

6. James's illustration presents an unbeliever observing a believer who, as far as he can tell, is not much different than himself and most of the other unbelievers he knows.
7. What comes next is the word that seals the deal for those who think that production is necessary for salvation, the aorist active infinitive of **σώζω** (**sōzō**): "to save."
8. There are several applications of this verb in the New Testament. The one most often assumed is salvation through faith alone in Christ alone, but it is just one of the applications (Acts 16:31).
9. Another is deliverance from disease or demon possession (Luke 18:42). A third deliverance is from impending peril or death (Matthew 8:23–27 with emphasis on v. 25).
10. The question in verse 14 may be assumed to read, "Can faith save him?" as we see in the NASB translation. But note the pronoun "him." Who is "him"? We have to go back to the beginning of the paragraph. There we find the subject that is to be discussed throughout the rest of the chapter:

**James 2:8**      **If [ protasis of a 1st-class condition ] you apply the Royal Law according to the Scripture, "You shall unconditionally love from personal integrity those you encounter," [apodosis] honorably, you must keep on doing this. (EXT)**

11. The expanded translation contains the answer in the phrase, "those you encounter," which in the Greek is the noun **πλησίον** (**plēsion**): "fellow man, any member of the human family," or according to the KJV, "neighbor."
12. As a royal ambassador, one of our duties is to recruit new witnesses for the Prosecution from among those we encounter, in other words, "those in our periphery."
13. The issue James is emphasizing is the function of the Royal Law. The application we have been observing is the development of personal integrity so that our relationship with others is focused on grace orientation and unconditional love from the soul status of personal integrity.
14. This is the approach to fellow believers with whom we may or may not have differences. In verse 14, James directs us to the unbeliever. How can we be a good witness to those with whom we are not familiar? We must execute the doctrines we have learned while in their company as a way of demonstrating the lifestyle of a believer in Jesus Christ.

15. When doctrine in the stream of consciousness is put into action in the presence of unbelievers, it serves to validate the difference that exists between the unsaved and those who effectually apply biblical truths to life and circumstances.
16. This is a form of evangelism. Unbelievers are able to observe our works as opposed to the invisible presence of our faith in Christ for salvation.
17. The application of our doctrinal inventory through production of divine good converts the negative answer to the question into a positive. Take for example the dynamics in James's church among Golden Fingers, Chazzan, and the Poor Man.
18. Let's conclude, for the purpose of illustration, that all three men are positive-volition believers. Golden Fingers would be a man of integrity that would not have allowed Chazzan to give him a choice seat in the synagogue to the exclusion of the Poor Man.
19. Chazzan would not have discriminated against the Poor Man in favor of Golden Fingers. The Poor Man would have been agreeable to sit anywhere as long as he could attend Bible class which was actually his desire.
20. Quite contrarily, James takes the opposite approach in verse 14 in order to make the point when an unbeliever contends, "he has faith in the Bible, but he has no production."
21. That brings us back to the question, "Can that faith save him?" So, "him" refers to the unbeliever that the believer encounters among "those in his periphery."
22. The word "faith" is *pístis* referring to doctrine in his stream of consciousness. Can unapplied doctrine in the believer's *kardía* save, *sōzō*, an unbeliever? We have established that the word *sōzō* does not refer to salvation with regard to the man who has faith, but has no production.
23. To illustrate, let's temporarily jump forward in James, chapter two, and note Abraham's faith in doctrine and its application with regard to his son, Isaac:  

**James 2:21** Was not Abraham our father justified by works [ **production** ] when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar?

**v. 22** You see that faith was working with his works [ **production** ], and as a result of his works [ **production** ], faith was perfected. (NASB)
24. James illustrates in the above passage that Abraham's faith application did not refer to his salvation, but to production from doctrine in his soul:

**Genesis 22:9** Then they came to the place of which God had told him; and Abraham built the altar there and arranged the wood, and bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.

**Genesis 22:10** Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.

**v. 11** But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.”

**v. 12** He said, “Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.”

25. Through faith in the integrity of God, Abraham confidently took his son, Isaac, to Mount Moriah to fulfill the Lord’s command to “offer him there as a burnt offering” (Genesis 22:2).
26. Abraham’s submission to divine authority was so strong that he had absolute confidence that God was testing his faith application at the most intensified level: parental love for his only son while orienting and adjusting to a divine commandment.
27. In this example, salvation was not the issue, but rather Abraham being delivered from the danger of sacrificing Isaac. This doctrinal confidence was revealed when he dismounted his donkey and led Isaac away to be bound upon the altar:

**Genesis 22:5** Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey, and **I and the lad** will go over there; and **we** will worship and **return to you.**”

28. In our James 2 context, the verb *sōzō* does not refer to salvation of the soul of the person who has faith, but no application. The verb *sōzō* occurs in the next sentence. The NASB’s choice of words is, “Can that faith (*pístis*) save (*sōzō*) him?” In the twenty-first century, this translation does nothing but intensify what was already developed in the latter half of the twentieth century, that salvation of the soul requires the production of good works.

