

Faith that Works 2

By Frank Fortunato, Former quizzer for Allison Park, Allison Park, PA and Calvary Assembly of God, Atlanta, GA

We return to the discussion of abstraction and confront again James' rhetorical question: how does a Christ-follower measure faith *apart* of works? James, as we have seen, argues action as the natural resulting evidence of faith's presence. If we were to look back into chapter one, we would find James' summary statement at the end to be a declaration that the religious practice God desires is found in caring for orphans and widows—people who cannot care for themselves—and in keeping yourself from being stained by the world. In other words, action, works.

Yet we cannot distance ourselves from the question of motivation insofar as our actions and works are concerned. Why do I do this work? What motivates my action? Is it "pure faith," the promise of reward, the desire to "prove" that I am actually following Christ? After all, is not confessing belief in Jesus as Lord itself an action, a work? When I question my motivation, am I attempting self-justification and does this somehow "taint" my faith? Perhaps *that* is really where faith plays a role: faith that God understands my motivation, faith that my works are born from the change Jesus has brought in my heart and my life. By demonstrating my faith via works I am in a sense, being justified *by* those works, even as it is my faith that ultimately motivates the works in the first place: one drives the other.

What James argues for, and in very strong language, make no mistake, is the integration of faith and action, seeing one as a natural and essential to the other, so much so that any separation renders both of them useless. As James asserts in verse twenty-six, "For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead." Works and faith cannot be separated without destroying the essence of both.

When we follow James' example put works and actions to faith, we are "doing the thing," we are making concrete and tangible that which is abstract and intangible and giving an image to that which has no image. And yet, with this in mind, we must always be vigilant lest we confuse the representations of faith with faith itself.



NATIONAL ONE-ON-ONE COMPETITION 2009 in ST. LOUIS

One of the best experiences of the summer—be there! National Youth Ministries Bible Quiz continues to expand National Finals with new ideas and events so that your National Finals experience can be one of the best weeks of the year. So don't lose heart if your team does not advance to National Finals this year. If your year has already ended for team competitions, line up and sign up now! The 2009 One-on-One Competition at the July National Finals is open to any A-league quizzers quizzing with an Assemblies of God district over the Gospel of Mark. 2009 categories that individuals may participate in include the 2009 National One-on-One Tournament, Dramatized Quoting, Preaching category, and the Quoting Bee. For forms and registration information, go to www.biblequiz.com.

Student participants must meet the 2008-2009 eligibility requirements outlined on www.biblequiz.com in order to participate. Competition registration with an Assemblies of God district will be confirmed for all students. **Questions?** Contact Pastor Bernie Elliot at elliottbq@aol.com.

2009 NATIONAL FINALS MISSIONS PROJECT

July 11, 2009, will be the first-ever Bible Quiz National Finals missions project. Come be part of Aim outreach "Project Serve." We will be working along side of the Berkeley Fire Department by installing Smoke Detectors and Fire Extinguishers in as many homes as we can during a three hour period.

When most people think of a missionary they think of a man in a safari outfit, living in a mud hut and eating bugs and vegetation in the jungles of Africa. While there are individuals serving in this way, Webster's dictionary defines a missionary as "one who is sent out with authority to perform a special duty." Our scope on this Aim Project is to minister in a very practical way to the homes near the Renaissance Hotel where we are staying for the National Bible Quiz Finals.

This AIM Outreach is open to any quizzers, coaches, officials and family members, who have just finished the 6th grade and above. We will be ministering in the community from 1:30 PM to 4:30 PM on July 11.

The cost will be \$15 for each participant to help in the purchase of the Smoke Detectors and Fire Extinguishers. Registration deadline for this outreach is May 26th and all of the information is on the event Registration Form located at www.biblequiz.com. Please contact bq@ag.org if you have any questions. See you in St. Louis!





