

James

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[0 : 0 0] Well, let's jump into James, and we're going to finish up Chapter 2 today. Oh, real quick, an announcement. Can you believe it?

And as far as I know, and we've double-checked and triple-checked and quadruple-checked, all the information is right, and the people's pictures are with their right name, and right phone numbers, and all that.

There may still be mistakes, so I apologize. But we tried our best to make it happen. So I'll stick those out in the foyer there so people can grab those.

But they look really nice. Yes, and thank Abby. Abby did pretty much most of the work. She did a great job. So James, James Chapter 2.

And we are starting, I think we stopped it before we got to verse 18, James 2.18. Again, just a little quick summary. James is written to the 12 tribes scattered abroad.

[1 : 1 9] This is a Jewish epistle, an epistle written to Jewish believers in their Jewish Messiah. And the context is they are waiting for the imminent return of their Messiah to establish his kingdom on the earth.

And there are things that they need to do, ways that they need to live in preparation for that kingdom. And so this is not an epistle like Paul's epistles written to Gentile believers or Jew and Gentile believers who are under grace.

But these are believers who are still under the law, waiting for the establishment of the kingdom. And so that's the big picture context that we need to keep in mind.

Before looking, starting at 18, I'll just start with 14. We'll kind of repeat what we've already looked at. What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works?

Can faith save him? This is a whole passage about faith versus works. And we talked about the different viewpoints on that. And a lot of people want to mix faith and works. And it seems like really that's what James is doing here.

[2 : 3 4] If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, Depart in peace and be warmed and filled, but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?

That thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. And how many times have we heard that, right? Faith without works is dead. So, you know, you were justified by faith in the blood of Christ.

But if we don't do good works, then our faith is void. It's dead. It doesn't have any effect. And that's what James is teaching.

But people take that and they apply it to the things that Paul is teaching as well. And what does it end up doing? It ends up making faith, the faith that we have under the grace of God, basically, it nullifies it, doesn't it?

And we certainly don't want that to happen. We need to clearly preach and teach the grace of God in all purity.

[3 : 37] Adding in just a little bit of works really spoils the whole thing. But James is talking in a different context.

And so we talked a little bit about that last week. We're going to continue to talk about that. And one of the things that I mentioned was, as you read through this passage from James 2.14 to the end of the chapter, to the end of chapter 2, if you, sometimes it helps to change some words as you read it to help you understand it.

Because he's talking about faith. He's talking about justification. He's talking about salvation. But in a different context than I think a lot of people assume. When we talk about faith, what is the object of our faith that we need to consider?

Under grace. What are we putting our faith in? Jesus Christ. The finished work of Jesus Christ very specifically, right? We can, in a general way, say Christ.

But even that isn't enough. We need to go further than that. It's in the finished work that Christ did on our behalf. He shed his blood for sinners, for us. And that is what we're putting our faith in.

[5 : 01] Is that what James is talking about? That's the big question. I think many people, as they read this, that's what they assume. James is saying, but someone will say to you, this is verse 18, someone will say, you have faith in the blood of Jesus Christ, and I have works.

That's how they read it. But here's how we ought to read it. But someone will say, you have faith in the law of Moses, and I have works of the law.

So you have faith in the law, and I have works of the law. That's how we should read it, because that's what James is talking about. He's talking about faith, not in the blood of Christ, but faith in Moses.

And not just Moses the person, but in Moses as the messenger of God to deliver the law. Joe. But wouldn't he also have a faith now that Jesus rose from the dead, so he is who he said he was.

He's the son of God. Okay, not to death barrel for our sins, but now he is who he said he was. He came to earth, and that leads credibility to something.

[6 : 19] Yeah. Joe, that's great. So, especially in this kingdom program, right, coming up to the kingdom, you have to believe in the king, right?

Yeah, I said it was here. And so that was a big message. If you read in the book of Acts, Acts 2, 3, and 4, the big message of the apostles was Jesus is the king, the Messiah, they called him, right?

Jesus is the king, and you need to believe that Jesus is the king. One of the things that's so, for a lot of people, like suspiciously missing is those first messages from Peter.

