

Faith Made Complete

by Aaron Hurst

The sermon explores the relationship between faith and works, emphasizing that true faith is demonstrated through actions and impartiality towards others.

Duration: 1:19:01

Scripture: Deuteronomy 8:3, Joshua 24:15, Matthew 4:4, Matthew 22:39, James 1:27 - 2:1, James 2:14-26

Topics: "Faith"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of faith and obedience in the Christian life. He highlights the example of the Israelites who did not enter the promised land due to their unbelief. The preacher encourages the congregation to trust in God's purpose for their lives and to be diligent in doing good works. He also emphasizes the need for impartiality in treating others and obedience to the whole counsel of God. The sermon concludes with the reminder that true faith is evidenced by the fruit it produces in a person's life.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

This message is not copyrighted and is not to be bought or sold. You are welcome to make copies for your friends and neighbors. If you would like additional messages, please go to our website for a complete listing at www.charityministries.org. If you would like a catalog of other sermons, please call 1-800-227-7902 or write to Charity Ministries, 400 West Main Street, Suite 1, EFRA, PA 17522.

These messages are offered to all without charge by the free will offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Greetings in Jesus' name.

Is that your prayer this morning? I need thee, Lord. Every hour, I need thee, Lord. Well, I think, uh, Malin must have been reading my notes.

I've begun a book study in the book of James and shared from chapter one a couple of weeks back already now. I felt clear in my heart to continue with chapter two this morning. I invite you to open your Bible to James 2. I also greet all you brothers and sisters in Christ this morning.

Visitors, all that are here today, God bless you. As you're turning there to the book of James, chapter two, some of the history of this book, if you study it, seems there was a bit of controversy in the beginning of the early days of the early church and considering where this book falls into the scope of God's grand scheme of salvation by grace through faith. Where does the book of James fall into place? Some even went so far as to proclaim that it is a book of straw.

I believe Luther said that because it seems, depending how you look at it, to contradict Romans where God is teaching that by faith, Abraham was justified. And now here, the book of James says, by his works he was justified. But I believe this morning that as we look at Scripture and we hold up the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith next to a faith that is an obedient, living, working faith, we'll see there is no contradiction at all.

But rather, that it's looking at two different angles at the same beautiful diamond of the truth of God. This chapter here in chapter two is made up evidently or mainly of three parts. Number one is the duty of impartiality in treatment of our brothers and sisters in Christ or shall I say, people in general.

I don't believe it just applies to brothers and sisters in Christ, but rather that we have a heart that is impartial. Number two, we see that we are to be yielding in obedience to the whole law of Christ. Now, some people don't like that word either.

The law of Christ. The whole counsel of God. We are to be yielding in obedience to the whole counsel of God.

And then number three is the subject of justification, showing us that faith and works, they are not in contradiction, but rather they go hand in hand and a man cannot say that he has saving faith if he has not the evidence of the fruit of that saving faith in his life. If his faith is real, it will be seen. It will be manifest.

Let's begin now with James chapter two. Let's stand together and read the entire chapter. My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory with respect of persons.

For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring in goodly apparel and there come also a poor man in vile raiment. And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing and say unto him, sit thou here in a good place and say to the poor, stand thou there or sit here under my footstool. Are ye not then partial in yourselves and are become judges of evil thoughts? Hearken, my beloved brethren.

Has not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which he has promised to them that love him? But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you and draw you before the judgment seats? Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by which ye are called? If ye fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well. But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

For whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, do not commit adultery, said also, do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

So speak ye and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. For he shall have judgment without mercy that has showed no mercy. And mercy rejoices against judgment.

What does it profit, my brethren, though a man say he have faith and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food and one of you say unto them, depart in peace, be warmed and filled, notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what does it profit? Even so faith, if it has not works, is dead being alone. Yea, a man may say, thou has faith and I have works. Show me thy faith without thy works and I will show thee my faith by my works.

Thou believest there is one God, thou doest well. The devils also believe and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead.

Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he had offered up Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works and by works was faith made perfect? 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. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified and not by faith only.

Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works when she had received the messengers and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. Let's pray. Father we come in Jesus name.

We thank you for thy holy word. We thank you for thy holy word. Breathed out from God.

Inspired. Father today we ask Lord that you would breathe out upon us by your spirit Lord. Father that you would quicken this word to our hearts God.

