

Rahab's Living Faith

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[0:00] James, chapter 2. We'll read verses 14-26. Please stand together with me for this reading from God's Word. What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds?

! Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, Go, I wish you well.

Keep warm and well fed. But does nothing about his physical needs. What good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, You have faith, I have deeds.

Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. You believe that there is one God? Good. Even the demons believe that and shudder. You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless?

Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did.

[1:08] And the scripture was fulfilled that says, Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness. And he was called God's friend. You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone.

In the same way was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction. As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

Brothers and sisters home from the Katrina relief trip, thank you for being our hands, our feet, and expressing our heart to those needy people in Mississippi.

It's good to see your faces, and that's an answer to prayer as we held you up. And it's good to have Dennis and Clara Hoskins with us as well.

And brother and sister, we sympathize with you in the loss of Dennis' stepfather, but we also rejoice to see you here as, again, evidence of God's answer to our prayers to uphold and to sustain you.

[2:25] We love you and thank God for your return to us. It's good to see all your faces. We've been apart. And we dare not take it for granted that we'll just be here the next week.

People slipped into eternity this week on the highways and hospital beds. But here we are. God intends to meet with us and has something to say to us.

And we have the privilege of looking on each other's faces and encouraging each other along the way. Some of you are memorizing the book of James. It's tough work.

So I just want to say, keep it up. Don't quit. If you have quit, start again. Redouble your efforts.

It's worth it. Its dividends will be lifelong. And if you obey what you're memorizing, they will be eternal. And if you're not memorizing the whole book of James, let me put in a plug just at least to memorize James chapter 2, verses 14 through 26.

[3:33] The portion read again this morning for the third time as we've met together. It's a crucial portion of God's word for it tells us how to distinguish between saving faith and a faith that doesn't save.

How to tell the difference between a living faith. And a dead and useless, good for nothing faith.

Now it's a neglected portion of God's word.

And it's neglect by the church today allows a lot of dead faith to go hidden under the name of Christianity and religion.

And that simply means that there's a lot of religious people who are going to their graves thinking that they are ready to meet God because they have a kind of faith.

But it's not the kind that saves. And I say if the first century Christian church needed to hear this message, perhaps we in the 21st century ought to be memorizing it.

[4:45] Now this is our third week in this section of James letter. I meant to finish last week, but we didn't get all the way to the end. We left two verses undone, verses 25 and 26.

And so we'll seek to finish those verses this morning. Where James takes us to a house of a former prostitute and then secondly to a funeral home.

And then we'll address apparent problems between James and the Apostle Paul. Now, just briefly, what have we seen so far in James 2, this portion, the last half of James 2?

He first gave us two examples of dead faith. The kind the demons have. And the kind that the armchair philanthropist has. Who says, I love you, but doesn't do anything to help you.

And then he turned to giving two examples of living faith. The kind that really saves. That's genuine. Abraham and Rahab.

[5:50] Last week we looked at Abraham. And just two snippets. Of his faith. Two faith events in his life.

We saw him first. And here he is. He's under the starry, starry night sky. And he's looking up as if he's trying to count them. And he's smiling.

And he's perhaps even laughing to himself. I can't believe it. Can't believe it. Here he is, a 75 year old man. And getting older.

And his wife's barren. And God said that we are going to have a son. And from him, my descendants will be as many as the stars in the heaven.

What are we looking at here? We're looking at faith. Abraham is taking God at his word of promise. And is believing him. And therefore God is crediting righteousness to his account in heaven.

[6:51] He believed God. And received righteousness through faith alone. There were no works that night under this. The starry sky.

But then we see him again. And it's it's much later. His beard is longer. It's whiter now. And the boy has been born and he's grown up and he's the apple of Abraham's eye.

And he's not looking up at the stars now. He's holding up a knife. And this son is stretched out before him on an altar.

And he's ready to plunge that knife into his one and only son. And we see what's going on here in Abraham's life. This is faith in action.

He is doing this because God commanded him to. And the very same faith that stood under the starry sky and believe God is now working.

[7:50] It's now doing something because now there's more than a bare promise. Now there's a command to obey. And Abraham shows that his faith under the starry sky was real, genuine faith.

Because when there's a command to obey, he rises to the occasion. That same faith that did nothing but believe that night. That same faith produces obedience and moves him to obey when God gives a command.

Now, this is no dead faith, then, is it? It's no mere claim to have faith without deeds. This is the real thing. The kind of faith that saves, that brings the righteousness of Jesus Christ to our account.

And we notice it's a living, powerful, energizing principle that changes the very way that we live. We do things that we wouldn't otherwise do.

So how do you know if you have this kind of faith? The faith that really saves? James answers, you know it by its deeds. Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar?

[9:06] You see that his faith and his actions were working together. And his faith was made complete by what he did. And so I see a girl.

And she's standing under the promises of the gospel. And Jesus Christ is promising salvation if she'll come to him. And the promise is believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.

And she says that she's believing. She says that she's trusting in Jesus to save her from her sins. Well, how will we know that she has the kind of faith that saves?