Never talks about the blood of Jesus, what Jesus accomplished on the cross. He just focuses on, well, you killed your king. That's what he says, you killed your king. He never talks about what was accomplished on that cross.

I don't know that Peter even knew. Maybe a little bit. Maybe he just had a little taste. But that wasn't really revealed until later, and in full, revealed to Paul. So anyway, that's the context.

[7 : 21] So as we read this, but someone will say, I have faith, and we'll put in parentheses, in the law. Or someone will say, I have faith in the law, or you have faith in the law, and I have works of the law.

Show me your faith in the law without your works of the law, and I will show you my faith in the law by my works of the law. Does that seem to make more sense?

That helps me kind of as I read this. Because that was the faith that James is talking about. And we see lots of examples of faith throughout the scriptures.

And so many times, there's probably dozens and dozens of times people had faith, and they weren't always the same faith. They were faith, in general, trust, belief, but not in the same thing.

And so we need to be careful as we read the scriptures. What is the object of someone's faith? What are they believing in? Who are they trusting? What are they trusting? And we're going to talk about Abraham in a second, and talk about what his faith was in.

[8 : 35] So when your faith is in the law of Moses, what does the law say? The law says, do this and live.

Right? Do this and live. So if you say, if your faith is in that message of do this and live, and you don't have works, is that faith do anything?

No, because the law says, is it says, believe this and live? Is that what the law says? No, the law says, do this and live. So if you say, I believe the law, but then you don't do the law, then your faith is in vain.

It's dead. What about under Christ? What about under grace? Is it the same thing? No, it's a different kind of faith. The object of our faith is in the finished work of Jesus Christ, the blood that he shed for us.

So the faith under grace says what? Does it say, do this and live? No. That faith says, it is finished.

[9 : 43] It's done. The work has been complete. That's what we're putting our faith in, that the work is finished. And so doing good works, doing something like dunking ourselves or sprinkling ourselves underwater, does that make God's gift more free?

Does it make God's gift more powerful or more effectual in us? By keeping the Sabbath, does that increase our riches in Christ?

Not at all. If we resist the fleshly temptations that we all experience, will that make us more alive to God than we are right now in Christ?

Not at all. And so the works that are talked about here, the works of the law, add no value to our faith as long as our faith is in Christ.

If your faith is in the law, which says to do, then your works matter, don't they? But I will say this.

[10 : 53] Though our resistance to fleshly temptation does not add, does not make us more alive unto God, I think if we reverse that, we can't say that it is true.

Our confidence in Christ and what he did for us can be effectual in us to help us resist temptation.

It's like the whole thing was turned on its head with the law. If we put our confidence in him, that he is our righteousness, then we actually have a good chance at living out the kind of life that God wants us to live.

In fact, I think this is what exactly what Galatians 5 teaches. Paul says this, I say then, walk in the spirit and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

If you put the full of your confidence in God and what he accomplished for you, then you won't fulfill the lust of the flesh. So, someone will say, so faith and works.

[11 : 58] Well, you can't have faith without works. Well, it depends on what we're talking about with faith. We talked a little bit about how people parse out this whole faith and works thing. There's a lot of people who would agree with the position that we're taking here that faith is alone.

In fact, this was the big part of the Protestant Reformation. There's five solas. Grace alone was one of them. Faith alone is another.

Faith alone. There isn't anything else you need to add. But so many times, people want to sneak it in. Sneak in those works. And so, some will say, well, it's by faith alone.

And actually, I can't remember. Is Martin Luther or Calvin said it's faith alone, but not faith that is alone. Well, now that's true. We ought to. In fact, we read a bunch of scriptures last week about how Christians ought to live a life of good works.

Is that true? Absolutely. And is it just Christians? Everybody ought to live a good life, right? All of us. That's true.

[13 : 13] True. But, but is that, does that, do those works in any way contribute to our faith or our confidence in Christ?

No way. So, but some people will use passages like this, this whole passage in James chapter 2, to say, well, what James is really saying is that if your faith is actually real, then it will be accompanied by good works.

