

## **Abraham Was Justified by His Works**

### **James 2:21-26**

James Chapter 2 is a chapter that works based salvation preachers will use over and over again. They ignore the entire rest of the Bible and will teach that you must have good works to get to heaven.

They will use a verse that says Abraham was justified by his works to say that you must have good works to get to heaven.

The entire Bible, hundreds of Scriptures, teach that we are only saved by faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus is "THE" Savior of the world. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ, his blood, his life, is the payment for our sin. He is the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. We cannot pay for our sin by doing good works.

## **Believing in Jesus Saves Your Soul Forever**

### **""John 3:15**

That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.""

That's a clear Scripture. And that can't be twisted around, though, the false preachers are trying. A strategy they try is to say that the word believe means to take action and do good works. But anyone and everyone knows that's not what "BELIEVE" means.

"Whosoever believeth in him" means believing "IN" Jesus Christ. Can Jesus Christ, the Son of God, God in the flesh, save you from all your sins on his own all by himself? Either you believe that Jesus can save you or you believe that something more than Jesus is needed.

If you believe that you need to do good works as a part of being saved, you are not believing "IN" Jesus Christ. You are believing that he doesn't have the power to save you without good works.

### **""Ephesians 2:8-10**

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.""

## **Salvation = Being Saved from Hell = Not of Works**

Salvation is not of works. This means you are saved by good works at all. Good works do not keep your salvation. Good works do not play any part of being saved and going to heaven.

We should do good works. If you are saved, you were only saved by faith in Jesus Christ. In that moment, you were saved. And it didn't take any good works to save your soul from sin. It took

the good work of Jesus Christ. It took his life. Why? Because he is perfect. He can save you from your sins. He isn't a sinner. We are sinners, and we cannot save ourselves through our works.

With that said, let's take a close look at James Chapter 2 that discusses Abraham being justified by works.

And keep in mind that false preachers will attempt to convince you that your good works will save you from hell. They will say that you must get baptized in water, repent of sin, pray every night, ask forgiveness every time you sin, give tithes and offerings, come to church, and many other good works. These are good works that you can do.

But there is no amount of good works you can do that will forgive your soul of the sin that you have committed. Remember that. Only Jesus is the payment for sin. If you have to pay for your own sin, the only way to do that is to be sent to hell when you die. That is your payment for sin.

### **Payment for Sin is Not Good Works**

"For the wages of sin is death. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." Since you don't want to end up in hell, what must you do to be saved?

#### **""Acts 16:30-31**

And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? 31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.""

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. Believe, believe, believe. Believe means to trust in Jesus alone. Put it all on Jesus to save you. Put your faith "IN" Jesus for salvation. That's it. "And thou shalt be saved." You can't twist that. You can't change that.

Now, let's look at James Chapter 2 very closely.

#### **""James 2:21-26**

Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? 22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? 23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. 24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. 25 Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? 26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.""

Now, look, the Book of James is a more advanced book. It is written to people who already know they are saved by God's grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Bible clearly says Abraham was justified by his works. Verse 24 says, "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."

So, what does this mean? Does this mean you are justified for heaven by your good works? There are numerous Scriptures in the Bible that tell us we are not saved from our sins by doing good works. We look closely at the Scriptures. Look at the first verse there.

## **Abraham Was Justified by His Works**

"Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?" So we go to those Scriptures. That story is located in Genesis Chapter 22.

In that chapter, God tempted or tested the faith of Abraham.

### **""Genesis 22:1**

And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.""

Abraham already had faith in God far prior to Genesis Chapter 22. Remember, we are talking about Abraham being justified by his works. God did tempt Abraham or test the faith of Abraham. God tests our faith. God tempts us but not with sin. God isn't going to tempt you to sin. But God does try your faith in him. And this is what he is doing to Abraham.

Remember, the story of Abraham offering his son Isaac upon the altar is in Genesis Chapter 22.

### **""Genesis 15:6**

And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.""

So, in Genesis Chapter 15, Abraham has already believed. He is already saved forever without good works. He was saved far prior to Genesis Chapter 22. You can see it right there in Genesis Chapter 15, and 15 is before 22.

