

Justified by Faith and by Works

by Jack Hyles

We are justified before God by faith in Christ, but we are justified before man by our behavior and works.

Scripture: Isaiah 1:18, Lamentations 3:22, Matthew 5:16, Matthew 11:28, John 14:15, Romans 4:2, Romans 4:5, James 2:21, James 2:23-24

Topics: "Faith And Works", "Justification By Faith"

Description

Jack Hyles delves into the apparent contradiction between Romans 4:5, which states that faith alone justifies a person, and James 2:24, which emphasizes the importance of works in justification. He explains that there are two types of justification: one before God, based on faith in Christ alone, and one before man, based on works. Hyles illustrates the concept of hypocrisy by discussing the importance of both faith and works in a believer's life, highlighting the need for consistency between one's profession of faith and their actions.

Transcript

"But to him that worketh not but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Romans 4:5

Look if you would please, at Romans 4:5: "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." We will come back to Romans 4; but now flip over to James 2:24: "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." Isn't that strange? Romans 4:5, says you are justified by faith without works. James 2:24 says you are not justified by faith without works. You are justified by faith and by works: Contradictory?

Look if you would please at Romans 4:1, 2: "What shall we say then that Abraham our Father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham Were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God." So Romans 4:2 says Abraham was justified by what? You tell me. Say it. Faith. Say it again. Faith.

Now look at James 2:23: "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."

Yet, look at verse 21, "Was not Abraham our Father justified by works." Isn't that strange. It says as plain as can be in Romans 4 that Abraham was Justified by faith without works, and just as plainly it says in

James 2, he was Justified by works as well as by faith.

Now, I am going to ask that every child close your Bible, and I am going to ask you to listen very carefully. You rattle your pages too much and you wiggle your hands I want you to listen very carefully.

A stunning contradiction. Paul said on one hand, "You are justified by faith alone without works." In fact, he goes so far as to say, "If a man does not do any work at all, but believes on Him Who justifies the ungodly, his faith counted for righteousness." What that really says is, "His faith is substituted for his works, his righteous acts." That is what Paul said, "No works can you." Then James comes along and says "You cannot be justified by faith alone You have got to have works, or you are not justified."

Now which is right? James or Paul? Well, let us see their credentials. James was the pastor of the First Baptist Church in Jerusalem, so he must have known what he was talking about. Anybody who is pastor of a First Baptist Church is brilliant. (One "Amen" out of the 5,000 people! Thank you, there is another one. Who will make it three?)

James certainly was Peter's pastor. You fellows on the platform think sometimes that -- here you are a bus man, renowned out across the country; you are a Christian educator, renowned across the Country; and you teach soul winning across the country -- and you have to sit here and hear me preach every Sunday morning and every Sunday night. Oh, a time or two a year you have to endure one of the other fellows. But do not forget that Peter had to listen to James every Sunday morning and John had to listen to James. James said, "You are justified by works."

Well, let us see about Paul. What kind of credentials does he have? Well, he was the greatest missionary that ever lived, perhaps the greatest preacher that ever lived. The man who founded more churches than any man who ever lived.

We have a contradiction folks. We have one fellow, who is pastor of the church in Jerusalem, who says that you are justified by works. Then we have one fellow, pastor of the church up the road in Antioch, who says that you are justified by faith without works. Who is right? Now, if you are listening, I will tell you.

There are two types of justification. Paul says God is our Judge and He is going to judge us according to our record, and God's justice will judge us according to our faith. That means, being justified before God is determined by your faith in Christ. God will not justify you because you get baptized. God will not justify you because you join the church. God will not justify you because you live a good life. God will not justify you because you are a good husband, a good wife, a good father, a good mother, a good neighbor, a good citizen. God will not justify you because you behave yourself. God will not justify you because you turn over a new leaf. If you get justified before God, the only way you can do at is to put your faith in Jesus Christ, and that faith is counted for your righteous deeds. On the other hand, James is not talking about being justified before God, James is talking being justified before man. We have two judges: We have God Who judges us and man who judges us.

Did anybody ever say, "Brother Fisk is a nice fellow?" Raise your hand. How have never said it, but thought it? Hundreds of us. I am with you. Why do you think he is a nice fellow? Because you watch how he behaves. Brother Fisk says he is a Christian. You say, "I believe it." Why? Because the way he lives is justified by the fact that he is a Christian. He says he is a Christian, so he justifies your faith in him that he is a Christian, and justifies what he says by the way he acts. Romans is talking about man's being justified before God as God judges him. James is talking about man's being justified before man as man judges

him.