And that sounds pretty good.

Well, I did trust. I think I trusted in Christ. But, man, yesterday, I really, I really blew it. I screwed up.

Maybe, maybe my faith wasn't real. Because would a real Christian fall to that kind of temptation? And this is how many people live their lives.

[14 : 36] And where is their confidence? Well, it's a little bit in what Jesus accomplished. And a little bit in, well, how am I living the Christian life? Is that what we should do?

Kind of split our confidence? Part of it in what Jesus did and another part in how we're living the Christian life. God forbid that we would ever do that. Paul teaches, he says, if anybody has a reason to boast, I do.

I could have lots of confidence when it comes to, you know, being a Hebrew. I'm a Hebrew of the Hebrews. When it comes to knowing the law, there's not many people that know it better than I do.

When it comes to doing the law, I'm pretty much blameless. But God forbid that I would ever put my confidence in any of those things.

But my confidence, the whole of it, is in what Jesus Christ accomplished for me. We want to turn our eyes upon Jesus, like that song says, and have our eyes fixed on him fully.

[15 : 43] Not fixed on what the Bible says in Isaiah calls as filthy rags. That's what our works are. Our good works are as filthy rags. We don't need to be putting our eyes on filthy rags, do we?

All right, we'll move on to James chapter, or verse 19.

You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe, and they tremble. So he's focusing on one aspect of faith. And there are actually multiple things that we're supposed to believe, even as grace believers.

We don't just believe one thing. There's kind of some things that lead up to it. One is believing in God, right? If you don't believe in God, you can't be a Jew. You can't be a Christian. You have to believe in God.

So he references that as far as their faith. In fact, I've got written down here, Deuteronomy 6.4. The Hebrews call this the Shema. Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God.

[16 : 44] The Lord is one. You believe in one God? That's what you ought to do if you're a Jew or a Christian. We believe in one God. We're monotheists. But that's just a starting point of faith, right?

If you're a Jew under the law, like James is speaking to Jews who are under the law, and you believe that God is one God, is that sufficient? It's required, but it's not sufficient, right?

You have to believe more than that. And you have to do more than that as well. It's the same thing for Christians, right? And I think this is where a lot of people who are not familiar with Christianity, but they grew up around it, and they think, oh, yeah, I'm a Christian.

I believe in God. That's what a lot of people think it means to be a Christian. I believe in God. I believe in Jesus. But they don't, sometimes they don't even know what Jesus accomplished.

They don't even know. It's incredible. Sometimes I'm talking to people, and, oh, yeah, I'm a Christian. Well, what did Jesus do for sinners? I don't know.

[17 : 49] What? How could that possibly be? But it's true. Demons believe in God, don't they? And so that's a great point. Even the demons believe.

And so when you're witnessing to somebody, well, you believe in God. Even the demons do, you know? So what's that doing for you? You need to believe something beyond that. For the Jew, you had to believe and trust in the law and that covenant that God made with the Jews.

For us who are under grace, we need to believe in what Jesus accomplished on the cross. Sarah. So it says you do well even if you believe. Does that mean that's the one thing they do well?

The demons do well. I don't know that I would call it doing well. No, but because their actions speak against what they know to be true. But.

Right. They believe that God is one God because, well, you know, they're aware just, you know, they have a lot of knowledge. But do they do the commandments?

[18 : 49] Do they do what God requires, whether it's the moral law or the Jewish law or anything? No. So. I think you're saying that that doesn't mean anything for any of us.

For any of us. We just believe there's one God. That doesn't mean anything for any of us. Under grace, under the law, under any dispensation of the scriptures. Well, not meaningless.

By itself. Yeah, by itself. Yeah. I mean, they knew who Jesus was. They knew. They did. Sometimes, right? The demons would cry out. They do. So. You know, only because their works doesn't prove what they know to be true that it's counted meaningless, correct?

Yes. Or not sufficient enough to be redeemed. Right. Because it is a good thing in and of itself to believe in God. Right? Right? But if you believe in God and then hate him, that's another thing.