## **Abraham Does a Good Work Though His Faith**

So, in Genesis Chapter 22, God tells Abraham to take his only son Isaac and offer him for a burnt offering. Abraham does what God commands him.

### **""Genesis 22:10-12**

And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. 11 And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. 12 And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.""

The Bible, in James Chapter 2, is saying that because of this work of Abraham, Abraham was justified. The Bible tells us why Abraham did this good work.

**""Hebrews 11:17-19**

By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, 18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: 19 Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure. ""

Abraham offered Isaac because he had faith. "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac." Why? He knew, he believed, he trusted, he had faith that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead.

## **Abraham Trusted God and Feared God**

Because of the great faith of Abraham, he trusted God and did as he asked him to do. God knew that Abraham feared God. He did what God commanded him to do. After Abraham used his faith to do this work, the Bible says this in Genesis Chapter 22:

**""Genesis 22:15-18**

And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, 16 And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: 17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; 18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice. ""

Because Abraham did this work, what happened there? Verse 17 says, "That in blessing I will bless thee." Because Abraham did this good work, he will be blessed. He wasn't saved from all his sins at that moment because he did a good work. He was already saved.

But this good work that he did by obeying God, "Because thou hast obeyed my voice," led to a blessing from God. This is a reward from God that Abraham earned by doing good works. This is how it works. You're saved by putting all your faith in Jesus Christ. At the moment you believe in the Lord, he gives you the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. You're saved forever.

Then, you will be tested by God in your life. For example, a small test of your faith might be coming to church. When you were thinking about coming to church, someone might have said, "You don't need to come to church." But you fought through that and you're here now.

## **Obey God and Do What He Commands**

God commands us to not forsake the assembling of ourselves together. There are nine books of the Bible written to specific churches. God wants you in a good church. When you go through those temptations to not come to church, God rewards you just like Abraham.

Abraham's test was much greater than the test of coming to church. Abraham passed. That test was not for the salvation of his soul. Abraham was justified by his works to be the father of people with faith. Abraham was justified by his works for that reward God was giving to him. That was reward. A reward is earned.

A gift is not earned. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Gift of God. You don't work for a gift, by definition, or it isn't a gift. Abraham was justified by his works for a reward from God. For a blessing from God. That is exactly what the Bible is teaching in James Chapter 2.

**""James 2:21-23**

Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? 22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? 23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.""

This is logical. God gave us logical brains. Verse 23 right there is a quote from Genesis Chapter 15. The first verse there speaks of Genesis Chapter 22. In Genesis Chapter 15, Abraham believed God's promise, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness. He didn't do a good work there. He simply believed God's promise. And he was called the friend of God.

## **Abraham Was Saved Far Earlier Than Genesis Chapter 22**

Then, in Genesis Chapter 22, an already saved man, Abraham, is tested by God. Abraham does what God commands him to do. This is a good work. And Abraham is justified for his blessing from God because he obeyed God and did that good work.

Abraham was justified by his works for that blessing. Abraham was justified to be written about in the Bible as a man who had great faith.

If Abraham wouldn't have offered his son upon the altar, he wouldn't have passed that test. He wouldn't have received that blessing. He wouldn't have been justified by his works for that blessing or reward from God. And Abraham wouldn't be in the Bible. He wouldn't be called the father of many nations.

But, would Abraham still have went to heaven? Yes, he would have. He was already saved through believing in the Lord. With that said, I want to show you Romans Chapter 4. If Abraham were justified by his works to get to heaven, the Scriptures in Romans Chapter 4 wouldn't be there. But they are there. Watch this closely.

**""Romans 4:1-5**

What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? 2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. 3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. 4 Now to

him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. 5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.""

## **Abraham Wasn't Justified For Heaven by His Good Works**

"If Abraham were justified by his works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God." You can't take all your works that you've done in your life and glory before God. If all your works were displayed for you to see, if you were reminded of all the works you've done in your life, you wouldn't want to attempt to glory before God.

Isaiah 64:6 says: "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." In this filthy flesh of ours, we all sin every day. It's not good. We should be ashamed. We definitely wouldn't try to glory before God Almighty. He knows everything that we do and have done.