And James says, well, follow her home. Follow her home and see how she treats her parents.

How she treats her brothers and sisters. See what she does at work, at school, at play, with friends, when she's alone. And especially see what she does when she sins.

[10:09] What does she do then? What does she do with God's commandments? You see, genuine faith. If it's real and she's really resting on Christ alone to save her, then it will be seen in

her life.

Deeds of obedience to God's commandments will follow. Deeds of holiness, repentance and charity. So that's what we learned from Abraham last week.

His example. Now, James' choice of Abraham is a no-brainer. We understand why James chose Abraham as an example of living faith.

He is the father of the faithful. And most of James' audience would have been converted Jews. Indeed, most of the Christians in the early going of the gospel after Christ's ascension were Jewish Christians.

And so they would have known all about Father Abraham. And they would have held him in the highest regard because of his faith. But I say that the second example that James points to is quite startling.

[11:18] And if it's startling for you, think what it would have been to that Jewish Christian. When James points secondly, for an example of living faith, to Rahab the prostitute.

The contrast with Abraham couldn't be any greater, could it? A man. A woman. A Jew. A Gentile. A patriarch. A prostitute. An old believer. A brand new believer.

Think of all the people that James could have chosen as another example for saving faith. A faith that's real, that's active. Why not David? Why not Daniel?

Why not Moses? Noah? Joshua? Caleb? But instead, the harlot of Jericho?

[12:24] Why her? Why her? Well, perhaps some would say they cannot identify with someone so great as Abraham. After all, come on, James.

He's the father of the faithful. God came and talked to him specially. One on one like no one else.

And all the privileges. You can't expect us to measure up to Abraham's faith, can you?

Okay, how about Rahab, the prostitute? Can you measure up to her faith? Well, they think this is a slam dunk.

Everybody thought they were better than her. But watch out, or she will put you to shame with her self-denying deeds of faith.

Now, this Jericho woman with such a filthy past came to believe in the God of Israel. Wonderful story. Historical event.

[13:28] She eventually even marries a prince in Israel and is mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus Christ in Matthew chapter 1. She didn't know much about God, but she believed with all her heart all that she did hear about him.

And her faith was not without deeds, but was followed up with actions. Her faith is living and working even as Abraham's.

And that's why James chooses her. Notice verse 25. In the same way. James 2:25. In the same way was not even.

Even. Do you see that? Even Rahab, the prostitute, considered righteous for what she did. We've just seen that Abraham was considered righteous for what he did as he offered his son Isaac on the altar.

And we saw his faith and actions working together. Showing that his faith was genuine. Now, in the same way, Rahab shows that her faith is genuine by her deeds.

[14:42] And notice, in the same way, on this score, saving faith does not work differently in Rahab than it does in Abraham.

As different as they are, they are used by James to nail down the same truth. Faith that no one has ever been counted righteous before God by a faith that did not produce good deeds.

Faith that justifies is always proven by a life of holiness. No exceptions. Whether you're the father of the faithful or a prostitute in Jericho.

Whether you're a preacher or a stripper. Whether five years old or 75 years old. Whoever you are. Whatever you've done. If you come to have saving faith. It will produce a holy life. And there are no exceptions to the rule.

[15:52] Evidence. Abraham and Rahab. Now, what were her deeds exactly? That proved. That demonstrated that her faith was the real thing.

It wasn't just a claim to faith. But it was real, living faith. What were the deeds in Rahab's life? That demonstrated real faith.

The story is told in Joshua 2. It's a familiar story to you children. And I trust to all of us this morning. Israel's about to cross the Red Sea. They've been 40 years in the wilderness.

The promised land is right before them. Only the Red Sea. I'm sorry, the Red Sea. Only the Jordan River separates them from the promised land. And the first city inside the promised land is this city with high walls.

That seemed impenetrable. Jericho. And that's where they're going to attack first. As God has told them to go into the promised land.

[16 : 54] So Joshua sends two men to secretly spy out the land. They cross the Jordan. They get through the gates of Jericho, which were open for business going in and out.

And they make their way to the house of Rahab. And she hears who they are. And makes a profession of faith to them.

Which is incredible for this Canaanite Gentile woman. Of such a sordid past. Listen to what she says in Joshua 2. I know that Jehovah has given this land to you.

And that a great fear of you has fallen on us. So that all who live in this country are melting in fear because of you. We have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you.

When you came out of Egypt. And what you did to Sihon and Og. The two kings of the Amorites. East of the Jordan. Whom you completely destroyed.

[17 : 58] And when we heard it. Our hearts melted. And everyone's courage failed. Because of you. Now listen. For the Lord.

Jehovah your God. Is God in heaven above. And on the earth below. There's her profession of faith. She claims to have faith. That God is God in heaven above.

And on earth below. But her faith is not. Her claim to faith. Is not. By itself. It's accompanied. By deeds. It's living.

And active. For verse 25. Goes on to say. Was not even Rahab the prostitute. Considered righteous. For what she did. When she gave lodging. To the spies.