Right? Yeah. Terry. Please repeat what they're saying. Okay. Yeah. It gets on the. Absolutely. Yeah. So, we were just talking about the value of faith in God by itself.

[19 : 59] And so, that was the question that came up. Believing in God as a monotheist by itself is good on its own, but it has to be mixed with, you know, humility and love towards God as well.

And then, also, just following whatever God commanded you. And we do need to understand what God is requiring of us today. Sarah, do you have something else? Yeah. So, essentially, it's flipping the script of what the Old Testament said.

My works produce my faith. Yeah. And this time, the faith produces the works. Correct? Really? I think that's true. Yeah. Just to repeat what you said. It's almost flipping what was under the law.

Under the law, my works kind of produce something. But righteousness. Righteousness. But is it complete righteousness?

No. Not at all. In fact, it's a very inadequate righteousness, isn't it? But under grace, our faith in Christ, our trust in him, can actually do something in us to actually make us like Christ, to make us godly like him.

[21 : 03] So. All right. We're going to continue on to the next few verses. Was there any other raised hands?

Roger, did you have something? Believing in God, according to Romans 1, seems to me to be just enough to condemn me. Yeah. That's a good point.

Believing in God has just enough to condemn you. Because natural revelation has shown that there's a God, but because men reject him as God, they're condemned. Right.

And God gives them over. That's such a great point. Romans teaches, and I'll just repeat this, Romans teaches that belief in God, everybody basically has that in their conscience.

And they not only know who God is because they can see a creation, they actually know some things about right and wrong because of their conscience. And those things end up condemning us, right, because we don't follow through with what we know.

[22 : 06] Such a great point. We'll read verse 20 through 23 here. But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? Ha! I'm going to prove it!

Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac, his son, on the altar? Do you see that faith was working together with his works?

And by works, faith was made perfect. And the scripture was fulfilled which says, Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

And he was called the friend of God. There's many that teach, and I so appreciate, they're trying to protect the purity of faith alone. And so they'll say, well, when he's talking about works, he's just talking about works that follow.

But man, when you read this, is that what James is saying? Is it works that follow? Oh, no, it's works that make your faith perfect. And then when we get to the next verse after this, it's like, what?

[23 : 13] Because he says, you see that, well, we'll get to it, that a man is justified by works, not faith only. So Abraham is used here.

Joe, do you have something real quick? I'm just going to bring up about Abraham. Back then, God worked with us differently. You know, as far as righteousness, how do you achieve righteousness? Believe. Back then, if you did what he said, then you had righteousness, you believe.

And Abraham did what he said. And it goes back to Noah. Noah proved that he loved God, he believed God, because he did what he said. But that's how he worked with people back then.

If they did what he said, you know, physical things come on. And he doesn't work that same way with us. Yep. Under the old covenant, you had to do what he said. And so that's what Abraham was under.

But let's compare a little bit with Paul and James. There's a great, because do you know that Paul also brings up Abraham? He brings up Abraham being justified by faith as well.

[24 : 23] And does he teach the same thing? No, he uses the same example, but comes to a completely opposite conclusion. Open up to Romans 4. So Paul teaches that Abraham was justified.

Does Paul teach that Abraham was justified when he offered up Isaac? Is that what Paul teaches? No, no, he teaches that Paul was justified when, or that Abraham was justified when he believed.

But James is saying, oh, well, wait. He actually wasn't justified until he offered up Isaac. That's when that faith kind of came to fruition.

That's when that faith was perfected. Now, if you're under the law, that's true. And this is, people get really confused because Abraham, it's the same story, the same example being used.

But it seems to be that they're saying exactly opposite things. So Paul says that Abraham was justified when. If you look at Romans 4.10, he says exactly, or at least I guess he says generally.

[25 : 39] He says, how then was his faith accounted as righteousness? How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised or while he was uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised.

When Abraham offered his son Isaac, was he circumcised or uncircumcised at that point? He had already been circumcised. So James is saying, well, that faith wasn't accounted as righteousness until he offered Isaac.

But Paul says, no, it was accounted before he was circumcised. These guys are on totally different pages. What is the deal?

