

If you have your Bibles, turn to Galatians 2.

Are we justified by faith or by works? Or by faith AND works?

What is the relationship between:

- Faith
- Works
- And Salvation

Some say...

Faith + Works = Salvation

You have to believe **AND** do good works to be saved.

Others say...

Faith = Salvation (that results in works)

You believe in Christ to be saved, and if you're faith is real, then you will do good works.

Some believe you have to work for you salvation, and some say you just believe.

For both camps

- **All 3** are present: faith, works, and salvation
- All 3 are seen as important
- So you ask... why can't we all just get along?

Why did we need a Protestant Reformation?

- Why did Luther nail the 95 theses to the door of the Wittenberg church?
- Why did we need to break from the Catholic Church?

I'd argue that the 2 greatest and most important reforms of the Reformation were:

- Getting the Bible into the hands of the people and in the language of the people – YOU'VE GROWN UP with the Bible, **BUT** for a long time, the church would not allow the people to have Bibles. They said, "**We will tell you** what the Bible says."
- And, the doctrine of salvation by faith alone

Today, we're going to **look** at Galatians 2 and James 2.

- In Galatians 2, Paul emphasizes salvation by faith alone apart from works.

- In **James 2**, James says that *faith without works is dead*. He emphasizes the need for works to be added to your faith.

Let's begin with Paul in ...

Galatians 2:6-9 – He says...

⁶I am astonished [I'm shocked] that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— ⁷not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. ⁸But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. ⁹As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.

This word **ACCURSED** is the strongest word in the Bible.

Literally... Let him be damned. It does not get any worse than accursed.

If anyone is twisting the scriptures, and preaching another gospel...a false gospel, Paul says, let him be accursed.

So the stakes are very high. This is a heaven or hell issue.

And, what is this “**DIFFERENT GOSPEL**” that some are preaching?

Paul tells us in

Galatians 5:3-4

³I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law. ⁴You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace.

- They want to be **justified by the law**. They want to be saved by faith + works...specifically one particular work.
- The specific issue that is messing up the gospel HERE. The specific law here is **Circumcision**: If you get circumcised, Paul says, you are **obligated to keep the whole law**, which you can't. So you're doomed. --- If you want to save yourself by lawkeeping, then you have to obey all 613 OT laws perfectly.

James 2:10 – James says it this way

For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.

- The issue is not so much that these people are getting circumcised, but the issue is **WHY** they are getting circumcised...
- Why would they do it?

Because they believe that **Jesus** is not enough. They need something more.

Paul is so upset by this perversion of the gospel, he says in...

Galatians 5:12

I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves!

A little slip of the knife and you have a circumcision gone too far. **Paul wishes** that upon them.

--- ***When you wish upon a star!***

These people who are saying you have to be justified by the law.

They believe that Jesus' death on the cross was a **PARTIAL PAYMENT** for their sin. Now, **THEY** have to add **THEIR** good works to Jesus payment for them to be saved.

They see it this way...

Faith + 1 Work = Salvation

They might say: "It's mostly Jesus that saves me, but I have to do 1 thing more."

Paul says that's **ALL IT TAKES**. You add 1 thing to the gospel and you don't have the gospel any more. Faith + 1 addition = a false gospel.

If you are counting on Faith + _____ charity, baptism, church attendance, tithing, obeying the 10 commandments... If you are counting on Faith + WHATEVER to save you, then you are not saved.

You are severed from Christ...

You are fallen from grace

This is why we can't all just get along. Because the gospel is at stake. Eternal life is at stake. People's souls are at stake.

If you want to be saved, then you need to trust fully in Jesus not in your ability to "***be a good Christian***".

The Philippian jailer said to Paul: What must I do to be saved?

And, **do you know** what Paul said? What did he say for that man **TO DO**? How many of the 10 commandments did Paul rattle off to the Philippian jailer? --- ZERO

BECAUSE It's not an issue of what you need to do. It's an issue of what you need to believe.

The jailer says: What must I do to be saved?

Paul responds: Believe... Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved.

That's all you need to be saved. That's it! Believe! ... And, it has **ALWAYS** been this way.

Abraham, all the way back in the book of Genesis was saved by faith alone.