And sent them off. In a different direction. Those were the deeds. She gave lodging. She welcomed the spies. And then sent them off. In a different direction. One commentator says.

[18 : 56] They came in through the door. They were sent out. Through the window. As her house was. Part of that. Wall. And she could send them out.

Through the window. At night. Now what she did was very dangerous. If she'd have been caught. It would have no doubt. Been her life.

She was harboring. Two enemy spies. You know that governments do not. Treat likely. Or lightly. Those.

Who. Aid. The enemy. As spies. Well Jericho's secret service. Had caught wind of these two spies. And heard that they had gone.

Into her house. And so they came looking for them. But the Bible says. That she took them up on the roof. And hid them under some flax. That she had drying out there. Under the sun.

[19 : 55] And then at night. She let them down. By a rope. Through the window. On the wall. She hid them. And let them go.

Now that might not sound like much to you. But she was willing to risk her own life. In order to spare theirs. She would have said.

They're upstairs on the roof. Under the flax. That had been curtains for those two men. Who are now her brothers. For she too has come to believe.

In the God of Israel. And put her trust in him. What was powerful enough. To make her jeopardize her own life.

For theirs. Well. In two words. The book of Hebrews says. Or in one word. The book of Hebrews says faith. Just turn back to Hebrews chapter 11.

[20 : 53] And verse 31. Because Rahab. The prostitute. Is in the chapter. Of the Bible.

That lists. Some of the champions. Of faith. Which is the subject of James. In chapter. The last half of the chapter. And so. Verse 31 of 11.

Of Hebrews. By faith. This is what enabled her to do what she did. By faith. The prostitute Rahab. Because she welcomed the spies. Was not killed with those.

Who were disobedient. With the rest of the city of Jericho. When Israel came calling. In judgment. You remember how she hung out the scarlet. Cord in the window.

And she and all who were gathered inside that window. Were spared. Now this text tells you. That what you read of. In Joshua chapter 2. About her welcoming the spies.

[21:48] Hiding them. Secretly sending them off at night. All at the risk of her own life. What you're seeing. Is nothing more than faith. Real faith. In action.

You're seeing the real thing. You're not seeing a claim to faith. That's so common. You're seeing real faith. Faith is. The power. It is the dynamic. Of a holy life.

And it was her faith. That produced. Such valiant deeds. That's the main part. In the story. Of Rahab the prostitute. Don't miss it. For all else. That interests you.

In Joshua chapter 2. Don't miss it. That's what the New Testament. Highlights. And puts an exclamation point on. In Hebrews 11. In James 2. Her faith. It was real. It was working. It was active. And it was because she believed. All that she heard about the Lord. That she acted the way she did. She chose to be identified. With the Lord.

[22:43] And his people. And his cause. Rather than in. The cause of her own people. The Canaanites at Jericho.

She took God's side. In the great contest. She cast her lot. In with him. In with him. And with his people. Even though it meant risking her own life. Faith in action.

Faith is the driving force. Behind it all. So. In spite of the great differences. Between Abraham and Rahab. They both demonstrate. Perfectly. For us.

That faith. Real faith. Is not without deeds. It moved both of them. To surrender. What was precious. To them.

Didn't it? Abraham. Surrenders. The life of his son. Rahab. Surrenders. Her own life.

[23:40] Say. Is that not almost. Sounding like. One upmanship. On the father. Of the faithful. Who the Jews. Looked up to. With almost. Some of them. With. Worshipful.

Veneration. James. Is. A shocking letter. And he's saying. That faith. Real faith. Works the same. In Rahab.

The prostitute. As it did in. The father. Of the faithful. And her faith. Will put us. To shame. If we do not. Demonstrate. Our faith. With self.

Denying. Works. Say. Isn't that what. Jesus requires. Of all. Who would follow him. If anyone. Would come after me. He says.

He must deny. Himself. And take up his cross. And follow me. For whoever. Wants to save his life. Will lose it. But whoever.

[24:34] Loses his life. For me. And for the gospel. Will save it. Folks. That was. Rahab. She gained life. Because she was willing. To lose it.

Have you let go. Of your life. Life. The way you want it. To go. Life. Going your way. Have you let go. Of that. And placed it. Into God's hands.

And following him. Denying yourself. What you want to do. And how you want to live. Have you denied. Yourself that. Then you will gain. Life. Eternal life.

Life. God's way. Which is far better. Than anything. You could have ever. Planned for yourself. Just ask Rahab. You see. Some may. Read James chapter 2.

And try to get off. Of James hook. By saying to themselves. Well I have deeds. Come on. I'm at church this morning. I even put money. In the offering box. I sang the hymns. I prayed. I read my Bible.

[25:33] I've been baptized. Do you know. That all those things. Can be done. Without any living faith. But notice. The kind of deeds. That living faith.

Produces. It moves a person. To do things. That they otherwise. Would never do. Like give up your son. Like give up your life.

These are self-denying deeds. And so I must ask you. How much self-denial. Is there. About your. Church attendance. About your.

Prayer life. About your. Bible reading. And obeying. About. Your. Commandment. Keeping. Your giving.