Father I pray that you would have mercy upon me your servant Lord. Grant unto me utterance Lord. Father I do not want to add to the word or distract from it God.

But Lord just to preach the word in faithfulness and truth. Oh God I pray that you would grant us ears to hear what the spirit of Christ saith to the church at Charity Christian Fellowship and to me as an individual. Oh Lord we trust you for these things in Jesus name.

Amen. You may be seated. So it's Sunday morning and we're coming to church and we're greeting different visitors at the back of the door and nicely dressed gentleman and his wife come in and it's easy to walk up to them and welcome them and ask them where they're from and have some conversation.

They're modest. They look like they could fit right in. We say oh just make yourself at home.

Worship the Lord with us this morning. We're glad you came. More visitors come in the door and here comes one dressed very modestly, very plainly.

Looks very nice. Everything in order to a tee and maybe we even greet them with a kiss of peace and say oh God bless you. Welcome.

Come. Allow the ushers to give you a seat and as we're about to turn and take our place in the congregation in comes another visitor. Not very modest.

Not very refined and orderly. Don't quite look like they fit in with us. Maybe we just as soon wouldn't meet them and we walk away quickly.

The situation is a bit uncomfortable. I'm not quite sure how to relate. It looks like maybe they need a bath.

The children's faces are a little bit dirty. Their clothing are quite wrinkled. They're not all done up just the way we are.

Maybe they even smell a little bit. Are they left standing alone? Wondering? It looks like the men sit over here and the ladies sit over there. Never been in a church like this.

Finally an usher comes and tells them you're welcome to be seated here in the back. You can just sit down back here. I don't think someone coming in to our midst dressed very sharply, smartly with the latest fashion and a gold ring that we would do that.

I don't think so. But what about showing partiality to the one who comes in with everything in order modestly clothed. She even has a head covering.

He's even wearing a plain suit. Surely, he's one of us. She's one of us.

Come in. Come, take a seat in the front. Come right up with us versus someone who comes in.

And they're seeking for truth. They may have heard a tape but they don't have it all together. She might even have slacks on and she's not veiled.

Maybe the man from his past evil sinful life has a tattoo or some scars. He doesn't know we're supposed to button the top button. He doesn't know you're supposed to have a white shirt on.

And he comes with a t-shirt and he comes just as he is but he may be full of sincerity and a hungering heart after God. Oh, that God would lay His finger on our hearts, on my heart. Do I, do we have respect to persons? If one come in in goodly, well-ordered attire and we look on the outward and we make a judgment and one come in in vile raiment and we make an outward judgment call.

You can sit over there or stand here or sit under my footstool. Are not, are ye not then partial in yourselves and become judges of evil thoughts? What is the motive of our heart? Are we standing in judgment, becoming critical and having wrong motives? God teaches us the rich and the poor, they're all stand on one level before God at the foot of the cross. God has His redemption among all sorts of people.

This teaches us that we should be very aware and sensitive that we do not honor or bestow honor unduly or lavishly upon those that are prosperous and well-to-do and then defy the poor man. Are we more influenced than we realize? Has our thinking been more shaped and molded than we realize by the prosperity gospel? That if you're walking with God, He'll bless your finances and you'll be prosperous. Is there partiality in my heart? Is there prejudice in my heart? Do I judge by outward appearance? Do I have evil thoughts toward a true child of God who is seeking after the Lord? But they don't look exactly like I do.

They don't exactly practice their Christian faith like I do. And so we slot them, put them in a slot. Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He has promised to them that love Him? There are many warnings in Scriptures concerning riches.

Many warnings concerning those that would be rich. Many warnings about oppressing the poor. He says, But ye have despised the poor.

You know, they're just of lesser rank. Just put them down a little lower. After all, they have no power or influence.

They're in debts. What can they do? Oh God! Forbid! You know, this matter of partiality can come out in many ways. It takes a lot of finances to take care of the day-to-day needs of a congregation and medical bills and properties and location for churches and missions.

Is there any partiality toward those with financial means? Those who are able to give a lot in the offering? Favoritism. We have our favorites. You know? All that God would convict us.

Am I partial? Do I have favorites? Do I show favor? I don't share this this morning because I believe we are utterly failing. But I share it because it's in the Word of God. And I believe it does us well to take it right as it comes.