Even if we understand, right, that there's these two dispensations we have under law and under grace, can they both be right? I mean, isn't James just wrong? Well, let's look a little bit further.

We're going to actually read a couple more verses. And I hope that this makes it a little bit more clear. Verse 11 and 12 says this. And he, talking about Abraham, received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe.

[26 : 59] Though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also. And the father of circumcision to those who are not only of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had while still uncircumcised.

So the wording here can be a little bit confusing, but here's what I think he's saying. Abraham, well, what it's clearly saying is he's the father of two groups of people.

He's not just the father of the circumcised. He's also the father of the uncircumcised. In fact, just this morning, Abby, she was singing to little baby Adam.

And she was singing the song, Father Abraham had many sons. You know that song? And it says in part of the song, I am one of them and so are you.

Are you a father of Abraham? Am I a father of Abraham? Well, Abby said, well, that song's not right. That's bad doctrine. You know, we got to be careful what songs we sing, right?

[28 : 08] We don't want to sing songs of bad doctrine. But are you Jews? Am I a Jew? So in what way, in what sense are we children of Abraham?

Well, Paul says right here, it's because we have the faith that Abraham had, right? And Paul says elsewhere also that, well, Jesus is a child of Abraham and we are in Christ.

So we are also children of Abraham. But it's in a different way, right? It's not physical progeny, but we are spiritual children of Abraham in that sense.

So Abraham was the father of two groups. And so this thing happened where his faith was accounted as righteousness so that he could be the father of people that believe, even though they're not circumcised.

But he was also the father of the people who are circumcised. So he was the father of those who are under the law and he's the father of those who are under grace.

[29 : 13] Now, one of the things that causes a lot of confusion is Paul makes such a major point about this. This is that Abraham had faith and it was accounted to him as righteousness that people think, oh, well, that's how all the Jews were supposed to live.

They were supposed to live by grace through faith alone. Is that true? It can't be true. And so what's happening here with Abraham, it's just a foreshadowing.

Did Abraham trust in the blood of Christ shed for him? Is that true? You know, some people actually teach that. Well, he kind of knew. He must have known. No, that's not true.

Abraham had no idea about the Messiah or anybody else shedding his blood for him. He knew about the sacrifices and all those things, but he didn't know about Jesus Christ coming in the future to die for the sins of the world.

What was it? What was the object? I'll get to you in a second, John. What was the object of Abraham's faith? Was it the blood of Christ? No. What was it? What did he believe? And what did God said?

[30 : 23] Yeah. I'm going to make of you a great nation. I'm going to make of you. You're going to be the father of many nations. That's what he believed. And so he put his faith in that promise of God.

And so when James says, well, when he offered up his son Isaac, that was him working that faith. Is that true? Is that true? His only son, Isaac, God tells him, I want you to slay him on an altar.

Oh, father of many nations, you want me to slay my only son on an altar? That's where his faith came in. That's where his works came in. He did that even though, and it says in Hebrews that he just, he must have known that God was, he must have believed that God would just raise him from the dead, right?

John? Abraham never had the law. Abraham never had the law? Like the law of Moses. The law came after Abraham. Well, the law started with circumcision.

Now, when you say the law, a lot of times we can mean different things. The law of Moses is usually what we're talking about. But circumcision was the law. But the law was given to prove that we can't be righteous.

[31 : 38] Even if you followed the law, you still couldn't be righteous. So, it still was faith. Like, Abraham believed God, he had faith that God was going to do what he said.

And even the ones under the law actually had to believe God and then go through the sacrifice and everything to be declared righteous.

And of course, then Christ came and it was believed in Christ and what he did. So, I'm not sure I'm saying this right, but I don't think the law made anybody righteous.

Even if you followed it. You couldn't. Yeah, so that brings a lot of confusion. I think that's true in a sense, but also not true in a sense.

And I'll tell you why. In Deuteronomy, it says, Moses actually says that if we do these things, he says to the people, if we do these things, then it will be righteousness for us.

[32 : 36] He says that. He teaches that explicitly. It will be righteousness for us. So, and it is true that if you do good things, you'll be justified in those things.

