

Series: James  
Lesson #6  
Title: Faith Justified By Works  
Scripture: James 2: 14-  
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Those born of the Spirit of God were judged of God in Christ Jesus the Lord. God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. He is our righteous obedience to the law of God and the justification of our every offense. Christ died in our room and stead. Christ condemned our condemnation.

When the Holy Spirit enters into the sinner, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes the believer free from the law of sin and death. Through the Holy Spirit abiding in us, the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us.—get that now—the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us.

By God, through Christ Jesus, through the Holy Spirit in us, according to God the righteous judge, the believer has fulfilled the whole law of God. The believer has been reconciled back into that upright and holy state Adam was in before he sinned and came under the dominion of the law. Only better: it is by Christ who offered himself through the eternal Spirit—this communion is eternal. We are eternally accepted of God and we have eternal communion with the thrice holy God. The believer no longer walks after the flesh, but is now under the rule of Christ, led of the Holy Spirit and walks after the Spirit. (Romans 8: 1-4.)

**James 1: 12: So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.**

This has been the subject of the epistle from the beginning.

#### IN THE VARIOUS TRIALS OF THIS LIFE

The believer not only says he believes, but he counts it all joy. Notice the “doing” James speaks of:  
**James 1: 4: But let patience have *her* perfect work (endure)...5: If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God...9: Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: 10: But the rich, in that he is made low...19: Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:...21: Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls....27: Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, *and* to keep himself unspotted from the world.**

Not with a respect of persons for personal advantage, but deal with all in the same mercy which God has dealt with you. Paul says the same thing.

1 Thessalonians 1:3: Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

James says do not only believe, but be doers of this word.

**James 1: 22: But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves...2: 12: So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.**

## NOW WE CONSIDER THE UNPROFITABLENESS OF ONE WHO MERELY SAYS HE HAS FAITH

**James 2: 14: What *doth it* profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?**

A so-called “faith” that is not accompanied with these works of faith will not profit the one who says he believes, nor any other.

### James Gives An Illustration

**James 2: 15: If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, 16: And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what *doth it* profit? 17: Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.**

### BRETHREN, YOU WERE NAKED AND DESTITUTE

God did not merely say to you, depart in peace, he gave his only begotten Son. The Faithful One—Christ Jesus—did not merely say he believed the Father and loved his brethren, but when the fullness of time was come—when the trial came—his righteousness of his faith was manifest:

- He counted it all joy.
- He endured the trial of his faith, unto death, even the death of the cross.
- He asked his Father in perfect faith
- He sanctified himself, sanctifying his brethren through the truth
- He visited sinners in our utter helplessness
- He not only spoke peace, he finished the work
- Clothed us in his righteousness
- Gave us life in him
- Continues to feed us with the Bread of life

Had God the Father and Christ our Savior merely promised and not worked the work, it would have been no profit in declaring God righteous and faithful. And it would have been, no profit to you and I, brethren. But how is the faithfulness of God and his Son manifest to us:

1 John 3:16: Hereby perceive we the love *of God*, because he laid down his life for us:

**James 2: 17: Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.**

Dead faith profits you nothing and no one else.

### Objection #1:

**James 2: 18: Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works:**

Someone might object, “Grace is not always manifested in the same way: you excel in faith and I excel in works.” James says,

**shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.**

The believer is not in the business of boasting of our works of faith. But wherever faith is, a life of commitment to Christ will be manifest. Faith is alive. And living things grow and move and manifest that they are alive.

**James 2: 26: For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.**

Illustration: Watching my children asleep in their crib.

Matthew 7:17: Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit;

True faith is justified as being true faith because it is always accompanied by works of faith, by labor of love, by patience of hope. There can be works where there is no faith, but it is impossible to have faith without works.

Objection #2: Some may say, "Well I may not have works but I still believe God."

**James 2: 19: Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.**

You are no better than devils. The devils believe there is one God. The devils believe, and tremble. But devils have no love for God: no works of faith, no labor of love, no patience of hope. A man may make a boast of faith—argue doctrine, defend doctrine, and may be accurate in all he claims to believe—may give his all his goods, but if the love of God is not in his heart, James says,

**James 2: 20: But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?**

NOW WE COME TO EXAMPLES OF WORKS OF FAITH.

**James 2: 21: Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?**

**Genesis 22: 1: And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, *here I am*.**

Have You and I Suffered A Trial?

Both the examples of faith which are given here is examples of faith which is proven true by trials which manifest we trust God alone. Have we suffered a trial? How about this kind?

**Genesis 22: 2: And he said, Take now thy son, thine only *son* Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.**

This is Abraham's son, his only son. The son who he loves. This is the boy, "Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called." But Abraham believed God.

Hebrews 11: 19: Accounting that God *was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead;

Abraham knew that he himself was an idolater in an idolatrous land, dead in trespasses and in sins--and the Lord God raised him from the dead. Abraham was old and his wife past the age of child bearing, but the Lord had given him a son from her dead womb. So Abraham charged God faithful and *able to raise him up, even from the dead*.

What God the Father commanded Abraham to do is what God the Father did for Abraham. He gave his only begotten Son, the Son of his love. The Father offered him up for a burnt offering—a sacrifice well-pleasing unto God. The Lord Jesus said, "Abraham saw my day and was glad." Abraham had genuine faith—how do we know?

