

Faith and Works - Part 1

by Manley Beasley

The sermon explores the critical relationship between faith and works, emphasizing that true faith is evidenced by corresponding actions in the life of a believer.

Duration: 1:20:01

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Romans 3:23-28, Galatians 2:16, James 2:14-16

Topics: "Faith"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of mission work and how it will be given more emphasis in their tape club. They share a specific example of the fallout in Russia where 100,000 Russians were scattered all over the country. The speaker also mentions their ongoing project of rewriting Facebook number two and turning it into a book. They ask for prayers regarding the financial support of the tape club and express gratitude to faithful supporters. The sermon concludes with the question posed by the disciples to Jesus about how to work the works of God.

Transcript

It's certainly a joy and a privilege to be with you again this month. You know that we have been dealing with the matter of rewriting Faithbook No. 2, and I have actually been using messages over the tape club just to be able to take it from the tapes and put it in the book.

Of course, it will be edited some, changed some, and helped some. But in the Word of God, it mentions about having the tongue of a ready writer, and of course, you probably realize that I'm not a writer, but the Lord has made me a communicator, and I communicate a great deal, but most of it's by speaking. And so, I'm definitely enjoying this, sharing these particular messages with you as we send them to you month by month.

It will actually make up the book, and I think it will be very unique because it will be a blessing to a lot of people because of the drastic need that's in the world today. I want to ask you to really pray about some things with me. Many of you have been with me a long, long time, and you've been so faithful and so on.

A lot of people sign up for the tape club, and they'll last for about a month or two, and then after about six or seven months, we'll take them off if they did not pay. And so, we usually have a lot of people like that. Last month, we dropped 150 people just in one month that had not paid anything in six months.

Now, this is no real problem to us because we've just got sort of used to it, and when you understand what's going on, it's okay. But this particular year, or in fact the last two years, the Lord has really been showing us more and more that all of what we're doing is we're going to be more and more involved in what I'm going to call a mission involvement. Now, what I mean by that is just last week, we got a confirmed invitation that will allow us to go in to Poland for a Congress zone revival and take a number of preachers in so they can preach in the Baptist churches there.

And this is an incredible invitation. And I know that for some years now, we have had an invitation to Hong Kong. And what I'm seeing is that out of this, God is wanting us to come up with these Congresses on revival in a number of places throughout the world.

And for me to do that, I'm going to have to cut down more and more on my meetings. And so, with doing that, we're going to have to change our whole approach to trusting God for income. The Bible teaches that a man shall live by the labor of his hands.

And the Bible also teaches that a man can live to where he trusts God to raise up the money here and there in different ways. Now, in these last few years, because of me feeling well, I have basically been able to live by the labor of my own hands. What I mean is I go to meetings, they take up me in love offerings, and I live on that.

And the office has operated on a different plan. We have operated on people paying for tapes and buying books and giving money by the leadership of the Holy Spirit. And so we've just had a real wonderful time watching God provide.

And things are doing real well, and we're rejoicing in it. Satan is fighting every step of the way. I mean, man, he is fighting every day just to blow this thing apart.

But in this tape ministry, we're going to ask you to just really pray with us that God will give us wisdom as we're formulating the structure as to how we're going to do all of this work that is before us. Many of you that are listening out there are pastors. And many, many pastors are allowing us to share what we're doing, and God is blessing in a unique way in that.

And many, many of you are laymen, and God is putting it on laymen's hearts to become prayer warriors and intercessors and contributors. And it's becoming a unique experience to watch what God is doing with this tape club. And actually, we're going to start giving more and more mission emphasis.

Now, that doesn't mean we'll not preach the messages, but we are going to give more and more mission emphasis as we send these tapes out. For instance, you're probably not aware of this, but do you remember the fallout in Russia a few months back? That awful fallout where they just had, you know, just an awful, awful problem there, and the Russians were taken from that place, about 100,000 strong, and scattered all over Russia? Let me just show you what is happening in that part of the world, and by that illustrate to you more and more mission emphasis. There were seven churches in that area, Baptist churches, and when that problem came up and that fallout came, those people in those seven churches were scattered all over Russia.

