



I slipped on a cute top and some adorable pants. Then I took a look at myself in the mirror and was pleased with what I saw until my eyes gazed downward at my feet. It was then I realized a great spiritual truth - the shoes DO make the outfit. Ok - so it's not a spiritual truth but it IS a truth!

I'd been having pain and trouble with my feet which led me to see a doctor. He proceeded to prescribe some medication and told me that I needed to wear, ahem, "better shoes". It seems that most of the shoes I wear aren't acceptable by podiatry standards and just make my foot issue worse! But the shoes he recommended aren't pretty. In fact, I'd say they're hideous with most of what I wear and don't at all complete or, "make the outfit".

James tells us that faith without works is dead. As I looked at myself in the mirror, I was reminded of my faith and what it looks like each day. Just as my outfit didn't look attractive or right with the "wrong" shoes, faith without works isn't attractive at all. We can "dress up" as believers in Jesus every day but just as we put our shoes on to complete our look for the day, we must complete our faith with good works. Like the shoes that complete or make our outfit, our good works, validate or make our faith.

We can claim to be followers of Jesus Christ but will people believe us without the works to confirm our claims? Do we live in peace with our neighbors? Do we love all people? Do we take care of the "least of these"? Will our faith appear genuine when we gossip and slander others? Disrespect those who have been put in authority over us? When we're short-tempered, grumpy, and complain? When we act like the world instead of Jesus himself?



Our outfits can look really pretty until we get down to the shoes. Just as our shoes work



with our outfit to make us look nice and presentable, our actions work together with our faith to show our faith is genuine and the love of Jesus Christ to the world.

What shoes are you wearing today?

*Prayer: Father, help me to complete my faith by doing the good deeds as you give me the opportunities to do. Open my eyes to the opportunities you give to show the love of Jesus to those around me.*

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## James 2:14-26 (NLT)

### Faith without Good Deeds Is Dead

<sup>14</sup> What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone? <sup>15</sup> Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, <sup>16</sup> and you say, "Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well"—but then you don't give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do?

<sup>17</sup> So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless.

<sup>18</sup> Now someone may argue, "Some people have faith; others have good deeds." But I say, "How can you show me your faith if you don't have good deeds? I will show you my faith by my good deeds."

<sup>19</sup> You say you have faith, for you believe that there is one God. Good for you! Even the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror. <sup>20</sup> How foolish! Can't you see that faith without good deeds is useless?

<sup>21</sup> Don't you remember that our ancestor Abraham was shown to be right with God by his actions when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? <sup>22</sup> You see, his faith and his actions worked together. His actions made his faith complete. <sup>23</sup> And so it happened just as the Scriptures say: "Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith." He was even called the friend of God. <sup>24</sup> So you see, we are shown to be right with God



by what we do, not by faith alone.

<sup>25</sup> Rahab the prostitute is another example. She was shown to be right with God by her actions when she hid those messengers and sent them safely away by a different road. <sup>26</sup> Just as the body is dead without breath, so also faith is dead without good works.

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