You know, man shall not live by bread alone or promises alone, but by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of God. So that gave me some comfort and encouragement. Let's just take it as it comes.

Let's just go down through the verses and look at them for face value of what God is saying. You know, on the matter of partiality, I just need to share a few more things I feel the Lord is laid on my heart. We're a family church.

We all have our children. We're a homeschooling church. We homeschool.

Are we partial toward families and cannot stretch ourselves to the singles among us? Do the singles feel a little bit left out in this church of families? Does the family that doesn't homeschool feel a little bit second rate under our gaze because they're not able to do it? Or they just haven't arrived yet? Is there partiality among us? Oh, that we could become like Christ with a true heart that loves and accepts people for where they are and who they are without having to try to stuff them in a certain mold that maybe God is not trying to put them into yet. Or maybe not putting them into. You might say, Brother Aaron, I don't know where you're going with this message.

Yes, sit up. Take notice. The Bible says that those that sit shall judge while one prophesies that the other shall judge.

Let us do that in our congregation. He says very clearly that the rich, it's the rich often, rather, he says, verse 6, do not rich men oppress you and draw you before the judgment seats and do not be blaspheming that worthy name by which ye are called. Is that speaking to Christians? Prophetic Christians maybe? Or non-Christians? You know, a person that doesn't have anything, generally speaking, a beggar, you know, they're not that quick to demand their own rights and bring you to justice and judgment.

Often it's rich men who draw people into the judgment and want to exact everything out of them. Those with status. And of course, verse 7 says, they blaspheme the worthy name by which ye are called.

Surely that's not speaking of Christians. Or prophetic Christians. Or is it? But let us go on.

Verse 8, if ye fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well. But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin and are convinced of the law as transgressors. You know, brothers, chapter 2 of James began out, my brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, with respect to persons.

Now he says, in verse 9, but if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin. You know, it's no little matter with God. We might just sort of say, oh well, you know, it's my preference or I didn't feel comfortable or I

didn't know how to relate.

And you know, there may be some room for some of those things. And yet, if we call judgment, remember, the judgment that we judge with, therewith we shall be judged. So we sort of isolate ourselves and we're the in group and they're the out group.

God forbid, that such a thing should exist. If you have respect to persons, if you show prejudice, if you're partial, you commit sin. And I'd like to just enlarge our hearts a little this morning.

Does that mean just here at Charity Christian Fellowship? Or does it mean beyond these walls? You know that man that you work with, who has a testimony of saving faith and loving the Lord Jesus, but he doesn't practice everything just the way we do. Do you have to put a dividing line there and set up a wall and judge him? Is there wrongs on the ladder with God? And of course we think, well I'm getting pretty close to the top of the ladder. And once this person sees and their eyes are open, then, well there may be some truth to some of that, but many times it's our puffed up vain imagination of a man esteeming himself higher than others and it's pride.

Before God, that servant of God stands or follows, why do you judge another man's servant? Why do you make yourself a judge? And become partaker of evil deeds and doings and thoughts? Why do you take that religious group and slot the whole group into one box? All of them. Why do we do that? To make ourselves look good? Is there no one saved out of that group? Out of that denomination? Is there no one there who loves Jesus and knows what it means to walk with God and have communion and fellowship with God? Do you think there's no one? Should we slot the entire group as lost and legalists and traditionalists or as resting the Scriptures and taking liberty as an occasion to the flesh and to just go out and live without restraint unto God? You know the two extremes. Did I make it clear? You know? The religious setting where it's a heavy emphasis on outward appearance and doing all of these right things and then that other extreme where I'm saved by grace and works don't matter.

But before we slot them all in one box or another, let us look with enlightened hearts and eyes at those around us and let us look at ourselves with enlightened hearts and eyes that who am I but for the grace of God. By the grace of God, I am what I am. And what the Lord has wrought in my heart, what He has shown in my life, what He has shown me in the Scriptures, thereby I'm following after and pressing in.

You know, to those who much is given, much will be required. If you have respect to persons, ye commit sin and are convinced of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art becoming transgressor of the law. You know, if you're looking to be justified by the law and you break one point, guilty of the whole thing, guilty of all.

Verse 12, So speak ye and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. For he shall have judgment without mercy that has showed no mercy. And mercy rejoices against judgment.