I say, Dr. Billings is a fine principal. Why? I have judged him. How did I judge him? By the way he behaves. By his works. Let me ask you a question. If you say Dr. Billings is a fine principal, is that because you think he has great faith or because you see him performing his duties as a good principal? It is because you see him performing his duties.

So, we have two judges. God sits on the Judgment Seat and says, "I am going to judge you." But God says, "If you have one thing wrong, you have got to go to Hell." One thing. Otherwise, you have to be perfect. So, He says "Lam going to have to let Jesus go to the cross, let Him die on the cross as your substitute, and when you put your faith in Him, Lam going to cover you with His righteousness. You are going to be as holy in my sight as Jesus Christ" That is the only way you will ever be justified before God, because God demands perfection. When you put your faith in Christ, God imparts to you His nature, imputes to you His righteousness, and He makes your record in Heaven as clean as the record of Jesus Christ Himself.

Man judges, but man does not judge you according to your heart. Man judges you according to your behavior. You are justified by mankind according to how you act. You are justified by God according to your faith.

Let me see if I can illustrate. Did you know one without the other makes you a hypocrite? Let us suppose there is a fellow who is not born again, but he acts like it. He is is not really saved, but he comes to church. He tithes. He lives a clean life. He is faithful to the Lord. He reads his Bible. He prays. He teaches a Sunday school class. He may even be elected to the Deacon Board, but he is not born again. What is he? A hypocrite.

Here is a fellow who is saved, has it in his heart, but does not get baptized. He does not join the church. He does not tithe. He does not read the Bible regularly. He does not pray. Is he really saved? Yes, he is saved, but he also is a hypocrite. There are two types of hypocrites: One fellow does not have it and says he does; the other fellow has it but does not say he has it.

Row many of you have ever served in the Armed Forces? How many served back in World War II? (I could have noticed by your heads rather than your hands!) Now, I can recall, when I was in the service there were two cardinal sins. I recall a fellow in Fayetteville, NC, near where! was stationed in Ft. Brags This fellow got a paratrooper uniform, got the boots, got the cap, got the insignia, got the wings and wore a paratrooper uniform and he went up and down the street. He ate in the USO. He went to the dayroom and played pool and Ping-Pong. He even showed up in the mess hall and ate at the mess hall for months and months and months. Then they found out he was wearing the uniform but he was not a soldier. He was caught, tried and sent to jail.

On the other hand, I knew fellows who were soldiers who did not wear their uniforms in town. They were caught, tried and sent to jail.

I recall I was in Dallas, Texas, on a furlough one time, and I wanted to wear a white shirt. I always liked the Army uniform with a white shirt, but Uncle Sam frowned on that. (Of course, nowadays, you can wear anything.) Anyway, I put on a white shirt and went to downtown Dallas, and do you know what that MP did? He got out of that little jeep driving in downtown Dallas. He had a club in his hand --back in the days when officers could carry clubs, guns, etc. --he jumped out and said "What are you doing wearing a white

shirt?" He put me into a jeep, took me to a temporary Army barrack place they had down on the river, and undressed me to the waist and I was so embarrassed. He said, "You put that shirt on, and don't you ever walk up and down the streets improperly clothed! You are a soldier, dress like it!"

Now, either one is a hypocrite. A fellow who is not a soldier and wears a uniform, and a fellow who is a soldier and will not wear the uniform, back in the war days, both were hypocrites.

This morning, you are a hypocrite if you belong to the church, but have not been born again. You are also a hypocrite if you have been born again and have not joined the church. You are also a hypocrite if you have been born again, but have not been baptized, not joined the church, do not live a good live, do not walk with God, and are not faithful. Don't you see? You are justified by faith before God, and God says it is okay. You are justified by works before man, and man says it is okay because of the way he behaves.

