselves because there is a real possibility that we can confess to be Christians, but in fact lack the evidence of it. This past Christmas, our children’s ministry organized what is called “Gift-a-Christmas” outreach activity where parents and their children bought gifts for needy residents which they personally handed to them. My children were assigned an elderly lady who was very friendly. She invited us into her home and through our conversation, we found that she was estranged from her family. After the visit, my children complained of a certain smell they picked up in her home and remarked that it was such a small place to live in. Despite that, we left her home determined to make room in our lives to care for people like her. She was open to have us visit again, and we have decided to do so regularly from now on – the next time being Chinese New Year! I am glad our children had the opportunity to minister to the marginalized to exercise genuine faith.</p> <p>Today, let’s reflect honestly on our lives. Is there evidence of genuine faith – where love and obedience are freely manifested? How do we respond when we see needs around us? After we have prayed about those needs, do our hands follow up with practical action? If so, keep that flame burning and continue to shine for Jesus! If not, let’s ask God to give us genuine faith and then respond to His Spirit’s promptings to love someone today. It may require sacrifices, but if we serve a God of love, and call Him our Father, these inconveniences will not deter us from doing good works.</p>

APPLICATION REFLECTIONS

Adult:	Are you guilty of the negative examples described in James 2? In this past month, how have you demonstrated genuine faith? Who can you reach out to today and for the rest of this year?
Youth:	Why must good works accompany genuine faith? Isn’t our faith only “between us and God”? Who has God prompted you to show practical love to?
Child:	God is love. If we really care for someone, what must we do when he/she is hungry/sad/cold? We pray for them but we must also help them by sharing our food, toys or clothing. Who can you help when school reopens?

PRAYER

Praying Scripture:	Dear heavenly Father, give me genuine faith that manifests itself through good works. Stir up within me a heart of deep compassion for the lost, the needy, and the broken-hearted. Then give me strength to show practical love to them regularly.
Thanksgiving Prayer:	I/We thank you for _____ (e.g. delicious food we ate, places we went, prayer that was answered, etc)
Intercessory Prayer:	I/We want to pray for _____ (e.g. healing of sickness, family members, work or study, leaders, nation, etc)
Salvation Prayer:	I/We pray for the salvation of my/our unsaved loved ones _____ (add one name per day). In Jesus’ Name I/we pray. Amen.