NATIONAL FINALS 2009 RENAISSANCE AIRPORT HOTEL RESERVATIONS

The 47th National Bible Quiz Finals will be held at the Renaissance Airport Hotel in St. Louis, MO, July 12-17, 2009. We are anticipating a record breaking crowd and some surprises that will be announced over the course of the next several weeks. Make your reservations now. You are welcome to come in before or stay after the Nationals Bible Quiz Finals and enjoy the many activities that St. Louis has to offer.

Reservations must be made no later than: **Monday, June 15, 2009**. Rooms will not be available after this date due to the All Star baseball game that week in St. Louis.

If you make a reservation for two queen beds, you will get a message that there are none available and that your request has been noted. Still make the request. This is a quirk in their system because we have those rooms already blocked off.

Rooms are \$89 plus tax for a one to four person occupancy per room. Self-parking is complimentary. Valet parking is also available for \$12 per day.

Once an individual reservation has been made, any changes should be made directly with the Group Reservations Department (toll free 1-800-468-3571). A credit card number or one night's advance deposit will be required to secure a room out of this block. Cancellations must be received no later than June 15, 2009, or one night's room charge and tax will be assessed.

Everyone is encouraged to make their reservation directly through <http://cwp.marriott.com/stlsa/biblequiz/>. When the option to enter a company name comes up, please put your church name so that your block of rooms are together.

Renaissance St. Louis Hotel Airport

Check Rates & Availability

Book using the form below to receive the special group rate for this event!

Rooms start at **89.00 (USD)** and are available from **07/08/2009 - 07/19/2009**.

You must book by **06/15/2009** to receive this special rate!

Check-in date
 Jul, 2009 8

Check-out date
 Jul, 2009 19

Guests / room No. of rooms
 1 1

Rewards no. Room Type
 _____ Quality Room

Group code
 AOGAOG/



Corinthians

What an exciting time as we get ready for a new season and fresh books—1 and 2 Corinthians. New products are already available! Start recruiting the friends that you want to be on your quiz team next year. For tips on recruiting from coaches around the country, check out “Recruiting Quizzers” under Coaching Tips at www.biblequiz.com. You might be able to try some of these ideas yourself!

The breakdown of material for competition will be:

A-League

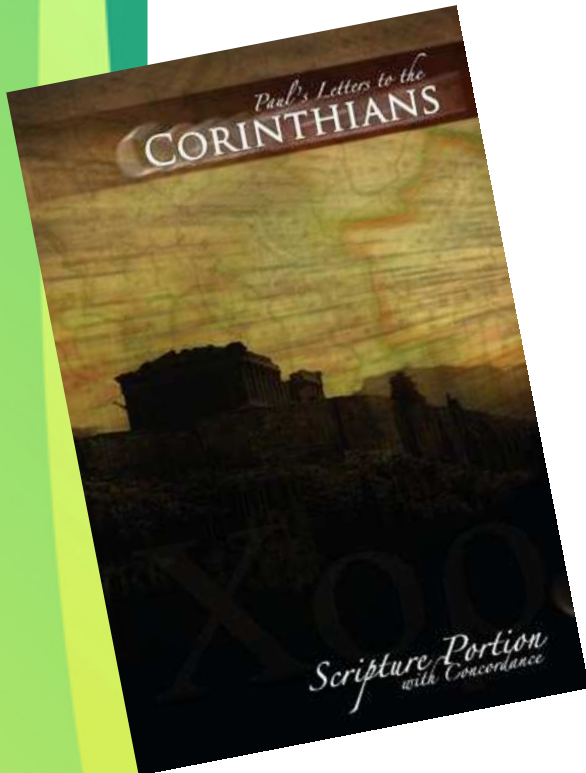
Meet #1	1 Corinthians 1-9	204 verses
Meet #2	1 Corinthians 10-14	151 verses
Meet #3	1 Cor 15 - 2 Cor 3	141 verses
Meet #4	2 Corinthians 4-13	198 verses

Total: 694 verses

Novice League

Meet #1	1 Corinthians 1-6	124 verses
Meet #2	1 Corinthians 7-10	113 verses
Meet #3	1 Corinthians 11-13	78 verses
Meet #4	1 Corinthians 14-16	122 verses

Total: 437 verses



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