Or have you made. All these things. Stand in line. And fit into. Your self-indulgent life. Don't claim. To have. The deeds.

[26:31] That accompany. Faith. If they are not. The self-denying. Deeds. That Jesus speaks of. That Rahab. And Abraham. Demonstrate.

And that. James is pointing to. Deeds. That move. Noah. To build an ark. In a place. Where there was no water. To float it on. I say.

That would have interrupted. His schedule. For a few weeks. It was self-denying. Work. Of faith. By faith. Noah. Built. Moses.

Chooses. To be mistreated. Along with the people of God. Rather than to enjoy. The pleasures of sin. For a short time. That's self-denying. And he did it. By faith. This is what faith.

Produces. It caused men. To be willing. To suffer. For the sake. Of God's kingdom. Even to lose their life. They were put in prison. Hebrews 11 says.

[27 : 26] Frog. Stone. Sawn in two. Killed with the sword. Tortured. They refused. To be released. They could have been released. If they just deny the faith.

No. Their faith is real. They refused. To be released. And so they were persecuted. And mistreated. Chased from their homes. Yes. How would you like to be chased. From your warm home.

Out into the. The outdoor. The elements. And so they wandered. In deserts. In mountains. In caves. And holes. In the ground.

Have you ever thought of that? You're out. In the. In the mountains. And you're looking around. And there's a hole. In the ground. And there's a man in there.

And you say. What are you doing in here? What would ever cause you to. To live in this hole. In the ground. It says. Because God. Has told me.

[28 : 21] Thou shalt not. Thou shalt. And I. Am obeying him. It's by faith. That they remain faithful. To the Lord. Even unto death.

22 times. In Hebrews 11. By faith. These were all. Commended for their faith. What's driving. Such self-denying deeds. Faith.

Don't think that there's. Faith. And then there's. Works. That are somehow. Unrelated. To the faith. No. These deeds.

These works. Are. Deeds. Of faith. They're produced. By faith. So. Why are you doing.

These things. That you say. Are deeds. Showing your faith. Why are you here. This morning. Are you here. Because of faith.

[29 : 17] That looks away. To Christ. And says. I want to meet. With my savior. This morning. And he has promised. That in the gathered. Assembly. Of his people.

He draws near. To have dealings. With us. I'm coming. Because I have. My eye of faith. To meet. With Christ. And I'm dropping.

Money into the offering box. Because I want to further. His cause. And I'm reading. My bible.

Because. Faith wants. To see. Jesus. In the scriptures.

And faith wants. To know. What pleases him. And I'm praying. I have an eye. To my savior. In my prayers. Deeds.

Of faith. You see. What is there. Of faith. In all your religious deeds. If you're going to count them. As evidence. Of saving faith. It must be. Deeds.

[30 : 12] Of faith. Faith. That looks. To Christ. Faith draws motive. And power. From him. For all that it does. And faith.

Aims. At his glory. In all that it does. This is the centerpiece. Of James letter. Faith. Is the engine. That drives.

A holy life. Faith. Is the power. That moves a man. Down the tracks. Of God's commandments. Now he's going to further. Define this holy life. Through the rest of the. Book of James.

So get ready. He's going to tell you. What. What. A tongue. Operated by faith. Looks like. And what it does. And so on. But in all of our studies.

From here on out. Don't forget this. That saving faith. Is the living. And active. Power. Behind. What. He is commanding. It's at the root.

[31 : 07] Of it all. Because this. Faith. In Christ. Not only. Brings. All of his. Righteousness. Over to my. Account. In heaven.

Glory to God. That's true. But this. Same. Saving. Faith. That looks. To Christ. Also. Brings. To my. Heart. Here on earth. The grace. And power.

That I need. To obey God. It does. Both. This faith. Is not. Just something. That does. Some.

Transaction. In heaven. And leaves. Me. Powerless. Here on earth.

No. This faith. Is a powerful thing. Read. Hebrews 11. And see. What all it does. Read. The life. Of Abraham. And see. What this faith. Does. Read.

Joshua. Two. And see. What it made. Rahab. Do. Now. You cannot. Peer. Into the. Into the books. Of heaven. To see. I'd like.

[32:01] To see. If. Christ's. Righteousness. Has been. Credited. To my. Account. Well. The Bible. Tells you. If you have. Faith. In Christ. Alone. That's what. Happens. Oh. But James. Says. Do you have.

The real. Faith. That's the critical. Thing. Do you have. Real. Faith. Living. Faith. If so. Then that. Righteousness. Has been. Put on your. Account. You can't. Peer. Into the. Books. Of heaven. And say. I'd like. You to.

Open. Gabriel. Over. To. To. John. Heaney. And I want. To see. Whether. Christ's. Righteousness. Is. On that. Account. But James. Tells me. What you can. Do.

John. As you. Can see. If your. Faith. Is. Producing. The. Holy. Deeds. Of. Repentance. And. Obedience. And. Love. Confession. And you.

Can know. If it's. Producing. The. Righteous. Life. Here. On earth. You. Can know. That it. Has. Credited. To your. Account. The. Righteousness. Of. Jesus. Christ. Because.