Genesis 15:6 – the verse that turned Martin Luther's world upside down and sparked the Protestant Reformation

Abraham believed the LORD; and it was credited to him as righteousness.

Abraham believed. And God saved him. God forgave all of his sins. And, God credited Abraham with righteousness.

WHERE did that righteousness come from?

WHERE does all righteousness come from?

It's from the Lord.

Do you want to be saved? Do you want God to forgive all of your sin? Do you want him to credit YOU with righteousness?

It's a **1 step process:** Believe on Christ.

John 1:12 – John says

"But as many as received him [Jesus], to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."

Now, **WHAT ABOUT JAMES CHAPTER 2?** If you have your Bibles, turn to James 2.

James says...

James 2:24

You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone.

This seems to fly in the face of what Paul says in

Ephesians 2:8-9

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

James says we are **justified by works**. And, Paul says we are **saved by faith...not a result of works**.

Do we have a contradiction here?

With that challenge before us, let's read the text from James 2.

In the ESV, this section is titled: **Faith Without Works Is Dead**

James says...beginning with **James 2:14**...

¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? ¹⁷ So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

¹⁸ But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. ¹⁹ You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! ²⁰ Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? ²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? ²² You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; ²³ and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"—and he was called a friend of God. ²⁴ You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. ²⁵ And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? ²⁶ For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.

1. Works matter.

¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him?

The implied answer is: **NO!**

If your faith is "living faith" as James says, it will **result** in good works.

Vs. 15, James gives some examples of these **good works**: feeding and clothing the poor

Yesterday, at our church we gave food to the poor. We did **NOT** do that to save ourselves. We did that because we are already saved. We have a living faith that is resulting in good works in our lives.

2. Works are evidence to people that you are saved.

James 2:18

But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.

James is posing a hypothetical debate here.

One person says: “**You have faith** and I have works.”

James replies: “**Show me your faith apart from your works**.” I’d love to see this faith of yours. How do I even know it’s real? How is anyone to know if you really are a Christian if you don’t act like one.

Then, James gives his drop the mic 2nd statement: “**I will show you my faith by my works**.” [BOOM] I’m **NOT** going to ask you to believe that I’m a Christian with no evidence to back that up.

People say: “I have personal, private faith. I don’t talk about it. I don’t act on it. It’s just in my heart.”

Hogwash! James says, “You want to know if I’m a Christian? Look at my life.”

Jesus did something similar to **JOHN THE BAPTIST**.

John asked: “Are you the one or should we look for someone else?” Are you really the messiah?

Jesus responded in **Luke 7:22**: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.

Ahh... Jesus: You could have just said, “Yes, I’m the messiah.”

But what does Jesus do? He gives John a long list of works...works that only the messiah could do. He gives him evidence, proof that he is the messiah.

As they say: ***The proof is in the putting.***

I've got to see it to believe it.

James would say **to you**: You say you're a Christian. Show me the proof!

Comic: A little boy goes up to his mom. "**I have faith** that you will give me \$10 for the movies."

The mother hands him a broom, and says: "**Show me your faith** by your works."

You clean up this house, and I'll give you that \$10.

3. There are 4 types of faith, but only 1 that saves.

James talks about 4 different types of faith: **dead faith**, demon faith, useless faith, and living faith.

- **Dead faith**: It's this intellectual assent to the truths of Christianity that doesn't result in a changed life. In verse 20, James calls it useless faith.
- **Demon faith**: In verse 19, James says

James 2:19

You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!

The demons believe the Bible. And, they know it a lot better than you. They know that Jesus created the world. He is the messiah. He did miracles. He died and rose again. He saves sinners. ***The demons believe all of that.***

But they have not repented of their sin and believed on Christ to save them. And, there has not been a life transformation for these demons.

You and I, we all know people who say they believe and ***live like hell***. Somehow their QUOTE "faith" has no affect on their lives. It doesn't affect what they watch on TV or the kind of comments they post on the internet. They have no interest in helping the poor or sharing the gospel with others.

They have DEMON FAITH or USELESS faith. And, that kind of faith will not save them.