Well, for a number of years, they felt like they were very isolated there, and so they were asked to be moved. They asked God to move them out so they could get people saved and establish churches, and do you know already we are getting reports back that new churches are springing up all over Russia because

these people in these churches have been replaced all over Russia to live. That's an incredible situation.

That may shock you, but that definitely is happening. We know that's happening, and we praise God for that. Well, God has opened up the European continent, the Eastern Bloc country for us, and so we're working on formulating our approach, and you are my friends, and you've listened to me, and you pray for me, and you contribute to me, and so I am just counting on you to continue to do that, and I trust that you'll become very active in your relationship with us.

We want to respond to you more directly if you need help, and we want you to respond to us more directly if you can be of help to us, and I'm not necessarily talking about a financial contribution. I've never known a time when an evangelist couldn't use finances, but there's something a great deal more important than finances, but you just pray with us about these issues, and I trust that this message will mean as much to you as it means to me, and now next month I'm going to break into the series and put a tape on by Carlos McLeod if it's possible. I have got his permission.

I heard him preach it today, and it was such an encouraging message for such a distressful hour that I asked him if I could send it to the tape club, and we made an agreement on it, and the Lord willing, I'm going to send it, so I'm trusting that you'll be able to get that next month. I tell you, it's one of the most encouraging messages I've heard in a long, long time, and I just want you to hear it. May God bless you.

We'll be with you again next month. Let us hear from you. Thank you so much.

God bless you. Now, oh, when I said let me hear from you, I sounded like one of these radio evangelists and television evangelists, you know, after they'd said, Now, if we don't hear from you, we're going under. Well, now, let me just say this.

If we do not hear from you, we're not going under. Our Lord is going to keep us going, and I know you know that. I just thought I'd throw that in.

May the Lord bless you. We love you, and I trust that God is blessing you at the point of your need right today. Thank you so much.

There are so many passages that I want to use tonight in this particular message. I want to, I will start with a passage and introduce the message and then turn to some more passages and get you into the heart of what I'm about to say. The Lord Jesus was asked a question, and that question interested me when I first ran across it myself.

The disciples asked the Lord Jesus, Lord, what is it that we might do that we might work the works of God? Of course, you know, a lot of folk have the problem they're not even interested in the works of God. But to those who are interested in the works of God, that's quite a question. Lord, what is it that I might do that I might work the works of God? And so, I wondered what I would have said 30 years ago if someone had walked up to me or 35 years ago and said, hey, Brother Magnus, what is it that I might do that I might work the works of God? And I think I know what I would have said.

And the reason I say that is because back in 1949, I went to hear a preacher preach. And that preacher was an outstanding preacher in this part of the world. And I don't mean Oklahoma.

I mean the United States, Canada. His name was L.E. Maxwell. And I may have lost you because I went beyond the Baptist denomination there.

But I didn't lose him beyond the Christian world and beyond the very, very real Christian world. And L.E. Maxwell preached. And I never have forgotten his message.

I could preach it tonight. I could start right now and preach that sermon. But I bought his book.

And the title of his book was Born Crucified. And I read that book. And when I got through reading that book, I said that I wrote it.

I still have the book. I wrote in the back of that book, the message of this book, is to read your Bible and pray and just try the best you can. And I think if you had asked me, you obviously haven't read the book.

That's right. Because if that book says anything, it doesn't say that. And so you would have been laughing if you had read the book.

I have my ways of checking out your understanding. And so, you see, if I had been asked back in those days, Brother Manley, what is it that I might do that I might work the works of God, you know what I would have said? I would have said, now you need to read your Bible, and you need to pray, and you need to go to church. And I would have probably said, you need to give.