[32:55] All. Faith. That. Justifies. You. In. Heaven. Will. Sanctify. You. On. Earth. Shirley. Hawkins. Lives. In a little. Town. A. Stone Market. Now. And. Just. Short.

Distance. Away. Over. In. Latham. Him. Many. Hundred. Years. Ago. The. Puritan. William. Gurnall. Lived. And. Labored. For. Over. Fifty. Years.

In. The. Same. Congregation. You. Can. Go. Into. The. Church. Graveyard. And. See. A. Stone. You. Can. Go. Into. Building. And. See. His. Name. Engraved. On. That. Stone. The. Puritan. Gurnall.

Wrote. Say. Not. That. You. Have. Royal. Blood. In. Your. Veins. And. Are. Born. Of. God. Unless. You. Can. Prove. Your. Your. Pedigree. By. Daring. To. Be. Holy. Say.

Not. James. Says. That. You. Have. Faith. It. Saves. If. It. Found. Producing. Works. Good. Works. In. Your. Life.

[33:48] So. Our. Ancestor. Abraham. And. Rahab. The. Prostitute. Demonstrate. That. Reality. By the. Way. Rahab. Did. Not. Continue. In. A. Life. Of. Prostitution.

She. Called. Rahab. The. Prostitute. Though. Even. After. She. Saved. Isn't. That. Something. Not. So. Much. As. To. Shame. Her. As.

It. Is. To. Glorify. The. Lord. Jesus. Christ. Whose. Righteousness. Was. Enough. To. Cover. All. Her. Sin. Aren't. You. Glad. For. That.

That. We're. Reminded. She's. Rahab. The. Prostitute. Wow. Faith. Brings. All. The. Righteousness. Of. Jesus. To. Our. Account. And. All. The. Power.

The. Sanctifying. Grace. And. Power. Of. Christ. Into. Our. Life. No. More. Evidence. Is. Needed. James. Is. Ready. To. Hang. His. Hat. And. And. Hang. His. Case. On. These. Two.

[34:41] Examples. Of. Living. Faith. So. At. Last. He. Takes. Us. To. A. Funeral. Home. For. A. Visitation. And. We. Arrive. Early. Because. We. Don't. Want. To. Get. Stuck. Behind. That. Long. Line. Of.

People. Waiting. To. Get. In. But. We. Find. When. We. Get. There. That. The. Room. Is. Already. Filled. With. People. There. Are. Bodies. Everywhere. And. All.

The. Bodies. Are. The. Same. Except. For. One. One. Body. Is. Different. From. All. The. Rest. In. This. All. Important. Matter. That. All. The. Bodies. In. The. Room. Are.

Alive. But. One. They. Have. Breath. In. Them. Their. Body. Houses. Their. Spirit. And.

So. We're. Able. To. Talk. To. Them. And. We. Can. Hear. What. They're. Saying. And. We. Can. Look. Into. Their. Eyes. And. See. Their. Pain. And. We. Can. See. Them. Take. Their.

[35:33] Hand. And. Wipe. The. Tear. From. Their. Eyes. And. We. Can. Feel. The. Embrace. Of. Their. Arms. Around. Us. As. We. Embrace. Them. And.

Then. We. Come. To. That. Moment. When. We. Stand. Over. That. One. Body. In. The. Casket. And. Everything. Is. Different. Now.

All. The. Features. Are. The. Same. There. There. There. A. Nose. And. Mouth. And. Eyes. And. Ears. And. A. Hand. But. It's. Not.

Moving. It's. Not. Speaking. This. Body. Is. Lifeless. There's. No. Speech.

No. Breath. No. Nothing. Nobody. Home. It's. The. Body. Without. The. Spirit. And. James. Says. It's. Dead. It's. Dead. And. What. Good.

[36:26] Is. Dead. Body. It's. Unable. To. Do. Anything. For. You. It's. Only. Fit. To. Be. Buried. And. The. Sooner. The. Better. So. Where. Have. We. Been. For. The. Last.

Three. Weeks. James. Introduces. His. Whole. Discussion. On. The. Place. Of. Faith. In. The. Christian. Life. Real. Faith. Living. Faith. Versus. Dead. Faith. With. A. Question. What. Good. Is. It. It. Was. A. Very. Practical. Question. What. Good. Is. It. If. A. Man. Claims. To. Have. Faith. But. Has. No. Deeds. Can. Such. Faith. Save. Him. And. Now. We. Come. To. The. End. Of. The. Discussion.

With. This. Vivid. Conclusion. The. Closing. Answer. To. All. To. His. Question. As. The. Body. Without. The. Spirit. Is. Dead. So. Faith. Without. Deeds. Is. Dead. What. Good. Is. It. It. Is. Dead. It. Can't. Do. Anything. For. You. So. Bury. It. With. All.

[37:18] Your. Other. Dead. Things. It. Can't. Justify. You. Or. Sanctify. You. It. Can't. Unite. You. To. Christ. And. Bring. His. Righteousness. To. Your. Account. In. Heaven. Or.