29. How should we address this heresy and still be in sync with the Royal Law? I am inspired to say, “You ignorant wretch, how completely disoriented are you to the conjugation of the verb *pisteúō*? It is transitive and demands an object. In salvific passages that object is Jesus Christ.”
30. But under the principle of the Royal Law, I am forced to leave out the, “You ignorant wretch, how completely disoriented are you,” part.
31. If there is no doctrine in the soul, then there is no ammo to fire. Our artillery, in the scrum of the Angelic Conflict, is divine ordnance and its firepower consists of principles, mandates, concepts, doctrines, and categories of systematic theology by which we fight the good fight of faith.
32. If there is no ordnance in the stream of consciousness, then there is no application to life and circumstances. Such a believer did have faith that saved his soul, but he is incapable of doing battle from his soul’s armory that is virtually empty of any doctrine.
33. It is imperative that we expand on the principle that faith’s object for salvation is Jesus Christ. Post salvation, we must inculcate doctrine as the object of our faith for application to life and circumstances.
34. James’s rhetorical question is a challenge to show that unless you have an ever-increasing inventory of doctrinal ideas in the soul you cannot apply doctrine in the presence of unbelievers.
35. This production can take the form of a relaxed mental attitude. This copacetic state of mind pays attention to what the unbeliever says to which the Holy Spirit may recall a biblical principle which can be added to the conversation.
36. No need to certify it by citing book, chapter, and verse. Just fire some truth into the discussion. If it stokes further conversation, then you respond with more divine viewpoint. Some may respond others may not. Under the Law of Freedom, their volition is unrestricted to either accept or reject.
37. All of this takes place in the first sentence of verse 14. The verb *sōzō* appears in the last sentence of verse 14, “Can faith save him?”
38. The pronoun “him” is the masculine singular pronoun, **αὐτός** (*autós*): “him.” The man who is saved, but has no production does not need to be saved, he just needs to get in fellowship and grow in grace. He is not the person referenced here.
39. The masculine pronoun in the last sentence can be expanded to read this way, “Can the person indicated in the Royal Law, referred to as ‘your neighbor,’ be saved by a believer who has faith but no production?”



40. The Greek of this last sentence gives us a clue from a word that is not translated into the English, but is very important to the translation. Here is how it appears in the Greek text: **μή δύναται ἡ πίστις σῶσαι αὐτόν (mē dúnatai hē pístis sōsai autón)**: literally, “Not can the faith save him?”
41. The negative particle **μή (mē)**: “not,” is not translated, but with the aorist active infinitive of the verb **σῶσαι (sōsai)**: “save,” it indicates a question that demands a negative answer. Here’s more on the subject:

**Μή (mē). As an emphatic interrogative particle which has lost its own negative power, but expressing a degree of fear or anxiety and implying the expectation of a negative answer. With the present indicative (James 2:14).<sup>2</sup>**

42. The presence of the untranslated particle **μή** in the last sentence of the verse requires another sentence to be added, “No, it cannot.”
43. The lifestyle of the believer who produces divine good by means of his thoughts, decisions, and actions can gain the attention of an unbeliever and with that response use the opening to present the gospel.
44. This is the expression of soul integrity under the leadership of the Holy Spirit. It enables this believer to use the opportunity to communicate truth to an unsaved person.
45. For him, faith in doctrine, plus a receptive environment, provides the opportunity evangelize an unbeliever.
46. Here is the expanded translation of:

**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)

### Principles on Operational Death:

1. Faith has several objects in Scripture:
  - (1) For unbelievers, Jesus Christ is the object of one’s faith for salvation. The faith of an unbeliever does not result in salvation unless it is directed to Jesus with the understanding that his faith alone in Christ alone results in eternal salvation.
  - (2) Faith is one of three systems of perception:

<sup>2</sup> Spiros Zodhiates, ed., “μή,” in *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, rev. ed. (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1993), 9779.