You know, we don't want an error on any side, do we? We don't want an error on the side of law and being too harsh. But we don't want an error on the side of grace and say, Well, it doesn't matter if there's a thus say of the Lord in the Scriptures. I think of what Jesus told the Pharisees when he said, you know, they were so careful about exacting the law.

And he said, you know, you should go and show mercy. You should go and learn what it means to be merciful and show mercy. He shall have judgment without mercy that has showed no mercy.

Pretty strong words. And mercy rejoices against judgment. Or mercy glorious against judgment.

I like that. Mercy, the mercy of God and the grace of God, it triumphs over judgment where we should have been judged for our sins and our deeds. Mercy comes in and we receive mercy and forgiveness through the blood of Jesus.

Let's go on in verse 14. What does it profit, my brethren, though a man say he has faith and have not works? Can faith save him? And this will be answered down through to the rest of the chapter here through verse 26. What does it profit, my brethren, though a man say, catch that word, though a man say he has faith and have not works? Can faith save him? Then he goes on to give us an illustration or a practical example to the answer to the question.

And that is, if a brother or a sister be naked and destitute of daily food and one of you say unto them, depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled, notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what does it profit? Now, he gives us a very down to earth example that we can all identify with. So, someone is destitute of daily food and clothing. And so we greet them and we say to them, Oh, God bless you.

Be warmed. Be filled. And send them on their way without giving to provide for the need Is that? Is that faith in action? Is that charity? Is that love? Is that giving? Does that help them anything? And of course, the answer is, what does it profit? It doesn't profit.

It does not profit. It doesn't meet the need. Even so faith, if it has not works, is dead being alone.

If a man say he have faith and have not works, can faith save him? Can it? It's a question. Verse 18, Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith and I have works. Show me thy faith without thy works and I will show thee my faith by my works.

So, he's stating very clearly. You know, the man who says he has faith, well, where is the evidence? Is there anything tangible here? Or is it just some theology that floats around up here in the air and there's no practical outworking? Is it possible that a man can show his faith without any works or deeds? Rather he says, I will show thee my faith by my works. You know, I believe all this is addressing this whole matter which we see a lot today of the error of resting in a bare profession of Christian faith without a holy, obedient lifestyle to show what they profess as being real.

Verse 19 says, Thou believest that there is one God, thou doest well. The devils also believe and tremble. You know, the scriptures tell us in Titus that there is those who profess that they know God but in works they deny Him.

So, they have this profession that they know God and then they have faith in God but in works they deny Him, being abominable and disobedient and unto every good reprobate. It's a little bit like Jesus when He was teaching and He said that not everyone that says Lord, Lord shall enter into the kingdom but he that doeth the will of my Father. He that obeys.

And then He gives that illustration of a wise man who built his house upon the rock and the foolish man who built his house upon the sand. And many times people think, well, the rock is the profession of faith in

Christ Jesus. But rather, that account clearly demonstrates that He who heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will show you who He's like.

He's like a man who built his house on the rock that obeys. The one who does not obey is like the man who built his house on the sand and he walks away and he forgets. He forgets what he heard.

He doesn't apply it. He doesn't put it to practice. And so his faith is not going to stand.

When the winds come and beat upon that house it's going to fall if it's built upon the sand. Here in verse 19 He says, Thou believest that there is one God. Thou doest well.

So far, so good. You're not an atheist. You're not an idolater who believes there's many gods and many ways to God.

You believe there's one God, one Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It's good. However, He says, the devils also believe and tremble.

And I believe that's speaking of that the devils also believe the fact that there is one God. They know it to be true. And they believe it so strongly that they tremble.

I believe in the German translation it says, sie zittern, meaning they shake. So again, if someone is just consoling themselves with a bare assent to the articles of the faith and saying, well, I believe that there's a God, well, so does the devil and so do his demons. If there's those that can just rehearse the creed of the faith, but not yielding themselves up to God and to love Him and to delight in Him and to serve Him and to obey Him, it's an empty faith.

It's a vain faith. He goes on to say, verse 20, But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead. Now, lest you're getting confused here this morning, saving faith, which is taught by Paul in Romans, as a believing God and a working faith, they flow together perfectly.

We are not saved by our works. But now we will look at a very clear picture in the Bible that shows that a faith that is real works. It does.

Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he had offered up Isaac his son upon the altar? Okay, good question. So, when was Abraham justified? How was he justified? How was it that God saw Abraham's faith? The Bible very clearly says that Abraham believed God and it was a covenant for righteousness. Now, if Abraham believed God, it moved him to action.

He did not stay sitting in his tent and say, well, God gave me a word and I believe it. And then just stay sitting there and not get up on the morrow, early in the morning, saddle the donkey, take his son, take a couple servants, take some wood, take all the preparations and head for the mountain where God told him to go. See, if Abraham would have sat there, it would have proved he did not believe.

He did not believe. Because he would not obey. In fact, what Abraham did, it tells us that he truly believed.

It was the evidence that he truly believed because God Himself said in Genesis 22 that because thou hast done this thing and hast not withheld thy son, thy only son, I am going to bless you. Blessing I will bless you. So, see, Abraham believed.

And his believing faith acted. And he was justified by his works of what he did. But he believed first.

Don't get this backwards. Don't get this confused. He believed God first.

And because he believed, he acted. And so faith, can faith save a man? If a man say I have faith, can it save him? That question is asked, I believe, three times in this chapter. Can faith save him? If a man have not works.

Thus the faith of Abraham was a working faith. It wrought with his works and by works was made perfect. Abraham believed God and he acted upon it.

God was so pleased with Abraham and his obedience. He calls him the friend of God. Isn't that wonderful? Verse 24, So you see then, that by works a man is justified and not by faith only.

This message needs to be hurled at forth in our day. Because there are many professors who profess the creed and look back to something that happened when they were a very young person. And it doesn't matter whether they were young or old so much.

But they look at having accepted the Lord Jesus and believed in him as my savior. So now, therefore, I'm saved. And as far as faith, as far as any good works, well, it'll maybe add to my rewards in heaven.

But works, nothing to do with my salvation. It doesn't matter if you can't see my faith. I have it in my heart, I believe it.

And God knows it happened back there 23 years ago, so it's all settled. Long ago. But oh, what a rude awakening because it says in Revelation that everyone shall be judged by their works.

Doesn't say by their faith. Doesn't say by what they profess. It says they shall all be judged according to their works.

And a faith that is alive produces works. As Brother Malin shared this morning, we have been created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God has ordained that we should walk in them. So it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure, working out his purposes in you.

Faith, that is real faith, it's not just a bare opinion or a profession. But it's a faith that believes and obeys the gospel. Now we see another example here.

Likewise, verse 25, was not Rahab the harlot justified by works when she had received the messengers and sent them out another way? Gives that beautiful story of Rahab. She believed God. She heard of the God of Israel and what he was doing.

And when those spies came to her house, she was willing to turn her whole life over to the hands of the almighty God of Israel and go against her own nation and people and believe God and hang a scarlet cord out the window and hide those spies if they would have been caught. What would have happened to her? But she hid them under that flax and they couldn't find them and she sent them out another way. She had faith.

She's a beautiful example of the mercy of God reaching down to all manner of society. Faithful Abraham, patriarch, a harlot in a sin city, believing God, letting down that scarlet cord and she did not perish with the rest. Isn't that beautiful? Rahab, the harlot.

She discarded all her former acquaintances. She changed her whole course of life. Hanging out that scarlet cord was a proof and evidence of her faith.

You know, and even after she was justified and saved, she's remembered as Rahab, the harlot. Not so much, I believe, to dishonor her, but to glorify the rich grace and mercy of God. That such were some of you.

The harlots are going to the kingdom before the self-righteous, Jesus said. What a mighty God we serve. And then he draws the conclusion.

I need to draw to a close here. Verse 26, For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. Get a dead faith? Or a living faith? Is your faith working? Are you tilling that plot of ground? Is it producing fruit? You know, this is quite a conclusion.

A dead body, so faith without works is dead. You know, a dead body has no beauty. It has no action.

It has no response. It's cold. It's lifeless.

It's dead. It's repulsive. You wouldn't want to crawl in with that dead body.

Pardon me for even saying it. It's loathsome. Isn't that how God looks at? Lord! Lord! Lord! But no righteous deeds follow.

God says three times, faith without works is dead. Faith without works would have no more claim to bring true righteousness than a dead body. As without a soul, would a person or a body be regarded as a living man? You wouldn't regard a dead body as a living man.