Let me illustrate. How many know who Duane Thomas is? Duane Thomas is probably the best running back in all of football. He is also one of the screwiest characters in all of football, too. Duane is halfback and fullback on the Dallas Cowboys, the world champion football team. Recently, while driving through Greenville, Texas, his car was pulled over to the side of the road, and they found marijuana in his car. Now the Dallas Cowboy management provided an attorney for him; he went before a judge in Greenville, Texas, and was given a five years' suspended sentence. The Dallas Cowboys had provided legal counsel for him and that legal counsel got him justified before the judge. The judge let him go free -- five years' suspended sentence. Why? Because the Dallas Cowboys provided legal counsel. Now he is justified. However, everyone of us who follows football is waiting to see how he will behave from now on. How many of you have wondered if he is going to play ball next year for Dallas? I have. I wonder if he is going to make it. I wonder if he is going to get back in the marijuana traffic. I wonder if he is going to talk next year or be quiet like he was this year. So we are waiting. How many of you have already judged what he is going to do? You cannot judge yet. Why? He has not worked yet. We do not know yet.

Here is a fellow who goes to jail, spends three years in a penitentiary, and gets out. The law is satisfied. He has paid his penalty. He is justified before the law. He can go free. He goes home, and his neighbors watch how he behaves. His friends watch him, and his family watches him. Why? Because they want to see how he is going to turn out. Has he changed? Will he be a good risk? The banker says "I have got to watch him and watch his works to see if he is justified, or if his credit is justified." The ladies in town say, "I am going to watch his work before I let my daughter even be near him." The neighbors say, "We are going to watch his works before we take him back into society like he was before."

Now ladies and gentlemen, here is what God is saying: If you want to go to Heaven, you then had better put your faith in Christ and get justified by your faith in Him. But if you want to live the Christian life, and be a good testimony, your neighbors will justify you by your works.

Here is a new convert. He came to church Sunday morning and got converted. He goes back to Inland Steel. Let me ask you a question. What are they doing? They are watching him. I was talking to somebody who had long hair. Let me say this just in case you do not know it: I detest men wearing this long, shaggy hair. You sissy; you effeminate. Yes, I said it. You who would associate yourself with Jerry Rubin and all the rest of them, by the way you wear your hair. Jerry Rubin said, "Wear your hair long, young men, and show that you are for revolution and for communism, and for narcotics." That is what you do. You do not know it, but that is where it started. You say you do not like that idea, but! say you need to figure out something to do with it because it is about time you looked like a man.

Of course, you do not have enough courage to buck society. You do not have enough intestinal fortitude to be different. You do not have enough of that to say, "I am going to dress like a Christian dresses and wear my hair like a Christian does." You do not have the necessary intestinal fortitude. You are are a coward. You are yellow.

Now let me get back to the sermon. You see, every once in a while a few slip in, and brother you need it whether you know it or not. Some parents do not like what I preach, and they leave the church because of it. You will rue the day that you got your kid out from under the influence of a man of God who is trying to 'flake them follow the Bible plan for wearing their hair and clothes. Brother, When you follow your kids against authority--you better understand me if you do not understand me anywhere else--you better stay for authority.

Anyway, I was talking to a fellow and he said, "You do not like my hair, do you?" I said, "No, and you probably do not like mine. The truth is, I do not like mine either." He said, "Well, that is the trouble. You are always judging a man from what is on the outside. What is on the outside is not important." Now that is a lie. The Bible has hundreds of verses that teach you how to look on the outside He said, "Well, you are just judging a man because of the way he looks on the outside." Then a sailor walked down the street by our window, and I said, "What is that fellow there?" He said, "A sailor." I said, "You are just judging from what he wears on the outside. You are judging a man. He may not be a sailor, He just has on a sailor uniform." "Well," he said, "I figured since he has on a Navy uniform he must be a sailor." I said, "If you have on a communist uniform, you must be a communist, too."

Everybody judges on the outside. What do I mean? A fellow says, "Hey, what a tall fellow he is." You are just judging from the outside. What kind of a fellow is Billings? Well, he is short. Watch out, you are judging from the outside. What kind of fellow is Roy Tobin? Well, he is a big, husky fellow. Watch out, you are judging from the outside.

The dear Lord says, "Sure people judge from the outside. So if you want to get justified before God, put your faith in Christ. But if you want man to justify you, look like a Christian and let your works show that you are a Christian."

A new convert has put his faith in Christ to be saved. Now, why should he wear decent clothes? Why should he wear his hair like a Christian? Why should he quit drinking his liquor? Why should he quit going to the dances? Why should he behave himself? I will tell you why. Other people are watching him to see how he lives, to see if what he has is the real thing; and the only way that they can tell if it is the real thing is by his works.

