

I have been talking about how the letter of James appears to refer to Paul's letters in order to contradict them (as has long been thought by scholars — going back at least to Martin Luther). But as it turns out, I don't think it's actually that simple. I briefly mentioned this in an earlier post, but here is the fuller scoop. This again is taken from my book *Forgery and Counterforgery*. I should remind you what I mean by those terms, "forgery" and "counterforgery."

The term "forgery" is a technical term for a book that claims to be written by a famous person who in fact did not write it. (So "forgery" does NOT mean, in this context, something like "a made-up story." It refers specifically to the claim by an author — either explicit or implicit — to be someone other than he is.) A "counter-forgery" is a kind of forgery — it refers to a forgery written in order to contradict the views found precisely in someone else's forgery (whether or not the counter-forgery realized that the book he is opposing was forged or authentic).

I will be arguing that the letter of James does not oppose Paul. It opposes letters *claiming* to be written by Paul but weren't. So it's a counter-forgery. Here's how I start making the case.

James as Independent of Paul

Even though James has picked up phrasing, concepts, contrasts, and Scriptural proofs from Paul, his actual position, as often noted, may not be contradictory to Paul's. True, he certainly sounds contrary to Paul. For James a person is justified by works, not by faith alone; for Paul a person is justified by faith not by doing the works of the Law. The problem is that Paul and James appear to mean different things by both "faith" and "works."

I do not need to provide a lengthy disquisition on Paul's use of the two words. Faith, for Paul, refers to ...

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