And I would have said, you need to witness. And that's possibly what I would have said. And I'll guarantee you, you do that, and you will be the best member that this church has.

And you will probably be in the seat of leadership in this church and any other Baptist church if you will just do those things. That's right. Now, that's what I would have said if you had asked me this question, Brother Manley, what is it that I might do that I might work the works of God? I would have said, do that.

But that is not what Jesus said. Jesus said, and I'm reading it out of the word of God, he said, this is the work of God, that you believe on him whom the Father has sent. Listen to it.

John 6, 28 and 29. Then said they unto him, what shall we do that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, this is the work of God, that you believe on him whom he has sent. Now, let me ask you a question tonight.

If that is the work of God, that you believe on him whom the Father has sent, do you believe on Jesus whom the Father has sent? Do you? Now, I would expect you, because I deal with Baptist churches all the time, I would expect you to say, preacher, yes sir, I believe on him whom the Father has sent. I would expect you to say that. But we want to look at that tonight in the light of faith and works.

Now, there are many more passages that we could go to in relationship to this matter of faith and works, and let me just mention some of them. The passage in Romans, the 3rd chapter, you'd probably like to start reading about the 23rd verse through the 28th verse, and it tells us there that we are not saved by the works of the law, but by the law of faith, especially in that 27th verse. And then in Galatians, that particular passage, there's one passage there in the 2nd chapter, the 16th verse, that says there's no flesh justified by the works of the law.

There's no flesh justified by the works of the law. None at all. And then on to James, and this is where we're headed, and this is where we'll count.

In James 2, at the 14th verse, we start reading these words. What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith and hath 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 doth it profit? Even so, faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man say, 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. Thou believest that there is one God, thou doest well. The devil also believes and trembles.

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 Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith walked with his works, and thy 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? Was the body without the spirit dead, so faith without works is dead also? Martin Luther, the great Reformation leader, who did his best to get saved by works.

In fact, I have been to the very building, the huge, huge cathedral, where he would get on this stone slab, that's right, this stone slab in East Germany, and literally cut his body all over to pieces. Trying his best to do righteous works in some way, somehow, to get saved by the grace of God. It's incredible.

But he was reading the book of Romans, and by the hand of God, he saw in his heart that a person is not saved by works, but that a man is saved, as we would put it, by grace through faith, without any works. And he was gloriously, gloriously saved. He really was.

And his salvation was so profound to Christendom. It's amazing to me, I'll be very honest with you, it's amazing to me that so much of Christianity and its movement for hundreds and hundreds of years would rest upon one man's shoulders like that. But I'll tell you, there is no telling what we owe tonight to Martin Luther.

There really is no telling. Even though we as Baptists basically did not come out of Martin Luther's movement, but we were right there in the midst of Martin Luther's movement, and a great deal of our thinking came out of that time. And it's quite interesting.

But when Martin Luther hit the book of James and read this passage that I just read to you, that a man is saved by his works, he had some pretty tough things to say about the book of James. I think the way he put it, he said it was a book of straw or something like that. But in other words, I'm not real sure about this book.

And it's amazing because I guess it goes to show you that some of the greatest men of all times can have blind spots. Because obviously he did not see what James was really genuinely saying. He obviously felt that there was a controversy between Romans and the book of James.

But you see, in the book of James, the Weymouth translation of James 2.14 really says it. It really says it, but I'm not going to... I'm going to give it to you, but I'm going to dwell on it, if not for your sake, my sake. Because I'm preaching to myself tonight.

Now, your pastor told me what to preach on this week, so I am being a good, obedient servant and preaching on what... But this is one he hasn't heard. But he just said faith, so I've got 15 on faith, so I can

fluctuate a great deal. But the Weymouth translation translates James 2.14 that something like this, "'What doth it profit, my brethren, for you to say you have faith and doth not have corresponding action?' Can that kind of faith save you?" Boy, I mean, boy, that is heavy.