- We need the **4th kind** of faith...**Living faith**

4. We need evidence to prove that we have living faith.

- We need that for ourselves...to give us assurance of our salvation.
- And, we need see that evidence in the lives of others...so that we know if they really are true Christians.
- You have to be able to make that judgment call

Matthew 7:16 – Jesus says

You will know them by their fruit.

If there's no fruit in their lives, no progress, no spiritual growth, then you can be assured that person is **NOT SAVED**.

A young man came up to Ray Comfort after church because he wanted assurance of his salvation. He wanted to know that he was really saved.

If you want to know if you have a living faith, ask yourself 2 questions:

- Do you believe the gospel?
- Is there fruit in your life?

As far as the gospel --- Do you believe the Trinity? Father son and Holy Spirit. Do you believe the Father sent the son? And that Jesus God's son died for you sins and rose from the dead?

As far a fruit: Is your life producing good works? Is their evidence that your faith is real?

Ray Comfort took this guy to

Galatians 5:22-23 – **the fruit of the Spirit...** BECAUSE If your faith is real, then this fruit should be in your life.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Ray comfort went through each of the fruit of the Holy Spirit asking him... **Is God's love** in your heart? Do you see a growing love for others? Are you joyful and kind? Are you gentle? Are you self-controlled?

After going through each one, the young man said: "I don't see those things in my life."

Why not? Because this man was **NOT saved**. He knew the Bible. He understood the gospel, but he **HADN'T** truly converted to Christianity.

Ray Comfort led this young man to repent of his sin and to believe on Christ for his salvation.

And then, you know **WHAT HAPPENED?** He changed. His life started producing fruit. Good works which served as evidence. They gave him assurance that he was saved. AND, they gave proof to the world around him that he truly was a Christian.

5. Paul and James are on the same team, but they are fighting against 2 different false doctrines.

Why do Paul and James seem so different?

First, understand that they are not. They both believe in salvation by faith alone. And, they both believe that living faith must produce good works.

But, they are **fighting** 2 different enemies of the gospel.

They are answering 2 different questions:

- **Paul**: How can someone be saved? (**God's perspective**: If someone really believes, **God knows** immediately.)
- **James**: How can people know that faith is real? (**Man's perspective**: We've got to see good works.)

Imagine James and Paul as 2 soldiers in a war fighting back to back.

Paul is fighting the Judaizers.

James is fighting the Antinomians.

Both are fighting to protect the pure gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Judaizers say that you must add your good works to your faith in order to be saved. Faith + Works. And, with a slash of his sword or a stroke of his pen, he fights them off.

James is fighting the Antinomians who say anything goes as long as you have faith. The word Antinomian literally means "Against Law". There's no rules. Works don't matter. As long as you believe in Jesus, your life **doesn't need** to produce any good works.

Both of these are Enemies of the Gospel. **We need** Paul. And, we need James. They are comrades in battle, fighting the **Same Devil** who is attacking the gospel on 2 fronts.

6. Abraham and Rahab were saved by faith alone, and they were vindicated by good works.

The word that trips us up is that word justified...because **Paul** and **James** both use that word, but they use it differently.

James 2:21 – James talks about Abraham being **justified by works**

James 2:25 – He talks about Rahab being justified by works

This **Greek word**, justified, has multiple meanings.

Paul uses the word justified as referring to salvation... “made righteous in God’s sight”.

James uses the word differently. This use of the word justified can also be translated as “vindicated”, “authenticated” or “proven to be true”.

For those **FALSE “CHRISTIANS”** who teach salvation by faith + works, they will **IGNORE** Romans, Ephesians, and Galatians. They will ignore the context of James 2. And, they will take you straight to verse 24.

James 2:24

You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone.

And they will interpret justified to mean “made righteous in God’s sight”, which **doesn’t fit** the context...because we’re **not** talking about God’s sight, but rather being vindicated before people.

James 2:24 could accurately be translated

You see that a person is **vindicated** by works and not by faith alone.

Are you starting to understand what James is saying?

He’s not talking about justification in the salvation sense. BUT He’s talking about the authentication of one’s faith.

That’s why in **James 2:14**, he says...if someone says he has faith... James is talking about people who publicly claim faith but have **no works** to authenticate that faith.