His. Grace. And. Power. To. Your. Heart. On. Earth. It. It. It. Won't. Do. You. Any. Good. In. Life. It. Won't. Do. You. Any. Good. On. The. Day. That. You. Die. It. Won't. Do. You. Any. Good. In. The. Day. Of. It. Won't. Do. Do. You. Any. Good. A. Billion. Years. From. Now. In. Eternity. So. Bury. It. Bury.

It. Rahab's. Faith. Was. No. Good. No. Dead. Faith. What. About. Yours. Some. Of. You. This. Morning. Might. Need.

To. Have. A. Funeral. Service. And. Bury. Your. Dead. Faith. Maybe. You've. Been. Claiming. To. Have. Faith. For.

[38:09] Five. Months. Maybe. You've. Been. Claiming. To. Have. Faith. For. Fifty. Years. But. James. As. The. Mouthpiece. Of. God. Has.

Demonstrated. That. Your. Claim. Is. Not. Backed. Up. By. The. Works. Of. Faith. Bury. It. Own. It. For. The.

Worthless. Thing. That. It. Is. Agree. With. God. Juiceless. God. Forgive. Me. Forever. Thinking. I. Had. Something. Called. Faith.

And. Come. To. Jesus. Christ. For. Real. Faith. For. Living. Faith. Faith. That. Will. Bring. The. Righteousness. Of. Christ. Credited. To. Your. Account. And. Will. Bring. Power. To. Sanctify. You. Into. Your. Heart. And. Life. Faith. That. Will. Not. Only. Put. You. In. Good. Standing. With. God. In. Heaven. But. Will. Enable. You. To. Live. Holy. Here.

[39:02] On. Earth. You. Know. In. Talking. With. People. I. Find. That. Some. Put. Off. Christ. Because. They. Say. To. Me. I. Couldn't. Live. The. Christian. Life.

I'm. Afraid. I. Couldn't. Live. The. Life. Well. Of. Course. You. Couldn't. It's. A. Supernatural. Life. It's. A. Life. That. Takes. God.

Himself. Taking. Up. Residence. In. Your. Heart. Through. Faith. That. Then. Produces. All. Kinds. Of. Works. Because. Faith. Unites. You. To. Christ. The. Vine. And. As. A. Branch. In. The. Vine. You. Then. Begin. To. Bear. Fruit. Because. Faith. Is. Real. Unites. You. To. Him. His. Grace. Flowing. To. Faith. We. We. Seen. The. Funeral.

[39:54] Parlor. Come. To. This. Christ. For. Faith. Just. Lastly. A. Few. Concluding. Remarks. About. The. Problems. Between. James.

And. The. Apostle. Paul. You. See. Some. People. Read. This. Passage. In. James. And. Say. Well. How. Do. You. Reconcile. James. And. Paul. Well. I. Start. By. Saying. That. So.

It. Is. With. James. And. Paul. You. Can. See. Them. Together. In. Acts. Chapter. 15. At. A. Council. In. Jerusalem. It. Was. Met. To. Determine. Whether. The. Gentiles. Had. To. Have. Certain. Works. Of. The. Law. Added. To. Their. Faith. In. To. Be. To. Be. Saved. Salvation. By. Faith. Alone. For. You.

Will. Be. Counted. Righteous. In. Heaven. And. Some. People. From. Jerusalem. Had. Gone. Up. And. Stored. Up. Trouble. In. Antioch. So. The. Church. Sent. Paul. And. Barnabas. Down. To. Jerusalem. To. Hold. A.

[41:02] Council. To. Sort. Out. This. Mess. You. Know. Who. Was. The. Leader. Of. The. Church. In. Jerusalem. Was. None. Other. Than. The. Brother. Of. Our. Lord. James.

And. He. Listens. To. Paul. And. He. Listens. To. Peter. Who. Rises. And. Gives. Testimony. He. Listens. To. Paul. And. Then. He. Comes. Down. Right.

With. Peter. And. Paul. And. The. Whole. Group. That. Stand. For. The. Gospel. Of. Praise. And. He's. Willing. To. To. To. Say. We're. Sorry. About. Some.

People. Going. Out. From. Us. That. Troubled. You. About. These. Things. Paul. Is. Preaching. The. Truth. Salvation. Is. By. Faith. Alone. In. Christ. Alone. You know. What. He. Calls. Paul. He. Refers. To. Paul. And. Barnabas. As. Our. Dear. Friends. Who. Have. Risk. Their. Lives. For. The. Friends.

[42:03] They. Believe. The. Same. Gospel. But. Somebody. Says. Oh. But. There. Is. A. Problem. John. Because. Paul. Says. In. Romans. 3. 28. That. A. Man. Is. Justified. By.

Faith. Apart. From. Observing. The. Law. And. Now. James. Says. In. Chapter. 2. And. 24. You. See. That. A. Person. Is. Justified.

By. What. He. Does. And. Not. By. Faith. Alone. Aha. We've. Got. A. Contradiction. Their. Teaching. Is. So. Contradictory. They.

