

**Lecture 13 – James 2-5: Justification in James**

*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. James 2:14-17*

**Key Terms**

Genuine faith, tests, needy brother, Abraham, the good pagan, James & the tradition, James vs. Paul

**Lecture Objectives**

- Locate and explain James' view of relationship between faith & works and justification
- Articulate the differences between Paul and James in their purpose and approach to the issue of Justification
- Explore the application of James' exhortations to your own life and ministry

**Preliminary Questions**

- Luther claimed that James ought not to be in the canon due to its focus on "works righteousness." How would you respond to Luther? Would you agree or not? Why or why not?
- If James is, in fact, a legitimate part of the canon, how have his exhortations impacted your life and ministry?
- A young believer has been eagerly studying through Scripture. Recently she has been working through James and comes to you a bit frustrated and confused. She asks, "I thought I was justified by faith not by works least any man should boast. Isn't James contradicting that?" How do you answer?

**James 2-5: Justification in James****I. Introduction****A. Review of James to now**

1. Tests of genuine faith
2. Favoritism: tests genuine faith
3. Unified character of law
4. Last word of mercy

**B. Structure of 2:14-26: Do you have real faith?****1. Reference to Leviticus 19**

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Question: What is the benefit (*óphelos*) if someone claims to have faith, but has no works?**

- a. Can faith save him?
- b. \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Series of rhetorical questions: (2:14-17)**

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_

Why is this question, “Do you have real faith?” threatening? In what way? How would you encourage someone who has been troubled by this question?

## II. What Is Real Faith?

### A. The case of the needy brother 15-17

1. Spurious faith is ...
2. Brother lacks daily food, clothes. What benefit is a faith without deeds (14,16)?

### B. The case of knowledge without peace (18-20)

1. Spurious faith is ...
  - a. Unexpected wording:
  - b. Problem:
  - c. James’ reply:
2. Faith is only known by ... (18).
3. Words prove nothing.
  - a. Proof: demons with orthodox beliefs
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_

### C. The case of difficult obedience (20-24)

1. True faith is ...
2. Abraham as illustration.
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Abraham's faith was perfected by works (cf. Gen. 15:6).
  - a. Monergism:
  - b. Synergism: (*sunērgēi*)
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. “... accounted to him as righteousness”
    - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
    - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
    - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
    - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Time frames of justification
    - 1) Past:
    - 2) Present:
    - 3) Future:
  - f. Our works prove – “justify” our claim that -- we are in Christ.

### D. The case of the good pagan (25-26)

1. True faith is ...
2. Rahab?! Contrast with Abraham:
3. Abraham: father of Israel, male, noble patriarch
  - a. Rahab: Canaanite foreign, female disreputable prostitute.
4. Perfect example of real faith: acted on her orthodox beliefs.

## III. Application: James Speaks to Comfortable Christians

- A. \_\_\_\_\_
- B. \_\_\_\_\_
- C. \_\_\_\_\_

## IV. The Consistency of James with the Apostolic Tradition

- Central question:

- Compare: Rom. 3:28 and James 2:21, 24.
- The chief issue: rhetoric and terms, not substance
  - A. Jesus in synoptic gospels
    1. \_\_\_\_\_
    2. \_\_\_\_\_
    3. \_\_\_\_\_
  - B. Jesus in the Gospel according to John
    1. \_\_\_\_\_
    2. \_\_\_\_\_
  - C. Paul
    1. Significant affinities: features of rhetoric, morals, vocabulary
    2. Both have disinterest in “works of the law.”
    3. Both insist on “works” (*érga*) - Paul 50 times:
      - a. 1 Cor 3:13
      - b. Gal 6:4
      - c. Gal 5:3 & Jas 2:10
      - d. Rom 2:13 & Jas 1:20-23
      - e. Jas 2:14 & Rom. 2:25-27, 8:4; 1 Cor 7:19
      - f. Eph 2:10
  - D. But James 2 and Romans 3-4 address different issues
    1. Paul’s question: the role of works in getting right with God
      - a. How shall Gentiles be received into the church?
      - b. \_\_\_\_\_
      - c. \_\_\_\_\_
    2. James’ question: the role of works once we are right with God
      - a. How to addresses people who believe they are saved because they assent to orthodox creeds?
      - b. Four views of salvation and works
 

1) Works	→	Salvation
2) Faith	→	Salvation
3) Faith + Works	→	Salvation
4) Faith	→	Salvation + Works

**Question/Answer**

- What is the difference between an Arminian position and a Calvinistic position on the role of faith and good works?
- Do our “good deeds” demonstrate that we are justified or do we justify ourselves through our “good deeds”?
- What is the significance of “good deeds” done by an unbeliever?
- How are the good works of believers distinguished from those of unbelievers?
- What about the man who died next to Jesus on the cross next to Jesus? What good deeds did he have?
- Can man be saved without repentance? Can a man be saved without baptism? Why is one a work and one not a work?
- How does the Roman Catholic position compare with the Protestant position?