James’ point is this: People are proved to be true Christians (to other people) not just by saying that they believe Jesus died for their sins. There must be works to back that up. There must be works for their claim to Christianity to be justified...for them to be vindicated.

If there’s no fruit in their lives, then they are NOT Christians. **Whatever faith** they have is a dead faith.

James **references** Salvation by FAITH ALONE in **James 2:23**.

He says: Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.

God **counted Abraham as righteous** in **Genesis 15**, but Abraham’s faith was vindicated in **Genesis 22**. It was proven to be true in Genesis 22 when he offered his son Isaac on Mt. Moriah. God knew his faith was real in **Genesis 15**, but the rest of us had evidence in **Gen 22**.

Similarly, **Rahab** the *prostitute* believed God and it was credited to her as righteousness, but her faith was proven to be true when she helped the spies.

She had already said that she believed in the God of Israel. "I know that the Lord has given you the land." BUT, if she had betrayed these spies and just turned them in to the **Jericho authorities**, we would have highly doubted her faith.

But that's **NOT** what Rahab does. She receives the spies, helps them escape...and ultimately she leaves her people to **join** God's people.

Despite the fact that Rahab is a Gentile, we find Rahab in the lineage of Christ in **Matthew 1**, and we find her in the Hall of Faith in **Hebrews 11**. Her faith was proven to be true. Apparently, the spies believed it, the writer of Hebrews believed it, the Apostle Matthew believed it, and James believed it.

Salvation is by faith alone.

However, works matter because they are the evidence that prove our faith to be true.

Jesus says: You can tell if faith is real by the fruit.

James says the same thing: You can tell if faith is real by works.

Mybible.com says it this way: Salvation always produces works. Works never produce salvation.

Faith without works is either Dead Faith, Useless Faith, or Demon Faith.

To be saved, you must put your faith in Christ alone for salvation.

And, if your faith is real... If it is Living faith it will produce good works in your life.

You are saved by faith alone, but true faith is never alone. True faith immediately starts producing good works.

GRAVEYARD

A little church history...

OT: creation, family line of Christ, prophecies of messiah

NT: arrival of messiah, cross, resurrection, and the establishment of the church (a community of believers in Jesus)

Church Age

- We start with the **Early Church** and it's relationship to Rome is: UPS

- U is for **Unknown**: The church was unknown to Rome. Rome just thought Christianity was a Jewish sect.
- P is for **Persecuted**: Rome persecuted the church. Crucifixions, burnings, and throwing Christians to the lions in the coliseum, etc.
- S is for **Sovereign**: Christianity became sovereign over Rome. Emperor Constantine became a Christian and with him so did the Roman empire.
- **1054: East West Schism**, also referred to as the Great Schism
 - Break between the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox church
 - The political and religious differences between the East and West had been building for some time
 - Then, you had 2 churches... Catholic and Orthodox
- **1517: Martin Luther** nails the 95 thesis to the door of the church in Wittenberg and begins the Protestant Reformation
 - With that the Protestants split from the Roman Catholic church
- Why did the Reformers leave the Catholic church?
 - For many reasons: false doctrine and the many abuses of the Catholic church
 - Also, because the Orthodox church too had left orthodoxy...left the true gospel behind
 - Otherwise, the reformers would have just become Orthodox

Believe that He is God. He died for your sins. And, he rose from the dead.

Now, some say you have to **BELIEVE AND BE BAPTIZED**. There are some verses that show a close connection between believing and baptism.

Mark 16:16

Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

The first half sounds like you have to be baptized to be saved. But the 2nd half doesn't even mention baptism. If you don't believe, you will be condemned.

Matthew 28:19

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations [basically, you're teach them the gospel so they can believe], baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

So, do you have to be baptized to be saved? No. Absolutely not.

That would be Faith + Works which = a False gospel.

The man on the cross next to Jesus was never baptized, and yet Jesus says to him: "Today, you will be with me in Paradise."

If you believe, then out of obedience to your savior, you should get baptized. But you are saved by believing, not by baptism.

Believe on the Lord Jesus and you will be saved.

Jesus said it this way in

Matthew 7:21-23

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

Only the one who has real, living faith that results in a life of **doing God's will**.