He knows our thoughts. He knows that we aren't good. Romans 3:10 says: "As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one." Abraham was sinner. You can read about him. Romans 3:23 says: "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Ecclesiastes 7:20 says: "For there is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." Jesus said, "There is none good but one, that is, God."

Abraham is not justified for heaven by his works. We can't take the word justified and act like it's always talking about being justified for heaven. James Chapter 2 isn't talking about Abraham being justified for heaven. Romans Chapter 4 is talking about being justified from all your sins.

## **You Can Be Justified or Seen Worthy for Many Things**

You can be justified or seen as worthy for many different things. For example, when a team wins the Super Bowl, they are justified for that reward because they played the game. They fought the fight. They were better than the other team.

If a reward is given, the person receiving the reward is seen as worthy to receive that reward because they did something good to receive that reward.

Heaven is a free gift that Jesus Christ paid for. We are only justified to receive the free gift by believing in the finished work of Jesus Christ. God says so. Not of our own goodness. Not of the works that we do. It has nothing to do with our works.

James 2:10 says, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." We are guilty of breaking God's laws. There is no reward for that. There is a penalty. We did wrong. We did evil. The penalty is death and hell. We aren't good enough to be rewarded heaven. Heaven is free to us. Everlasting life is free to us. Jesus paid for it. You can't.

Abraham can't glory before God because of his works. Abraham would tell you that. Abraham was a wise man. Instead of believing in his works, he believed God. And God saved him. You don't see Abraham, in the Bible, telling God about his great works that he did in offering Isaac his son.

## **Working for Salvation = You Are In Debt**

Verse 4 right there says, "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." If you want to work for heaven and receive your reward of heaven, it will never happen. If you want to do any amount of good works, such as repenting of sin or stopping sin, to earn heaven, you are in debt. You'll owe the debt. What is that debt? Death and hell. You'll pay it.

Verse 4 says so. Don't be foolish and try to pay for your sins by doing good works. You have to believe that Jesus paid for all your sins: past, present, and future. That means there's no sin you can do that Jesus didn't already pay for.

Verse 5 says, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Jesus justifies you for heaven. He makes you righteous. You can only enter heaven if you are made righteous by Jesus Christ. Your good works don't make you righteous. Your good works do not forgive your sin. "His faith is counted for righteousness."

### **""Romans 4:6-8**

Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, 7 Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. 8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.""

God imputes righteousness without works. Salvation is NOT OF WORKS. Hey, if you have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ alone, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Why? Because of the faith you have in Jesus Christ.

## **You Are Saved Without Works**

### **""Romans 4:9-11**

Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. 10 How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. 11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: ""

Romans Chapter 4 absolutely crushes a false preacher who attempts to say that James Chapter 2 is saying you must have good works to get to heaven. No, Abraham was justified for the blessing God gave him because Abraham did good works because of his faith in God. Abraham was justified by his works, but that justification was not for the forgiveness of sins.

Abraham was already forgiven of all his sins. He was a saved man, for sure, at Genesis Chapter 15. And notice what this Scripture says. "Faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness." Because of Abraham's faith, God made Abraham righteous for heaven. All his sins were no longer imputed unto Abraham. He received the remission of sins by faith.

Verse 10 says, "How was it then reckoned?" When was Abraham saved from his sins? The Bible asks the question: "When he was in circumcision or in uncircumcision?" Was it when he was circumcised or before he was circumcised? The Bible clearly says it was before he was circumcised. It says, "Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision."

### **Abraham Had Faith Before He Was Circumcised**

Verse 11 says, "A seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised."

Let's see when Abraham believed, when he was circumcised, and when he offered Isaac upon the altar. Here's a table I put together:

<b>Genesis Chapter</b>	<b>Abraham's Age</b>	<b>Context</b>
12	75	Departed out of Haran
15		Abram believed in the Lord
16	86	Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram
17	99	Abraham circumcised
21	100	Isaac is born
22		Abraham offers Isaac

Take a close look at that table. You can find these things in the Bible for yourself. Get a King James Bible and study for yourself. It's all there for you to find. Look at that table and tell me which chapter of Genesis was Abraham circumcised. Do you see it?

