

1) Just to review, I will read 2:8-11. Then we will jump into 12 and 13.

a) As I said last time 12 and 13 are connected but really require some extra attention.

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) Now, lets get into verses 12 and 13...

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.

3) These two verses are a pivot point in James’ current dissertation and in truth, they are a key to the whole idea of Faith Demonstrated!

4) 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. Jesus himself addresses this in talking to some Jews who “Believed him” but as we proceed on it will be obvious that they did not understand or accept His teaching.

John 8:31–36 (NASB 2020)

³¹So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, *then* you are truly My disciples; ³²and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” ³³They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s descendants and have never been enslaved to anyone; how *is it that* You say, ‘You will become free’ ?”

³⁴Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin. ³⁵Now the slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever. ³⁶So if the Son sets you free, you really will be free.

5) I think to be clear here since we quoted the entire verse 34, when Jesus says; “everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin”, I think He is saying those who intentionally commit sin are slaves to sin.

a) Once we are saved and living under the fulfilled law, we must never intentionally sin.

Agree / disagree?

b) There is a commitment issue here.

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- c) It is what we were talking about last time – looking at God’s law, saying in our heart we don’t agree with it, and choosing to disobey.
- d) It would also be when we look at what we know God wants and simply say that’s too hard and just ignore Him – not turning to Him for the strength we need.
 - i) Not even attempting to accomplish His desires.
- e) Paul says this much better in Romans:

Romans 6:12–23 (NASB 2020)

¹² Therefore sin is not to reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, ¹³ and do not go on presenting the parts of your body to sin *as* instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those who are alive from the dead, and your body’s parts *as* instruments of righteousness for God. ¹⁴ For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under the Law but under grace.

- 6) So, to really understand the difference – the law of freedom vs. unfulfilled Law – we have to look at them carefully.
 - a) The unfulfilled Law was the law as was given.
 - b) God’s intent was for it to transfer to the heart.
 - c) In actuality, what happened was His people turned into a burden, a checklist.
 - i) There was no heart felt reason for most in trying to obey the Law.
 - ii) Again a crushing “no way out” situation!
- 7) When Christ fulfilled the Law, He made the intent of God’s Law perfectly clear in all things.
 - a) He also provided the ultimate sacrifice so that grace could enter and now, we are free.
 - b) Not free to sin but free to serve God by looking into His perfect law and living it out in our lives with grace to cover the times and things we are unable to do.
- 8) James puts this forth as a command with emphasis; “So speak, and so act”
 - a) We must choose to speak and choose to act as the law of freedom demands.
 - b) Bruce Barton comments on this...

Christians can be held responsible by the world for our bad example. Nothing is sadder than believers whose words and actions demonstrate that they are still under the influence of the world rather than under the influence of Christ.

- c) He continues a paragraph or so later by saying ...

As Christians, we are saved by God’s free gift (grace) through faith, not by keeping the law. But as Christians, we are also required to obey Christ. ⁹

- 9) We must always remember that God’s grace does not cancel our duty to obey him.

⁹ Bruce B. Barton, David Veerman, and Neil S. Wilson, [*James*](#), Life Application Bible Commentary (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1992), 55.

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- 10) The law is no longer an external set of rules with provided expansions.
- 11) Instead, it is the heart full of love for Christ and God that makes us want to live to please them in every way.
- 12) This is a new basis for our obedience that is beyond a checklist.
- 13) James completes his point by indirectly focusing back on that very grace we were just discussing.
- 14) 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.
- 15) And, as James says here, He expects us to show that same grace (mercy) to others.

I found these next two points some where and they ring so true regardless of where they come from....

- 16) Jesus reintroduced the world to the awesome character of God: holy, just, and gracious.
- 17) The Incarnation was not a revision or change in God's eternal plan – it was God's plan brought to fulfillment.
 - a) In other words, we are no longer just rule keepers we are children of God serving a risen savior keeping the entire intent of the law rather than a mess of rules with no heart.
- 18) Without verses 12 and 13, what James had said before and what he is going to say next would just seem like the same repressive system with no heart – only the burden.
- 19) Now, that's a lot on two verses but, as I said, they are I think pivotal to this section of the letter – perhaps the entire letter.
- 20) Again – they are the broad definition of FAITH DEMONSTRATED!
- 21) Take a minute and think about all that I have been saying.

Does this click or have I taken us down a path to oblivion?

Please, Questions / Comments / Thoughts of any kind on any of this?

- 22) The next passage in most of your translations has a heading “Faith and Works” or something similar.

Before we get into that passage and without looking at the passage itself, BUT, keeping in mind what we have just discussed, WHAT ARE WORKS?

I 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

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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.

- 1) In these two verses, we must make sure we do not get into a “majoring in minors” situation.
- 2) Verse 15 and 16 are NOT examples of work, though they would be considered as such by most of us.
- 3) Instead, I think 15 and 16 are to be seen as an explanation of what “faith without works” means.
- 4) Read the passage again and pick out from verses 15 and 16 the item that represents faith, and the item that represents works.

What represents FAITH?

What Represents WORK?

One last item that really has a major impact on what we are saying here is the last phrase of verse 17.

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

- 5) One of the major objections to the book of James through the years has been that it presents the idea of salvation by works.
 - a) This meant to some that faith was not really necessary.
 - b) Both of these are incorrect as I am sure we all realize.
 - c) This last phrase BEING BY ITSELF is one clear indication that that is not true.
 - i) This is the unequivocal answer to the question he asked in verse 14. Can that faith (without works) save him?

Any changes to the answer to our first question; WHAT ARE WORKS?

- 6) 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 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.

- 7) There are several ins and outs to unpack in these verses.

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- 8) 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 even demons have faith or belief which only says they know who Christ is – not that they would serve Him in any way.
- 9) He then gives two very wonderful examples showing the result of having both – proper faith and proper works.

What was Abraham's works?

What was Rahab's faith?

- a) In just a moment, we will discuss the potential of faith with wrong or perhaps unapproved works.
- 10) He concludes with another concrete 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!
- 11) There are two scriptures from Matthew which look at exactly what James has been talking about in these last two passages.
 - a) First, from the sermon on the mount...