

1) We did not get quite through our review last time so we will start with a few comments on verses chapter 2:8-13.

- a) First, we have to remember that James has just been talking about treating someone with preference because they were rich. He then goes on to say ...

James 2:8-11 (NASB 2020)

⁸If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scripture, “YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF,” you are doing well. ⁹But if you show partiality, you are committing sin *and* are convicted by the Law as violators. ¹⁰For whoever keeps the whole Law, yet stumbles in one *point*, has become guilty of all. ¹¹For He who said, “DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY,” also said, “DO NOT MURDER.” Now if you do not commit adultery, but do murder, you have become a violator of the Law.

2) Verses 8 and 9, James says basically if the favoritism you are showing is because you are following scripture and loving your neighbor as yourself, you are ok.

- a) But, if you are not, and it is pure partiality for your own gain – i.e. you have “become judges with evil motives” then it is a sin.
- b) This of course, requires us to be honest with ourselves – to face if you will the real motive behind our preferential treatment.

3) We then talked for a moment last time about where James goes next – sin is sin – no big sins and no little sins, in God’s eyes they are all the same.

4) James then talks about the “law of freedom”.

James 2:12-13 (NASB 2020)

¹²So speak, and so act, as those who are to be judged by *the* law of freedom. ¹³For judgment *will be* merciless to one who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.

5) As we discussed when we first covered them, these two verses are a pivot point in James’ letter and in truth, they are a key to the whole idea of Faith Demonstrated!

6) “So speak, and so act,” pretty much covers our every word and deed or action. Our rule for our every action is the law of freedom.

7) We must get two things here if we get nothing else:

- a) **First** – what is the “law of freedom”.
- b) **Second** – what it means to be judged by it.
- c) Let’s begin with the law of freedom.

8) To really understand the law of freedom, we must compare the law of freedom and unfulfilled Law.

- a) The unfulfilled Law was the law as it was given.
 - i) According to Paul in Romans 11, it defines sin.
- b) God’s intent was for it to transfer to the heart.

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- c) In actuality, what happened was His people turned it into a burden, a checklist.
 - i) In truth, it became a form of slavery.
 - ii) They even expanded it, added to it details that God never intended.
 - (1) Then as Jesus tells them, they taught these commandments (OF MEN) as though they were commandments of GOD!
 - iii) There was no heart felt reason for most in trying to obey the Law.
 - iv) Their righteousness came from checking the boxes – no heart required!
- 9) When Christ fulfilled the Law, He made the intent of God’s Law perfectly clear in all things.
 - a) In doing that, in many cases it seems almost like he elevated the law to a new level.
 - b) He also provided the ultimate sacrifice so that grace could enter and now, we are free.
 - c) Not free to sin but free to serve God by looking into His perfect law and living it out in our lives with grace from God to cover the times and things we are unable to do.
 - i) The Law fulfilled by Christ shows us how to live in correct relationship to God and our fellowman.
 - ii) And grace from us to others because of our love for them and God.
- 10) James completes his point by indirectly focusing back on that very grace we just mentioned.
 - a) It is an absolute that we must see God’s grace (mercy) in all of this and realize that without it we would not be able to stand before Him.
 - b) And, as James says here, God expects us to show that same grace (mercy) to others.
 - c) We do this by not condemning the person for their sin but loving them.
- 1) OK – onward to new territory!
- 2) The next passage in most of your translations has a heading “Faith and Works” or something similar.
- 3) Before we get into that passage and keeping in mind what we finished with last ...

James 2:12 (NASB 2020)

¹² So speak, and so act, as those who are to be judged by *the* law of freedom.

Considering that, WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER WORKS?

- a) Basically, anything that shows that we are doing what God wants as defined by the fulfilled Law.

James 2:14–17 (NASB 2020)

Faith and Works

¹⁴ What use is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone says he has faith, but he has no works? Can that faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,” yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that?

¹⁷ In the same way, faith also, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.

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- 4) In these two verses (15 and 16), we must make sure we do not get into a “majoring in minors” situation.
- 5) The intent of these verses is not to categorize but through example, to show what “faith without works” means.
- 6) I am going to read verses 15 and 16 again and as I do, pick out from them what represents faith, and what represents works.

What represents FAITH?

- a) Saying to the person be warmed and fed.

What Represents WORK?

Galatians 5:6 (NASB 2020)

⁶For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, **but faith working through love.**

- b) It would be the need actually sensed but missed.
- c) The actual work required by the faith was not done – nothing was accomplished.
- 7) The last phrase of Verse 17 has a major impact on what we are saying here.
- ¹⁷ In the same way, faith also, if it has no works, is dead, ***being by itself***.
- 8) One of the major objections to the book of James through the years has been that it is supposed to present the idea of salvation or justification by works.
 - a) This meant to those who felt that way that faith was not really necessary.
 - b) Either of these extremes is incorrect as I am sure we all realize.
 - c) This last phrase “BEING BY ITSELF” is one clear indication that that James is not saying that we are saved by works.
 - i) This is the unequivocal answer to the question he asked in verse 14. Can that faith without works save him?
 - ii) That answer is NO – IT TAKES BOTH!

- 1) O.k. let’s read James’ more detailed arguments against “faith alone.”