So, faith that claims to be faith, that saith faith has not works, is any more to be called faith than a body that's cold and dead. Let's kneel together in prayer. Father, O God, have mercy upon us, Lord.

Show us our true state, God. Partiality. Respect to persons.

O God, prejudice, Lord. A saith faith that doesn't act. Father, many other examples are in the Scriptures of faith.

In Hebrews chapter 11. Moses. His faith caused him to lay aside the treasures of Egypt for the greater riches in Christ.

Noah built an ark. He was a preacher of righteousness. Abel offered up an excellent sacrifice.

Sarah received strength to conceive seed. On and on we could go. Father, grant us Thy grace, Lord, that we may be a congregation that has a living faith.

An obedient faith. Why were we saved? To show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. That people may see Your good works and glorify Your Father which is in Heaven.

O Lord, let us not be afraid to do good works. Let us be careful to maintain good works as the Scriptures say it. And be unashamed.

As for me and my house, we shall serve the Lord. We shall walk in obedience to the Scripture as we know and understand. And Lord, increase our enlightenment and understanding where we do not know and do not see.

O God, that our religion may be pure and undefiled. Visiting the fathers and widows in their affliction and keeping oneself unspotted from the world. O Lord, thank You for Your Word.

We receive it. It's Your Word to us. Bless this congregation.

I ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, praise the Lord.

The Lord definitely has been speaking to us today and seeing the Lord use both those messages and a common theme. You know, the book of James, it reminds me of something a drill sergeant said the first day of basic training. He said, look around.

See all those people there with you? They're not all going to be there at the end. Some are saying this. Some are saying that.

Some have got the army t-shirt on. Some of this. But look around.

Some of them are not going to... It's not real. They're going to pass out or they're going to go this way or that. They're not going to make it.

They're not going to be there. The book of James hits us with reality. It takes us out of a fantasy faith, a demonic faith as Wesley calls it there in speaking about those demons.

It talks about a reality. It doesn't speak of a faith that comes from just joining a church or reciting a creed. Here, a creed is even mentioned.

A creed is the things that we believe. Some churches call themselves a creedal church where we believe a faith by accepting a creed. This is what the demons have.

And they tremble. So it's a faith that is real. It's a faith that works.

Amen. A faith that works. Again, back in that Ezekiel passage, he said that he'd take that heart of stone out and put in a heart of flesh.

And I will write my laws and my statutes upon your heart and I will cause you to walk in them. The question this morning is are you born again? Has that happened? Has God taken out that heart of stone and put in a heart of flesh and is working now within you? James also encourages us. He's speaking to the believers as Brother Aaron told us.

And so he's taking us further on in our walk in that garden of salvation that He's given us. Hallelujah. In that plot of land.

Are we afraid of works? It was talked about today. Some are afraid of works. Well, I don't want to be called a Pharisee.

I don't want to be called this. You know, it's funny, in James there, in both chapter 1 and chapter 2, he twice mentions the law of liberty. What was a bird created to do? What was a fish created to do? Does a fish have liberty in the sky? Does a bird have liberty in the ocean? You were created unto good works.

It's God working within you unto good works. In that garden. In that God wants us to walk in that law of liberty.

To be let free. To walk in holiness and godliness and sanctification. To have these things be realities in our life.

That's where we were created. To have our liberty. And it's only there that we're going to experience true liberty.

It's walking in the holiness of God. Walking by those precepts. You know, John Wesley was kicked out of every church in England for preaching salvation by faith alone.

But it was John Wesley who said those who are saved by faith should have a faith that's saving them. They should have a faith that's working in their life. They should be able to take the law and say, oh, now God's writing this standard and that standard upon my heart.

Are you blocking that? Have you fallen again into bondage? And say, I don't want to work that field. I'm afraid of that field. The Israelites didn't come into the promised land because of why? Because of why? Because of unbelief.

God has a purpose for us to do. He has something, that garden, that He wants us to be. And these are real things that He has.

He's working in our life. Amen. I was blessed richly by both messages.

He also talked about some practical things. I love expository preaching for this reason. James brought up, Brother Aaron preached this.

A lot of times we like to preach of sins of the youth. And I think we should. But these were sins of the grown-ups, weren't they? Partiality.

Covetousness. Looking at some of those things. God's pressing us on.