Too. Can't. Possibly. Be. In. Agreement. Well. Is. That. So. A. Group. Of. Doctors. Work. Together. In. The. Same. Office.

And. Two. Patients. Are. In. The. Waiting. Room. And. They. Get. Around. To. Comparing. Notes. And. Told. Me. To. Lie. In. Bed. At. Least. 20. Hours.

[42:56] A. Day. And. Not. To. Do. Anything. Strenuous. And. The. Other. Lady. Says. You're. Kidding. Dr. James. Told. Me. Just. The. Opposite. He. Said. That. I.

Need. To. Get. Out. Of. Bed. And. I. Got. To. Get. Busy. And. Start. Jogging. And. Lifting. Weights. They. Shake. Their. Heads. Wondering. How. These. Two. Can. Ever. Get. Along.

In. The. Same. Office. They. Must. Really. Get. Into. It. At. Times. They. Clearly. Don't. Agree. With. Each. Other. And. Then. We. Follow. Each. Lady. Into. Their. Doctor. Appointment. And. What. We. Learn. Is. That. They. Have. Two. Very. Different. Medical. Conditions. One. Is. Right. In. The. Middle. Of. A. Problem. Pregnancy. So.

Bed. Rest. And. No. Work. Is. Ordered. The. Others. Just. Had. Her. Baby. Three. Weeks. Ago. And. She's. Lethargic. She's.

[43:48] Depressed. She's. Overweight. She's. Still. Lying. Around. In. Bed. All. Day. And. The. Doctor. Orders. Get. Out. Of. Bed. And. Get.

To. Work. And. Do. Something. The. Contradictions. Between. The. Two. Doctors. Are. Only. Apparent. Each.

Agrees. With. The. Other's. Remedy. Of. The. Two. Very. Different. Persons. Now. It's. The. Same. With. Paul. And. James. In. The. Scriptures. Any. Differences. In. Their. Doctrine. Are.

Only. Apparent. Each. Are. Emphasizing. Two. Different. Truths. That. Both. Believe. But. That. The. Situations. They're. Dealing. With. Called. For. Differing. Remedies.

So. Dr. Paul. And. Dr. James. Are. Treating. Two. Different. Spiritual. Diseases. Both. Are. Equally. Deadly. And. Damning. Errors. And. That's. Why. They're. So. Serious. And.

[44:40] Intense. Dr. Paul. Is. Dealing. With. Legalism. Patients. Who. Think. That. They. Can. Be. Counted. Righteous. Before. God. Because. Of. The. Good. Deeds. That. They.

Do. Ask. Them. Why. Do. You. Think. You'll. Get. Into. Heaven. Well. Because. I. Go. To. Church. And. I. Give. Money. And. I. Try. To. Treat. My. Neighbor. And. They're. Leaning. On. Their. Good. Deeds. To. Get. Them.

Into. Heaven. It's. Legalism. And. So. Dr. Paul. Insists. That. No. Works. Being. Done. Before. Conversion. Give.

Anything. There's. No. Place. For. Anything. Of. A. Work. To. Even. Be. Called. Good. Before. Conversion. In. God's. Sight. And. It. Will. Not. Earn. Your. Salvation. Dr.

James. Is. Dealing. In. James. Chapter. These patients. Know. That. Salvation. Is. Not. By. Works.

[45:34] Their. Own. Works. But. Rather. By. The. Works. Of. Christ. Received. By. Faith. Alone. They're. Very. Orthodox. On. This. Point. So. They. Claim. To. Be. Trusting. In. Christ. To. Save. Them. Not. Leaning. On. Their. Own. Works. But.

Their. Lives. Do. Not. Back. Up. Their. There. Are. No. Deeds. With. Their. Faith. Their. Supposed. Faith. Is. Standing. By. Itself. There's. Not. The. Obedience. To. God. The. Self. Denying.

Service. To. God. They're. Not. Doers. Of. The. Word. So. Whereas. Dr. Paul. Insists. On. No. Works. Being. Done. Before. Conversion. In. Order. To. Earn. Salvation. Dr. James. Equally.

Insists. On. Works. Being. Done. After. Conversion. Not. To. Earn. Your. Salvation. But. Simply. As. Proof. Of. Saving. Faith. They.

Are. The. Works. That. Faith. Produces. Yes. Faith. Starts. Out. Alone. Just. Believing. But. It. Goes. On. To. Obey. And.

[46:28] Does. Not. Stand. Alone. But. Is. Accompanied. By. Deeds. Dr. Paul. Says. If. You're. To. Be. Saved. It. Must. Be. By. Faith. Alone. In. Christ. Alone. Without. Any. Trust. In. Any. Deeds. You've. Done. Dr. James.

Says. If. That. Faith. Is. Real. Then. It. Won't. Stay. Alone. But. Will. Be. Accompanied. By. Works. Dr. Paul. Attacks. Any. Thinking. That. Your. Dead. Works. Will. Save. You. Dr. James. Attacks. Any. Thinking. That. Your. Dead. Faith. Will. Save. You. Dr. Paul. Is. Emphasizing. How. To. Be. Justified. Before. God. By. Faith. Alone. Dr. James. Is. Emphasizing. How. To. Show. And. To. Know. That. You. Are. Justified. Before. God. By. Deeds. That. Accompany.