That's it. He says, "'What good does it do for you and me to say I have faith, I have faith, I have faith, and we do not have corresponding action?' In other words, can that kind of faith save you? Could we reverse it? It's real easy for me to reverse things because I have this problem with dyslexia and you see things backwards. And it really is saying, hey, if your faith is real, there are works that prove your faith is real.

Now, see, in the book of Romans, Romans talks about a man being saved. Can we use the word redemptively saved? Does that mean anything to you? Now, does it mean, I heard Brother Paul today divide up the salvation in three aspects. He didn't use the word redemptive part, but he used the word justification part.

And redemptive, when I use the word redemptive part of salvation, I'm talking about that justification part of salvation where you're saved, you're forgiven, you're cleansed, and you are inhabited by Christ. That part of salvation. But there's another part of salvation where you are literally saved now from the power of sin, which is called sanctification.

And then one day you'll be saved from the peasants of sin when God takes us out of here. And so, you see, when you are saved, redemptively saved, it's without any works whatsoever, my dear friends. It's by grace.

Totally by grace. Now, it's tragic that we Baptists believe that. But that's where we stop.

Believing the Bible, usually. Now, we may with our words say we go on and believe in sanctification and all of that by faith. But if we do, we sure practice it differently.

Because we have the old philosophy of try your best stuff. Amen. And so what I'm trying to say to you is this.

Romans talks about the redemptive part, just between you and Christ, you're saved by grace without any works whatsoever. And that's absolutely right. But James is saying, hey, if your faith in Christ is genuinely real this way, there will be works before man.

That will let the world know that you are saved this way. Therefore you're justified before man. That's right.

And that's what that passage is saying. And it's saying, what good does it do you to say, hey, I've got faith in Jesus. I'm a Christian.

I'm really saved this way. If there's not any works this way. Can that kind of faith save you? He says no.

I think this illustration is so beautiful. It's happened to me. I'm sure it's happened to some of you.

But I'll use Billy Graham since he's not here to defend himself. But he was on this airplane. And there in first class was a drunk.

And he was acting like a drunk. Very foolish. Loud, boisterous.

And the young lady, you know, trying to take care of the situation, was so embarrassed. Especially because Billy Graham was on this airplane. And so she thought after a while, said maybe this man will be quiet.

You know, if he really realizes that Billy Graham, the great preacher, is on this plane. So she went over and she said, Sir, I really do wish you would be a little quieter. Because Billy Graham is on this plane.

Oh my. He said, where is he? Where is he? I want to meet him. I've been wanting to meet him a long time.

And you know, his face was red. He was drunk as he could be. And you could smell that liquor.

And he staggered back to Billy Graham. And he said, Sir, I've been wanting to meet you a long time. He said, you saved me years ago.

And Billy Graham said, I must have. It's obvious Jesus didn't. Now what was Billy Graham saying? Billy Graham was really saying in his heart, You're saying to me, you have a faith in Jesus.

You have salvation. Your faith is real. But your works indicate that your faith is not real.

Now, beloved, listen. As Baptist, when I went to school, you had to take a course on what Baptists believed. And I went to two different Baptist schools, so I had to take two courses on what Baptists believed.

Because they wouldn't transfer it. And so they... So I know what Baptists believe. But I don't think they believe what they believe.

Honestly. If you took the articles of faith of Baptists adopted in 1938, the New Hampshire Confession of Faith, and preached that, I'll guarantee you, my dear friends, two-thirds of this church would get re-baptized. Because it says, No one is saved except those who endure to the end.

And all this crowd that falls away, folk, that thing says they're not saved. They do make an exception. They do believe it's possible to backslide.

But it's not normal. Of course, John seems to have felt that way. He said, If we sin.

That's right. He said, If we sin. We have an Advocate with the Father, right? Now, the Bible teaches, and Baptists believe that the Bible teaches that we have a faith that works.

Not faith and works.

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