Now, as we see these things, and we see our need this morning, do we say, well, Brother Aaron's a law preacher and so-and-so is a grace preacher, then you're missing the whole boat. What did Paul say right after he said, so we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. Three verses of these later he says, what then? Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid.

Yea, we establish the law. This faith, this real living faith that God puts in the heart of those who are truly born again will establish the law of God. It will.

And James here now is that look-around word that says this is a reality. This is where it's real. Is it real in your life today? I bless you both brothers for sharing this word for us.

Amen. I think some of those things get brought up. Some real sins got brought up today.

And so, if we could, may we pass a microphone around and if some brother has something in their heart that you want to share or you want to bring out, then let's rise up and be able to add to that message. Alright? Who has something they want to share? Amen. I was blessed to be here today.

So the question comes again, what's the Lord saying to us, the Charity Christian Fellowship, and to all the visitors that find themselves inside the door this morning. And how can we put this to practical use? I would have a word to the parents, just kind of an add-on to the children's lesson. When you do get to that place and you do pick up that paddle, you know, just put a caution there.

What do the children sense in you? Think of Job that he says, to his friends that came to comfort him, came to correct him, he said, but this spirit that I feel coming out of you, where does it come from? And I think of this living faith, the faith that comes from the heart. You know, we talk of fruit and clothes we touch, that's okay. But the fruit of the spirit, the love, the joy, the peace, the goodness, gentleness, kindness, faith.

What do the children feel? What do you feel when you pick up that paddle? Is there a rising up in the heart? Is that pressure there? Is that, you know, that feeling of frustration there? If it is, I would just advise you to take time, take time alone, take time to pray, and search your hearts. The biggest thing is where we're at in the spirit when we do apply discipline or correction. I just want to encourage us all, may we all open our hearts, and truly I would say we as parents cannot sing that song too often.

I need Thee, Lord, I need Thee, every hour I need Thee. Amen. That's right, thank you John and Mark as well, that message fit in too.

God can give us a spanking here this morning and let us know some things that... Thank you for that also word about our child training there, George. Let's speak out quickly, we still have two testimonies we want to hear this morning too. So, raise your hand.

Shane? Yes. First of all, I just was really blessed by the message this morning. And just thinking about it from our studies in Ephesians, the invitation that God has given us to holiness, the calling to be holy before Him, I was really, really blessed with that this morning.

But I guess this morning I really feel like I need to share a confession with all you brothers here, that I've, over the past several months, since about December, I really have not been walking in the light of God like I should be. I allowed frustration and I guess bitterness to come into my heart. And I stopped walking in the light of God and I was not spending time with God to keep me on track.

I just feel like I need to ask your forgiveness. Sometimes people have asked me how I was doing and I just kind of evaded the question or said that, oh, my health is pretty good or something like that. But I do want to share, though, that God has been working in my life in the past couple of weeks, that He's been changing me and really turning my heart towards Him.

I don't have a desire to turn back to sin again. I'm really thankful for what God is doing. I would ask for your prayers for me.

And also, one particular instance that I feel that I need to confess, this past week at the youth picnic, I think most everyone was already gone by that time, but I was really acting in a selfish way, bringing attention to myself there. And the Lord convicted me of that, of the sin of that. And I just want to confess that and ask that those that were there, would you please forgive me? Thank you.

Thank you for confessing that, Shane. Where sin abounds, grace much more abounds. So I continue to encourage your brother to continue to seek God.

That when He shows us something, particularly puts a point on us, that when He shows us sin, and we call it sin, and you have this morning, grace much more abounds to that, to bring us to a place He wants us to be. I was very blessed by both of the messages as well this morning. You know, my background, coming from evangelical circles, it wasn't uncommon for pastors to preach holiness or righteousness in my circles to the understanding that they had.

And I'm thinking of my own pastor who had the congregation print out a neon paper, a verse, I don't know if it's from Isaiah, but I will put no unwholesome thing or unclean thing before my eyes. And we were encouraged to tape that across the top of our television. So that when we'd watch television, we would use our remote to zap the commercials.

And we all got pretty good at that as a congregation and were pretty proud. When the Super Bowl came around, we didn't watch some of those commercials or scenes of cheerleaders, we would blink the screen. Wherever you're at, you can set a standard and with a little bit of work, you can learn to achieve it.