Your. Faith. Faith. Produced. Deeds. So. These. Men. Are. Not. In. Disagreement. You. Can. Go. To. Acts. 15. And. See. That. James. Agrees. With. Paul's. Preaching.

[47:21] And. His. Doctrine. And. Then. You. Can. Read. The. Epistles. Of. Paul. And. See. That. He. Agrees. With. James. You. Know. Paul. He. He. Has. His. Searching. Words. To. Say. About. Faith.

As. James. Does. In. Chapter. Two. Don't. Be. Deceived. He. Says. In. Galatians. Don't. Be. Deceived. Thinking. You're. Saved. If. If. You're. Sowing. To. Please. The. Flesh. You. Will. Reap. From. The. Flesh. Corruption. Destruction. You. Must. Sow. To. Please. The. Spirit. If. You. Would. Reap. Everlasting. Life. Don't. Be. Deceived. What we find is that the highway of truth is a very narrow highway.

And sometimes on either side of the highway there is a sheer precipice. Going straight down to hell. On each side. Now not all truth is like that.

Some truth is not. Such. Of such importance that if you hold to it. You damn your soul. But sometimes truth is that way. And that's what Paul and James are showing.

[48:29] And so. A guardrail. Has been put up on the right side of the road.

Isn't this the way it is? When you go over some pass. And there's a guardrail on the right side of the road. To keep you from that ditch. Lest you stray too far that side.

But there's also a guardrail on the other side. Because. Often when you get over too far this way. You over correct and go into this ditch. And so there's a guardrail on either side.

And that's probably what happened in first century. Christendom. And why James wrote the way he did. In. A letter perhaps as early as 40 AD. These Christian Jews had been saved out of what? A Christless. Christ. Judaistic. Legalism. It said if you want to be right with God. Just keep the law of Moses. You're doing fine. And some Christians.

[49:33] Some of these. Who are receiving the letter. Came to see. That's not true. That's not true. Your own deeds can't get you to heaven. Never. It's only the works of Christ.

Received by faith alone. And so. They didn't fall on. Into this ditch. Did they? No. Not at all. But you know what they did? They over corrected. And they swung over.

And they're getting ready to plunge into this ditch to hell. The ditch of easy believism. That says. I have faith in Jesus. He kept the law for me.

So don't talk to me about commandments. And laws of God. No. Don't talk to me about that. Jesus kept the law for me. And they use. One truth.

To ruin their own souls with. And James is standing over here. And he's erecting a guardrail on this side. He's saying. No. No. Because if you have real saving faith in Christ.

[50:32] It will be active. And you'll not go to hell thinking. I've got saving faith. When your life is not showing it. Because. You've seen the guardrail. You've dealt with God's teaching over here.

There's these two great guardrails. That God has given us. And they are equally. Inspired by God. Don't hide lawless living. Behind.

The preaching of. Justification. Through the works of Jesus alone. That's a truth. It's a blessed truth. Hold on to it with both hands. With all your heart. But don't hide a lawless shabby life.

Behind that preaching. And plunge yourself. To the bottom on this side. James says. If you've got the real thing.

It'll be seen in deeds. It's a rare thing. To find a Christian. Holding both truths. With both hands. Faith in Christ.

[51:32] That justifies. It's always faith in Christ. That sanctifies. Faith in Christ. That credits his righteousness. To my account. Is always faith in Christ. That brings.

Power for living. A new life. Yes. Every one of us. Has this pendulum. Reaction. Built into us.

Oh may the Lord. Help us. To hang on. To both truths. With all of our heart. And to look to Jesus. Whose righteousness. It is. That is imputed.

To our account. And imparted. To our hearts. Both. Damning. Diseases. Are with us. Today. They're alive and well.

They're in epidemic proportion. Be armed. Against both. By the truth. Of God's word. If you found yourself deceived.

[52:28] Hold a burial service. For your dead faith. And come and look to Christ. Christ. And live. And that living faith. Will change the way you live. Christian.

Some here need to look to Christ. For the first time. Some. Of us need to look for the thousandth time. For whatever. Our need. Our sin. We look away to Christ. Is it.

For strength. To persevere in trial. We look away to Christ. To remain true. Obeying. His commandments. We look away to Christ. There's all that we need in Jesus.

God has talked to us this morning. Let's talk to him. In prayer. Lord God. Thank you for. Your perfect law.

Of liberty. We are imbalanced. And imperfect. At best. As Christians. And how we need. To be balanced out. With the truth. That we find in scripture.

[53:25] All of it. Teach us again. This morning. To embrace all that you've said. For our good. And may it lead us. To our savior. To run the race.

Looking to him. He who can save us. Not only from the penalty. Of sin at the end. But from his very power. His reigning power. In our lives.

Today. We thank you for him. We pray in his name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.