James said, "You ought to work for God." Again I say, I do not think you have to get baptized to get saved; I think you have to get baptized to look like you have been saved. You do not have to join the church to go to Heaven, but you join the church so folks can know you are going to Heaven. You do not have to live a good life to go to Heaven, but you live a good life so folks can know YOU are going to Heaven.

Jesus said, "That they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16) That is why in school you ought to walk circumspectly, cleanly, and live right. Why? Because you are being justified or not justified at school according to the way you live.

I was down in Chattanooga, Tennessee, preaching at the Highland Park Baptist Church and Tennessee Temple College. On Tuesday night we had a wonderful service. After the service, a lady came to me. She

must have passed middle age and I am not going to tell you how old I think that is. I think young is 45 an under. She said "I have got to meet you." She took both of my hands and she began to cry. I thought, "Is it so bad to meet me?" I said "What is it?" She said, "I have lived in Chattanooga for years, and I have rented my apartments in my house out to students all of these years. Dr. Hyles, I want to tell you something. The kids you send down here who rent my apartments are different. They are different." She said, "I do not know what you do to those young people up there, but the married students that come down here are different. They are just different." She said "Brother Hyles, what you preached this week is manifested in the lives of your married students who come to Tennessee Temple College." I just rejoiced and rejoiced and thanked God. What we stand for is justified by the way we live. Our students go off to school. We preach here that you live right, be clean, be honest, pay your bills, be courteous, dress appropriately, and be Christians; act like it, talk like it, sing like it, and dress like it. We preach it. Folks say, "What kind of kids do you turn out?" Our kids go down to Tennessee Temple, they pay their rent on time, keep their apartment clean, are courteous and kind and friendly. Then the lady comes and says, "They practice what you preach." We have become justified before that lady. How? By faith? No, by works.

Listen to me. I do not want anybody on this church roll to get the idea that it does not matter how you live. It does matter how you live. It does matter how you live. The Gospel we preach is being examined. We are on the stage. We are on center stage. We are in the center circle. We hold up our banner. We say, "The Bible is true!" People look to see if we can justify, by our lives, what we preach. God help us to do it.

You men on the job -- a man came to me not long ago and said, "Where do you go to church?" I said, "I am pastor of First Baptist Church." He mentioned where he worked, and I said one of our deacons works there. He said "Who?" I said, "Mr. So-and-so." He said, "Does he go to church?" I said, "Sure, he is one of our fine deacons." "He is?" I said, "Well, he is one of our deacons." He said "I have worked with that man for 17 years, and I never even thought that he went to church." What a pity. What a pity. The first day on the job, he ought to look at you and say, "There is something about that fellow. He justifies what Hyles preaches." That is the way you get justified before man. That is Scripture. Our Lord, Himself said, "Let your light so shine before man..." (Matthew 5:16) I Was in Wichita, Kansas. I was about to preach, and I went out to check my book table and a couple fellows walked through. I said to the man beside me, "Look, tell the man to sing another song, I want to go talk to those hippies." Two hippies came through and I said, "Hey fellows, I want to talk to you. My name is Jack Hyles." One of them said, "Hi, my name is So and So." We talked for awhile, and I said, "Are you fellows Christians?" One of the hippies said, "Praise the Lord!" I thought, "Good night! I never had a hippie speak like that hippie" I said, "You mean you are saved?" He said, "I am born again." He pulled his Bible out and said, "I love the Bible. I am born again." He was one of these Jesus freaks. I said, "That is tremendous, and I rejoice in it." I said, "Do you know what I thought you were?" He said, "What?" "I thought you were a hippie." He said, "How would you think that?" I said, "Well it may be the sandals. It may be the dirty teeth. It may be the blue jeans with patches. It may be the shirt with the hand-painted pictures all over it. It may be the long hair, it may be the beard." He said, "That is the trouble with you Fundamentalists: You are always judging from the outside." I said, "What did you call me?" He said, "A Fundamentalist." I said, "How did you know?" He said, "I could tell by looking at you." I said, "That is the trouble with you Jesus freaks: You are always judging from the outside."

Everybody judges from the outside. Do you know why he knew I was a Fundamentalist? I had a Scofield Bible. I had my hair cut. I dress like a Fundamentalist. Do you know how he knew the whole crowd was made up of Fundamentalists? Because the ladies had on decent-length skirts and carried their Bibles. We say we are Fundamentalists. I said, "You guessed right on me, but I guessed wrong on you."

Let us pray.

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