In Genesis Chapter 17, Abraham was circumcised. How old was he? He was 99 years old when he was circumcised. So, the Bible tells us Abraham was already saved before he was circumcised. We look back to Genesis Chapter 15 in the table. Abraham is between 75 and 86 years old in Genesis Chapter 15. He's already saved in Genesis Chapter 15.

Abraham offers Isaac sometime after Abraham is 100 years old. Isaac is born when Abraham is 100 years old. Isaac was walking and talking in Genesis Chapter 22. Abraham has already been saved for approximately 20 plus years when he offered Isaac upon the altar.

The Bible says so. Abraham's works didn't justify him for heaven. His faith was being tested. That was great test of faith. Abraham passed it. The first step is to be saved. Then you need to grow your faith by obeying God. You're already saved. Now pass the tests that are coming. Get to church. Read your Bible. Study your Bible. Learn the Bible. Apply these things to your life.



## Take This Knowledge to James Chapter 2

Now that you see what James Chapter 2 means, let's read the last few verses.

### ""James 2:24-26

Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. 25 Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? 26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.""

A man is justified by his works. For example, my works of preaching and teaching, justify me to you. You can see that I use the Bible. I go by what the Bible says. You see my works. Many of you know that I go out and preach the Gospel. I've given you the Gospel. You see my works. And that justifies me to you. You know that I'm trying hard for God. You know that I'm working hard for God.

But we all know that none of those works that I do get me to heaven. Why? Because I'm a sinner just like you. I've sinned. I sin every day. It's not okay. My body is dying. But my soul is saved by the Lord Jesus Christ. By Jesus. Not by me. By Jesus alone.

Rahab received the messengers from God. Her reward for doing that good work through the faith she already had was her and her family was physically saved from death. They got to live.

### ""Joshua 6:17

And the city shall be accursed, even it, and all that are therein, to the LORD: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent.""

## Rahab's Reward for Her Work Was Physical Salvation

They weren't killed when the attack took place. That was her reward for the work she did. She was justified to those messengers when she helped them. For example, when you come to church, pay attention, learn, and start applying what you learn in your life, I can see that.

That justifies you to me. When you go out soul winning with us, that justifies you to me. I can see your works. It's a great thing. And you encourage me. And I need that too. I'm just a man. I need prayer. I need encouragement. When you do good, that encourages me. That helps me.

### ""James 2:26

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.""

You have a body, a spirit within you, and a soul. The spirit is the life the Bible says. I can see that you are alive because you are moving. I know you have a spirit within you. You're animated. You're alive.

If the spirit leaves your body, your body dies. Your body won't be doing anything good without the spirit. Same thing. If you have faith in Jesus, you've already been saved. But if you won't do anything good with that faith, your faith is dead. It's not helping anyone. It's not profiting anyone.

If Rahab wouldn't have showed her faith through that good work she did, her and her family would have died. Rahab still would have went to heaven because she already had faith in God. She had faith. Saved. But she showed that faith and saved her life and the life of her family.

## **Show Your Faith Through Your Good Works**

Hey, it's important that you show your faith through your works. It's highly, highly important. My goal is for all of you to show that faith. Do good works. Go with us and preach the Gospel. See how we do it. And then you can learn to do it too. You can start preaching the Gospel.

Life is short. Let's use it for good. And then when you get to heaven, you'll have a huge pile of treasure awaiting. Why? Because God rewards you for the good work you do. Lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven.

For example, when Shelia went soul winning with us. She received rewards in heaven. When she gets to heaven, those rewards will be waiting. And I'm happy for her. She's trying. She's working. She's faithful to come to church. God sees your faith. God sees your works.

"Seest thou how faith wrought WITH HIS WORKS, and by works was faith made perfect." Keep working on your faith by doing good works. Your faith increases with good works. A little drop of faith saved you, but don't stop there. Increase your faith.

Please join us in doing good work. I need you here. Let's do these works together. Let's change things for the good.

Let's pray.