



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Living Faith

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The Epistle of James' (AD 45-50) likely author was James, the half-brother of Jesus Christ, the leader of the Jerusalem church, the leader of the Council of Jerusalem and a humble man. While James is addressing the twelve tribes that had scattered to all parts of the world and attempts to be encouraging to the believing Jews who were struggling with trials and tribulations, he confronts the issue of the testing and fruit of a faithful Christian's walk and the wise Godly righteous reactions of him when grounded in total faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. James provides an OT example of Abraham's tested and living faith. (James 2: 21-26 NASB)

Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS," and he was called the friend of God. You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone. (cf. 2:21-24)

Abraham's faith resulted in good works. James is providing an OT example and an identification of living faith known to the Jewish believers; that living faith and being made righteous will result in good works designed to honor and glorify God and be an example to others. Abraham offered yet, did not complete, the offering of his son, Isaac; God provided a substitute sacrifice (Ge 22:1-14). Abraham's faith "was perfected", completed, or was brought to maturity through his obedience to God's will and testing. James is not discussing salvation but rather an example of testing, obedience and good works as a result of salvation through God's grace and mercy. James (1:1) like Paul (Rm 1:1) was a bond-servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

James is saying that people can only witness the faith of believers by observation of their works; good works will justify believer's faith before people, but not before God (Rm 4:2). God reckoned to Abraham righteousness. Abraham was justified before God by faith and justified before man by works. James presents an additional example of a living faith through an unlikely person.

In the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? (cf. 2:25)

Rahab's, the harlot, faith resulted in good works. James provides two examples of seemingly opposite individuals to illustrate living faith. Abraham was a Jew, a male and considered a good man while Rahab was a gentile, a woman and considered a sinful woman; yet both willing risk all that was considered important to serve and be faithful to the test and task that God placed upon them. Like Abraham, Rahab was justified before God by faith (Jos 2:11) and justified before man by her works.

For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead. (cf.2:26)

A Spirit-filled believer produces good works. James is saying that faith that does not lead to good works is a dead and not saving faith. After salvation, new birth, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, believers are called into a living faith and good works that serve, honor and glorify God and become an example (justification) to others of the faith that only God can see.

For Your Consideration:

- What is most important in your life?
- Does the money and time you spend reflect that God is first in your life?
- Do you have a living faith that results in good works which serve God and are a witness to others?

BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS: WEDNESDAYS (SESSION OR HEARING DAYS) AT 7:30AM, STATEHOUSE ROOM 44

STATE STAFF AND LOBBYISTS: WEDNESDAYS AT 12:10PM, STATEHOUSE ROOM 44