**Genesis 22: 3: And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.**

Abraham was swift to hear, slow to speak, he did not become offended at God. Abraham laid aside any vain excess of his own wisdom and received the engrafted word with meekness. God does not tell us to do what is right, faith believes it is right because God says it.

**Genesis 22: 4: Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.**

Three days is a long trial when you are about to offer your only son. But Abraham patiently endured. Do you suppose he asked God for wisdom during that time?

**Genesis 22: 5: And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.**

Abraham believed God was able to raise his son, even from the dead--we will come again to you.

**Genesis 22: 6: And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid *it* upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together. 7: And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here *am* I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where *is* the lamb for a burnt offering?**

Here, we see a small example of visiting one in affliction. Isaac knows they are going up to offer a lamb. They must have a lamb. But where is the lamb for a burnt offering? Did Abraham unbridle his tongue and scold Isaac? No, he visited him in his affliction.

**Genesis 22: 8: And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.**

God will provide. Do you believe God? God will provide a lamb. God gave his Son, the spotless, Lamb of God. God will provide HIMSELF. God was in Christ reconciling his people unto himself. He purchased his church with his own blood. Do you believe God? If you do, here is the work of faith-- so they went both of them together.

**Genesis 22: 9: And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.**

Isaac willingly laid himself on that altar—Christ laid down his life willingly. Abraham his father bound his son on that altar—the Jews nailed our Savior to the cross, but God the Father bound him with the sin of his people; and Christ bound himself as Surety for his people.

**Genesis 22: 10: And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.**

Abraham did not waver. He showed no respect of persons but obeyed God, even when it meant offering his own son. In his heart, Abraham slew his son.

**Genesis 22: 11: And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here *am* I. 12: And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God,**

God knew before. God worked this in Abraham by his grace. But we might read it this way: “now I have made it known before all men.” How does James say faith is justified as true faith? V12...**seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.** Note: the angel of the LORD said, “I know thou fearest God, seeing thou has not withheld thy son, thy only son FROM ME!” This is THE ANGEL OF THE LORD, the Son of God, Christ Jesus speaking.

**Genesis 22: 13: And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind *him* a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.**

This is what Abraham saw by faith from the beginning. This is the sum of Abraham's faith—substitution. God providing himself in the person of his Son, a Lamb, to take the place of his people—in the stead of his son.

**Genesis 22: 14: And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said *to this day*, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen. (hold here)**

Abraham believed God. He said, "God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering." Now, through this trial Abraham saw even more the faithfulness of God—Jehovahjireh—God has provided.

**James 2: 22: Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? 23: And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.**

Abraham believed God long before this—He saw Christ's day, was justified and accepted in Christ Jesus long before this—it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and he was called the Friend of God long before this.

But "the scripture was fulfilled"—that is, by Abraham's obedience to God's word, when he offered up his son Isaac, the faith Abraham claimed to possess was justified as the genuine gift of God. By his works his faith was manifest to be true faith.

James said, **He that endureth to the end shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.** Notice James says, "The Lord Jesus hath promised this." Now listen to the rest of the account:

**Genesis 22: 15: And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, 16: And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son*: 17: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which *is* upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; 18: And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice. 19: So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.**

The second example is Rahab, the harlot.

**James 2: 25: Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent *them* out another way?**

Rahab was a Gentile, a harlot. When the spies came from Joshua she hid them. The king sent and commanded her to tell him where the spies were. She told the king she had sent them out and so the troops went out the way she said they had gone. But she hid them in her house and sent them out another way. Why?

**Joshua 2: 10: For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that *were* on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. Rahab said when she heard, her heart did melt—Joshua 2: 11:...for the LORD your God, he *is* God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.**

Faith believes that God has dried up the sea of sin and death and delivered us out of Egypt in Christ the Way. Faith believes that God has slain all our enemies and shall yet save us. Faith

believes that he that spared not his only Son but delivered him up for ME—will freely give me all things. Her faith was justified as genuine faith because she proved her life on this earth was not her life—she risked death (but it was no risk at all) she received the messengers and sent them out another way. And Joshua—a type of Christ—sent his men and they brought our Rahab and she perished not with them that believed not.

**James 2: 26: For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.**

These works of faith are the fruit/effects of the love of God living in our hearts.

**I John 3: 16: Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.**

James says here:

**James 2: 23: and [Abraham] was called the Friend of God.**

Abraham and Rahab showed their friendship toward God because God had first proven his friendship toward them in their hearts—*that one who sticks closer than a brother.*

And so they laid down their lives for him.

Brethren, Paul said: Preaching is a good. But only when the love of Christ constrains us will we preach Christ crucified—waiting in the trial it presents from unbelievers. Understanding is good but only when the love of God is in our hearts will we seek Christ in all the word. Faith is good but only when the love of God constrains us to lay down our lives for Christ. Bestowing all our goods is good, but only when I am wholly committed to Christ, his gospel and his people. When the believer perceives the love of God for him, it will be manifest in his forsaking of all else for Christ and his brethren (I Cor 13: 1-3.)

These works of faith are not merely morality, it is a consecrated life--offering up our Isaac's.

The widow's Isaac was her two mites—she perceived that God so loved her he laid down his life for her and he would provide for her, so she laid down all she possessed for him. For another it was an alabaster box of ointment—300 pence—a years wages. King David said, [I will not] offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing.

I John 3: 23: And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. 24: And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

**James 1: 25: But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.**