

A FAITH THAT WORKS

(A Study of the Book of James)

Genuine Faith

TEXT: James 2:14-26

INTRODUCTION: From the moment that Adam and Eve committed the first sin,

SALVATION HAS ALWAYS BEEN BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH.

Gen. 3:15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”

Skins instead of leaves

Abraham – Gen. 15:6 And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

The Old Covenant of the Law – Ex. 19:5-6 5 Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth *is* Mine. 6 And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These *are* the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.”

It was not a covenant of salvation.

God still taught them through the sacrifices that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins.

Day of Atonement annually

Passover

When Jesus came, He made it abundantly clear.

THE GRACE THAT BRINGS SALVATION IS RECEIVED BY FAITH IN JESUS.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

John 10:10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.

After Jesus died on the cross for sin and rose from the dead, the Holy Spirit began to inspire men to write new portions of the Bible (we call the New Testament) to give clear explanation of this truth that

THE GRACE THAT BRINGS SALVATION IS RECEIVED BY FAITH IN JESUS.

Rom. 6:23 For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Rom. 10:9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

Eph. 2:8-9 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

In spite of the clarity of God’s revelation,

MANY PEOPLE BELIEVE SALVATION IS ACHIEVED BY THE WORKS THAT THEY DO.

Some believe this because they misunderstand the Covenant of the Law.

Personally, I believe many people believe this because the devil deceives them into believing that.

- Nobody can be good enough to be saved.
- So if the devil makes them believe that, he is delighted for they will be eternally lost.

Now, James certainly knows and understands and believes everything he had said to this point. But to that understanding, he wants to add another critical truth. It is this.

SALVATION COMES BY GENUINE FAITH, NOT JUST AN AFFIRMATION OF AN IDEA.

Let’s read what he wrote.

James 2:14–26 14 What *does it* profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what *does it* profit? 17 Thus 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 without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. 19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! 20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? 22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? 23 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. 24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. 25 Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent *them* out another way? 26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

GENUINE FAITH ALWAYS PRODUCES GOOD WORKS.

Genuine faith is not just words.

15 If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what *does it* profit? 17 Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

The works do not produce faith. Faith produces the works.

18 But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.

GENUINE FAITH IS NOT JUST BELIEF IN GOD.

19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!

Now James offers proof of two people whom everybody would agree was saved about how their faith produced good works.

Abraham

20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? 22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? 23 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. 24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

Rahab

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CONCLUSION: Do you have genuine faith? I am not asking about your experience or your memory of it. Is it producing good works in your life? Are you a changed person?

THE TEST OF SALVATION IS A TRANSFORMED LIFE.