Well, then I moved from there down to Texas and attended a reformed church for a while and the standard was there that ladies would wear dresses. And so we as a family adapted and we started wearing dresses and putting away our slacks. And I felt pretty good about that.

I was climbing that rung that Brother Aaron talked about. You know, as an athlete, I learned that there were rungs to climb to increase your performance. And women especially can set goals and achieve them and feel pretty good about it.

Then when I came to charity, I learned that there were no televisions at all. So the rungs got higher. And we've kind of taken care of that and anticipated that before we even got here.

But I'm convinced that the standards that are in Scripture that we are called to keep are impossible apart from grace. And if there's one thing that the standard, the righteousness of Scripture brings about, it should be bring about a brokenness and humility. When someone walks through that door, be they perhaps not as kept or refined as Brother Aaron said, or maybe they're coming from my background where they have a nice suit or they're not covered and they have a little makeup on.

Whatever that rung that they find themselves on, it should provoke in us an ability to drop to our knees, so to speak, publicly and say, God, I'm uncomfortable right now because I know what Your Word says to do. I need to move towards that person. And I need to love them.

And I can't do it. I'm a hypocrite. You know my history.

I've climbed those rungs. And here I am at charity. I'm on a pretty high rung now.

But isn't God faithful to always bring people back into our lives that make us drop to our knees publicly and say, Oh, those feelings, Lord. I'm such a hypocrite. The only way I can move towards that person is if I'm praying each step and I hand out a timid hand and I greet them.

You know, really it's our own flesh that we don't like in others, isn't it? But if we can put that flesh on the cross and realize how God sees us, as sinners saved by grace, all the rungs disappear and we'll move towards people in hope and meet them where they're at. Because that's really what inspires people. They can see it in our eyes.

They can hear it in our greetings. God help us to give us grace. But praise God for the standards that were shared this morning that are only kept by grace.

Amen. Yeah, that's good. I was blessed by that whole portion.

It's so easy for us to evangelize something that's all this way or that, all neat and clean. I appreciated that. There's a little story in Judges.

A group of people were coming over to one of the tribes of Israel and as a test, they were going to test them if they could say the things the way we say it. It says here, And the Ephronites which were escaped said, Let me go over. Then the men of Gilead said unto him, Art thou an Ephraimite if you say nay? Then say unto them, Okay, say now Shibboleth.

And he said, Sibboleth. For he could not frame to pronounce it right. Because of his accent, he couldn't say Shibboleth.

So he said, Art thou an Ephraimite if you say nay? Then they took him and slew him at the passage of Jordan and there fell at that time the Ephraimites 40 and 2,000 who just didn't say it right. Yeah, may we not be there. Amen.

Maybe just like one more or two quick ones and we have two more testimonies. Unless it's just pouring out, then amen, you just stand up anyway. Amen, go ahead.

I really appreciated the messages today. You're on. Okay.

I really like the analogy of the garden. I'd just like to bring our minds back to that garden again. If you have the plot of land that God has given you and the ground is tilled and plowed and we come here to church every Sunday, we get a lot of seeds.

But the question is, are we planting them? Are you planting these seeds that we get each Sunday or do we just have faith and we don't have the works to plant them? We're not doing the work of planting these seeds. We have lots of seeds here but they're not doing any good to us unless we plant them. And then as we have planted them, we might have ideals in our mind of what we want these seeds to produce.

And we go back into that soil and dig out these seeds to see is there anything happening? Is it growing? We're not allowing God to do the work that He wants to do in our lives. We become impatient. That's just my encouragement there.

And also I had to think about bringing us back to James there where we say to a brother, be filled and do not do anything to help them. There's another, bring it to the spiritual realm. And I know I've done this at times.

When I've said to people God's grace is sufficient for thee and we don't really get down to meet the needs of the person that needs help. It's destitute spiritually. May God help us in these matters.

Again, those two messages I think went so well together. God wants us to work out that field. To do real things.

Have real things that happen. Just like Brother Jeff shared there, it's only by God's grace. So today if by Brother Aaron's preaching you have now within you a will to do these things.

Certain sins. Certain things. Certain things.

God has used the foolishness of preaching to now bring and convict and give grace into your life. Now you have a will to do good. What will cause it now to do good? He both will and to do according to what? His good pleasure.

Amen. It's the work of God so that He will receive glory.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/15/SID15242.mp3>
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/aaron-hurst/faith-made-complete/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net