

THE BOOK OF JAMES

“My Faith By My Works”

Scripture Reading: JAMES 2:18-20

-) **SLIDES 1-6.** Bible Jeopardy!
-) **SLIDES 7.** Read today’s Scripture text.
-) **SLIDE 8.** Today we continue in our expository study of the Book of JAMES. This is week #14. I have titled today’s message *“My Faith By My Works”* (2:18).
-) Story time about Uncle Bud fixing ticket. If you have the connections you say you have, then prove it. But my ticket didn’t get fixed. So, now I have to question if you really have those connections you say you have. Lip service?
-) **SLIDE 9.** JAMES 2:18. And just like my Uncle Bud said he could get any ticket fixed because he knew the right people, if a person claims they are a Christian, then James says prove it.
-) **SLIDE 10.** EPH 2:8-9. There are four components that make up saving faith. Let’s quickly review what we have learned up to this point about the first three components to saving faith.
-) **SLIDE 11.** The first component of saving faith is the **KNOWLEDGE** of the **TRUTH** (mind).
-) **SLIDE 12.** The second component of saving faith is **BELIEF** (heart).
-) **SLIDE 13.** The third component of saving faith is **TRUST** (will).
-) We could stop here and say these three (knowledge, belief, trust) are the components of saving faith. And we would be correct. People will profess that they have these three. But the real question is do these same people possess true saving faith? People can profess anything, just like my Uncle Bud.

-) **SLIDE 14.** In MATTHEW 13:3-23, we read the parable of the Sower and the seed. Professors but not possessors.
-) **SLIDE 15.** JOHN 6:66. Professors but not possessors.
-) **SLIDE 16.** 1 JOHN 2:19. Professors but not possessors.
-) We could say that these disciples, these followers of Jesus, in these three examples appeared to have some form of saving faith on the outside. But as you can see, they all fell away. They were apostates. Judas was an apostate. They professed a faith, but never possessed the faith.
-) In a similar light, James is telling us that if you are a professor of the faith, then there will be evidence of that transformation in your Christian walk. LISTEN! This evidence is not necessary to EARN salvation. These actions are the evidence of it.
-) I will be talking a whole lot more about this difference next Sunday. For today, let's stick with the truths James is teaching.
-) **SLIDE 17.** There will be **EVIDENCE** of our saving faith by our **WORKS**. Our outward actions and words will prove or disprove if we genuinely have knowledge, belief, and trust.
-) Let's search the Scriptures so we can define what these works, our words and actions, look like.
-) **SLIDE 18.** EPHESIANS 2:10. We have been saved for good works and not by good works. More on this next week.
-) Now, if a person says that they heard the gospel, believed the gospel, and trust the gospel for their salvation; if they have truly been transformed from an old creature to a new creation in Christ, that this person is saved by grace through faith, what should their next step be?
-) **SLIDE 19.** They should make a public affirmation of that faith. How? Through baptism. ACTS 2:38,41. I want to make sure we all understand that baptism is not necessary for salvation. It is the believer's way of affirming publicly what they believe.

-) **SLIDE 20.** I have spoken 4x on this and I want to make sure we all know the Reformed Theology position on water baptism.
-) Necessary for salvation? No. I was saved in 1994 and wasn't baptized until 2000. I guarantee you I would have gone to heaven had I died between those dates. Again, if you want to know more on this topic and the reformed view, please go to the BGCC website and listen to these messages.
-) Now, if a person says that they heard the gospel, believed the gospel, and trust the gospel for their salvation; if they have truly been transformed from an old creature to a new creation in Christ, that this person is saved by grace through faith and have been baptized, what should we see next?
-) **SLIDE 21.** JOHN 15:8.
-) So what does this fruit look like? What does this evidence of saving faith look like? Is it that we start helping little old ladies cross the street? We now put some change in the Salvation Army tin at Christmas time? Or we don't drive as fast on the interstate as we used to? Those are all good things to do but even the unsaved do those things. I believe the evidence of saving faith comes in other flavors.
-) **SLIDE 22.** MARK 12:29-31.
-) **SLIDE 23.** Evidence of saving faith shows that we love **GOD** and we love our **NEIGHBOR** as ourselves. Do we really love God or do His commandments sometimes get in the way of the way we would like to live our lives?
-) Do we really love our neighbor as ourselves? Or do we only show favor to people who are just like us?
-) **SLIDE 24.** JOHN 14:23.
-) **SLIDE 25.** Evidence of saving faith shows that we **OBEY** God's Word.
-) **SLIDE 26.** 1 JOHN 3:9-10.

-) **SLIDE 27.** Evidence of saving faith shows that we do not lead a **LIFESTYLE** of sin.
-) Certainly we will never be perfect. But knowing we are saved never gives us a license to sin. There are no such things as pet sins. Do not believe that once you are saved, you can do whatever you want (antinomianism).
-) That is not what the Bible teaches. What does Jesus tell the adulterous woman in JOHN 8:11? “Go now and leave your life of sin.” Practicing sin is never condoned by the Bible.
-) James says that a person will show his/her faith by their works (the title of today’s message). We have defined these “works” as bearing fruit. We bear fruit by loving God, by loving our neighbor, by obeying God’s Word, and by not leading a lifestyle of habitual sin.
-) And there’s much more we could add to that list. But let’s conclude today’s lesson with one very important truth that James is teaching us with the example that he gives in this Scripture text.
-) **SLIDE 28.** JAMES 2:15-17.
-) **SLIDE 29.** Evidence of saving faith shows that we are not **HYPOCRITICAL** with our words. If we are going to have words of compassion as James points out here, then we must have acts of compassion. Prove your faith.
-) **SLIDE 30.** JOHN 15:8. When Jesus says that His true followers will bear fruit, it means we will see the evidence of that person’s saving faith—the evidence and proof of a transformed life.
-) So we start with the TRUTH. We KNOW this truth. We BELIEVE this truth. We TRUST this truth. Then our words and actions will show EVIDENCE of this inward transformation.

-) Many people have some combination of these components of saving faith. But they don't have saving faith.
-) A demon knows and believes the truth but they never trust in the salvation promises. A pagan can know the truth and demonstrate a generous and kind life but they will never believe in their heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God or if anything in this Book is true.
-) In Mormon theology, they believe, trust, and demonstrate their faith, but it is not based on truth. They have the wrong Jesus. Many professing Christians are not possessing Christians. That's why Jesus talks about the many and the few.
-) Saving faith. We are saved by grace through faith. *Sola fide*. By faith alone was the cry of Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation. And concerning today's lesson, Martin Luther agreed with James and said this: "*We are saved by faith alone but not by a faith that is alone.*" Where's the evidence?
-) Uncle Bud, why didn't you get my ticket taken care of? You say you have a hamburger? Where's the beef?
-) Next week we will conclude chapter two and talk about the line that separates a salvation based on faith alone with a religious system based on faith plus works to earn salvation.

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