But, what Paul is teaching is, is that justification sufficient? Because does the law say, well, just do as much as you can? No.

Our righteousness is imperfect. Highly imperfect. And so, the law can bring a certain amount of justification, if that's a good way to put it. That's kind of how I view it.

And, you know, I'm sure there could be differences even in this room. And that's fine. But the way that I view it is that the law can provide a certain amount of justification, but it can't make you righteous.

And really, when it comes to the law, is a little bit of righteousness sufficient? No. You're either, in the most important sense, you're either righteous or you're not. It's because you can't keep all the laws.

[33 : 33] In order to be righteous, you'd have to keep every bit of the law. And you can't do that. Right. And so, therefore, you're unrighteous. Just like in a judge today, right? You go to the judge, you know, you stole, you know, you did a hit and run, right?

And then you show, well, hey, I've kept most of the law. Look at, I can count, you know, here's all the books. I went, I went to the, to the courthouse and I got all the laws and I, I followed 256 of them.

I only broke one judge. Is he going to say, okay, that's good enough. No. You are unrighteous because you broke one. And that makes you unrighteous.

And that's what, that's what really matters. So, you can do acts of righteousness by following other laws. You break that one and you just made yourself unrighteous.

Great discussion. So, Abraham had two kinds of faith. He had a faith that was a faith that was alone. And then he had a faith that was a faith that was, that worked with the law.

[34 : 33] Circumcision. So, there's two kinds. So, he was, he had this precursor of faith that was by itself which is what we follow. But then later on, it was after that one, which was the most important one, I think, was what Paul's teaching.

It was after that that he mixed his faith when God told him to become circumcised with doing a work and then continuing to do works. And that's what the law of Moses is all about.

as well. Yes? Isn't it such that the whole confusion that people have is that when Abraham was made righteous by faith alone, he wasn't a Jew at that point.

And so, righteousness by faith and works is only for the Jews. It's not for the Gentiles. And so, we can't mix that because it's not ours.

Yeah. What Paul, I think, is teaching, and so you, just to repeat what you, the question you asked of the comments you made was that the law is for the Jews. Abraham was not a Jew.

[35 : 43] He was the father of the Jews and it was through him that circumcision was introduced. And circumcision is what makes a Jew a Jew.

It's like that one big thing, right? Now, Paul says, well, some people say, oh, I'm circumcised. I'm good. I don't have to keep the rest of the law. Well, that's not true. But circumcision is like critical. And so, in that sense, because he was the father of the Jews, I think, but when did he believe?

Was it when the whole Jewish thing started? Was it after? No, it was before. That's the big point that Paul makes. The faith alone thing was before he ever, quote, became a Jew, became circumcised, however we want to put it.

So, there's a verse I want to look at real quick. It's in, where did I put it? Galatians. Galatians 3, 23 and 25.

Or, 23 through 25. Galatians 3, 23 through 25. And Paul's talking about the importance of faith. I'll give everybody a second to go there because I think it's good to look at this passage.

[36 : 55] The faith that we believe, the object of our faith in the blood of Christ, was not available to Abraham, was not available to Moses, was not available to David, was not available to anybody in the Old Testament.

Paul says this, but before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith, which would afterward be revealed.

Under the law, there was a faith. Like we said, Abraham believed he would be the father of many nations. That's what he believed.

But Paul's talking about a very specific faith, a faith in the blood of Christ. And he said, before that faith came, we, as the Jews, were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith, which would afterward be revealed.

Therefore, the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. And he means justified by faith later. But after faith has come, we are no longer a tutor, under a tutor.

[38 : 02] After faith has come. And so Jesus had to die. And then, and then the, what he accomplished through his death had to be revealed. Then you can put your faith in it.

If you don't know that, just like all those people in the Old Testament didn't know that, they can't put their faith in it. So under grace, our faith is what Jesus accomplished in the cross.

Yes. All the sacrifices and so forth, they did in the Old Testament before Christ came, were like a down payment type of thing. A down payment.