James 2:18–26 (NASB 2020)

¹⁸ But someone may well say, “You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works.” ¹⁹ You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. ²⁰ But are you willing to acknowledge, you foolish person, that faith without works is useless? ²¹ Was our father Abraham not justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? ²² You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; ²³ and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “And Abraham believed God, and it was credited 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 In the same way, was Rahab the prostitute not justified by works also when she received the

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messengers and sent them out by another way? ²⁶ For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

- 2) There are several ins and outs to unpack in these verses.
- 3) First, James' original premise in his opening quote from "someone" is a challenge between the two extremes.
 - a) Only the one with both faith and works is correct.
 - i) And as James quickly points out that even demons have faith or belief which only says they know who God is – not that they would serve Him in any way.
- 4) He then gives two very wonderful examples showing the result of having both – proper faith and proper works.

What was Abraham's faith?

He believed God

What were the works of Abraham?

He took his only son and

was willing to sacrifice him because he believed God

What was Rahab's works?

Received the messengers.

What was Rahab's faith?

NOT STATED

She believed in God.

Joshua 2:8–11 (NASB 2020)

- 5) After explaining all the things she and her people had heard about what God had done for the Israelites, she says in verse 11 ...

¹¹ When we heard *these reports*, our hearts melted and no courage remained in anyone any longer because of you; for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth below.

- 6) James concludes with another strong analogy – body without spirit and faith without works – both are dead!
 - a) They may both be walking around so to speak but in truth, they are dead!
- 7) There are three scriptures from Matthew which speak to exactly what James has been talking about in these last two passages.
 - a) First, from the sermon on the mount...

Matthew 7:21–23 (NASB 2020)

²¹ “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of My Father who is in heaven *will enter*. ²² Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ ²³ And then I will declare to them, I never knew you; leave Me, you who practice lawlessness.’

What is missing from these folks – faith or works? (BE CAREFUL)!

- b) Obviously, they had some works so works could not be completely missing.

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- c) You would think that they also had some faith – without faith, how could they have prophesied, cast out demons and performed miracles – in Christ’s name?
- d) The clue is perhaps in the last phrase of verse 23 – “you who practice lawlessness.”
 - i) They may have fallen into the area of false prophets.
- e) It appears that these folks were missing the mark in their relationship with Christ as well because he says “I never knew you; leave Me.”
- f) Perhaps the works they were doing were the wrong works because they were not in a relationship with Christ to understand what He wanted from them for works.
- g) Now, we may have the third leg to our two-legged stool – relationship.
- h) One way or the other, they missed the mark – insufficient works and insufficient faith – had perhaps some of both but no driving relationship!

8) The next passage is Matthew 23:23-26 ...

Matthew 23:23–26 (NASB 2020)

²³ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the Law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these *are the things* you should have done without neglecting the others. ²⁴ You blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!

²⁵ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence. ²⁶ You blind Pharisee, first clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may also become clean.

- 9) The Pharisees are similar to the folks in the last passage who had prophesied, cast out demons, and performed miracles.
 - a) They had faith in God – absolutely no doubt.
 - b) However, they had missed what God really wanted and what the purposes should have been in what they were doing.
 - c) What they were doing was for themselves – it was not from their hearts to honor God or their fellowman.
 - d) They were doing the “works” but for all the wrong reasons!

What are ways that we can fall into this trap in our own walk with Christ?

10) The next passage is Matthew 25:31-46 the judgement...

Matthew 25:31–46 (NASB 2020)

The Judgment

³¹ “But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. ³² And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, just as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; ³³ and He will put the sheep on His right, but the goats on the left.

³⁴ “Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry, and you gave Me *something* to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me *something* to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; ³⁶ naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.’ ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer Him, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You *something* to drink? ³⁸ And when did we see You *as* a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? ³⁹ And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ ⁴⁰ And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did *it* for one of the least of these brothers *or sisters* of Mine, you did *it* for Me.’

⁴¹ “Then He will also say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, you accursed people, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; ⁴² for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; ⁴³ I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.’ ⁴⁴ Then they themselves also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or *as* a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?’ ⁴⁵ Then He will answer them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do *it* for one of the least of these, you did not do *it* for Me, either.’ ⁴⁶ These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

- 11) I think it is important to note that both groups asked the same question – when did they see Him?
- 12) The difference is that the group on the right had served their fellow man without thought of reward or praise – surely without thinking that it might have been seen as serving Jesus himself.
 - a) In this case, there was no thought about reward – only caring for those in need.
 - b) The true opposite of the Pharisaical attitude of the last passage.
- 13) The group on the left had not served anyone and their question of “when did we see you” was really a way of looking for an excuse for not having done the things Jesus pointed out.
- 14) Again, the belief was there but the relationship was missing.

Same question, the group on the left (goats) what is missing from these folks – faith or works? (BE CAREFUL)!

- 15) The goats on the left may have had neither.
 - a) We can say conclusively that they did not have the works which Jesus the King expected of them.
 - b) I think we must also note here that these folks offered no repentance – only excuses by the way of the question.
 - i) This speaks to the missing relationship!

What if anything was missing from the group on the right (sheep)?

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- 16) Nothing! They had both the correct faith and the correct works.
- a) And, I would also say they had a true and correct relationship with their Savior.
- 17) I know this section has been somewhat drawn out, but my hope is that we see how important it is to have both faith and works – always in context of a relationship with God and Christ.
- a) Contrary to what some might think, James never says otherwise.
- 18) Additionally, and perhaps most importantly, I hope that we see that the works we must have are all encompassing.
- a) They are not just things we do because they seem right.
 - b) They are instead things we do because we are living by the law of freedom – obeying God and Christ because we love them and our fellowman.
- 19) Again, they are works brought about because of our faith and therefore become FAITH DEMONSTRATED!!!!