In fact, it's called a seal. When we read there in Romans, that circumcision was a seal. It kind of, it was like a preserving, in fact, Galatians says the same thing, right?

It kind of kept people. It didn't accomplish the end result that God was, but they had to wait. There was a waiting period. And that law was like a seal.

[39 : 02] The circumcision, all those things, was a seal to preserve, to hold these people until that faith was revealed. Yeah. Thank you. Okay.

For the sake of time, we'll try to finish up the chapter. You see then that a man is justified by works and not faith alone, James says. Anybody ever seen that? You know, sometimes we put up verses of scripture like on our wall at home.

Has anybody ever seen this scripture on somebody's wall in their house? You see then that a man is justified by works and not by faith only. Anybody ever see that scripture? I've never. I asked Sherry to take it down.

Yeah. I mean, this verse, just by itself, is complete and utter heresy to an evangelical Christian. So, Sherry, thank you for saving your husband there from heresy.

You see that in that message, nobody would put that up on their wall. That is completely antithetical to what we believe as Christians. Now, I will say, just this last week, I was watching a YouTube video with a Catholic guy who used to be a Baptist.

[40 : 10] He was talking on this topic and man, he loves James because in the Catholic Church, you are justified by your works and not by faith alone and that is a big deal.

And that's what you need to believe, that you're justified by works and you've got to do all these things and the Eucharist and all these things. You have to do these things. And so, and he was really mocking Protestant Christians who, he's like, you know, where is faith alone in the Bible?

He said, well, it's only right here in James. That's the only place where it talks about faith alone and what does it say? It's faith that's not alone. It's by works. And for a lot of Protestant Christians, what do you say?

What do you say? That's exactly what it says. You see that a man is justified by works. You can just leave it right there. That's what it says. And not by faith alone. But that's not true.

Romans 4, 1 through 4 says this. What then, this is Paul, what then shall we say that Abraham our father was found according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.

[41 : 16] For what does the scripture say? Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Now, he's saying now, under the age of grace, to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace, but as debt.

If you do works, whether it's avoiding temptation or getting dunked in water or doing the Eucharist or some other sacrament that you think is going to provide value to, then that would be a debt.

God owes you something. But to him who does not work, but believes on him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness.

If you do not work, but believe only. And that is what we need to do as Christians.

We need to not work. Now, does he mean, well, you know, if you do good works, then that nullifies your faith. No, no, no, no. He's talking about what we're putting our faith in, what we're putting our confidence in, what we're trusting in.

[42 : 21] It's not our works because that's not what our faith tells us to do. Our faith, the faith of Jesus Christ under grace says, believe. Period.

Believe and nothing else. Of course, we ought to do good works. And we'll say that over and over and over again. Many people misunderstand. But we ought to do good works, but that provides no value to our confidence in Christ, what he accomplished for us and our position as righteous in him.

We'll finish up with the last two verses. Likewise, was not Rahab, the harlot, also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way? Again, you know, she believed that this God of the Jews was real and that he was just.

But if she just believed that and didn't like do something to rescue those spies, right? You know, the story of Rahab. Would she have been saved?

No, she would have died along with everybody else if she hadn't done something about it. So he's giving an example. That's the way that the law works, right? If you just believe the law, but you don't actually do it, it's the same way.

[43 : 36] You'll die. For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. Again, if you're living life under the law, you believe in the law, but you don't do it, then that faith is a dead faith.

Faith without works under the law is dead. Faith without works under grace is exactly the kind of faith that God wants. A faith that puts no confidence in works.

Where our works follow, they ought to. Do they always? I wish they did always. Right? Yeah. But they don't always.

They should. God forbid that they don't, but many times that's the case. We shouldn't be hypocrites either, right?

Just like the Jews shouldn't be hypocrites, we shouldn't be hypocrites. But under grace, the law has no power over us.

[44 : 41] It can't save us, it can't make us righteous, it also can't make us unrighteous, can't condemn us. The law is powerless when we're in Christ.

If we trust in Christ, the law has no power both either to lift us up or to drag us down. We're in Christ and that is enough. Joe?

On Rahab, if this incident would have never occurred in her life to do that for these spies, she was still righteous because she believed, see, before this incident even came up.

So it didn't prove she was righteous at all. Things that come along, if they don't present themselves to us doesn't mean we're not righteous because we didn't have an opportunity to show it.

I think I see what you're saying. Yeah. Just because it didn't happen doesn't mean you weren't righteous before that. Yeah, I don't know that it's talking about her righteousness but really her physical salvation, right?

[45 : 43] She was saved by the works that she did. She heard about that she was God. She did, yeah. She had heard and she believed their God, you know, that he was who he said he was.

You know, see, the question is when did he become righteous? Back then, you know, Christ hadn't died on the cross yet and so forth to believe in that but Abraham and all these Old Testament people, how did they become righteous before God without Christ being died on the cross?

Well, they believed basically. In the case of Abraham, a lot of them then they did what he said which James was saying that proved that they were righteous, you know, so to speak.

So just to repeat what Joe's saying, you know, these Jews including Rahab who was a proselyte, she became a proselyte, Jew and she became the mother, you know, of the lineage of David, right?

And so, but her faith was important, her works were also important but, what was I going to say? I forgot what I was going to say. She did believe.

[47 : 00] Yeah, oh, what was I, what I was going to say was also she believed but she also did a work and she became a Jew. I'm sure when she got married do you think she circumcised her sons?

I hope she did. I imagine she did, right? And again, the Bible teaches that that was a seal to preserve these people, the ones who believed in God, this was a seal to preserve them until a future day in which the object of our faith today was revealed, right?

Anything else before we quit? Roger? Look at you, Dave. He, since Abraham had come up and they both used chapter 14 of Genesis, both Paul and James used that but it's still that, Paul's going to argue later that this is a promise, this isn't of the covenant and the covenant doesn't set aside the promise.

Yeah. But, but for me it's a beautiful picture of what God did because God promised Abraham. Abraham's faith alone was a beautiful promise, yeah.

And, it says that Abraham believed God and God reckoned it as righteousness to Abraham and then Abraham said, how will I know that this promise is coming through and God said, lay out the covenant, cut the covenant but God went through alone.

[48 : 30] Yeah. that's perfect, yeah. So, just to repeat, that was God's promise and this was a picture, right, of Christ but Abraham believed alone. It was reckoned to him as righteousness and Abraham's like, well, how do I know for sure?

He says, well, I'll show you. So, he cut a covenant with Abraham and God walked through the covenant, right? Is that right? Is that what happened? No, that's not what happened. God went through by himself.

It has nothing to do with you. This is me and me alone. Dave? There are people that have put their faith in the blood of Jesus Christ who are physically unable to do any kind of good work, i.e.

a deathbed conversion. So, to me, that was a prime example of, you know. That's a good example. Those who are on their deathbed, can they cry out to Jesus?

Do they have to prove their faith in some way? They don't have time. My life has come to an end but I call out on the living God and Jesus who died for me. They don't have to prove anything.

[49 : 40] You know, just like none of us. What's that? The thief on the cross. Yeah. The thief on the cross. John? It seems like all through history, belief in God is the answer.

All throughout history, yeah. Faith is this huge thing right from the very beginning. In fact, in the garden, what caused the whole thing to crumble? Did God say? Right? I don't believe what he said.

Did God really say that? Man, God just, faith is so important to him. Sarah? Just believing and crying out is the first work of faith. So, it doesn't mean that they didn't have a work.

It just means they didn't have more to store up those treasures. Yeah, say that again. The first work of faith is to call out and know you're wrong and God's right.

Yes, to say that I'm wrong, you're right. Yeah, that's believing. Yeah. But to access is to say, I know I'm wrong, I know I'm a sinner, I know I can't do it alone.

[50 : 40] So, I think that's the first work that faith produces is to believe and cry out and admit you're wrong. Yeah. It's a humility. Yeah.

The humility of faith. So, the rest of the maps of that are building. It's building on top of that. Yeah. Yeah. Okay. Well, over time, but thanks everybody.