

“Understanding the nature of Salvation”

All Scripture is KJV: James 2:20

INTRODUCTION: WHAT DOES THE BIBLE HAVE TO SAY?

James 2:20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

1. There are; I am sure many believers struggle with the understanding of this verse and perhaps have become despondent in spite of it?
2. This verse can and has been misused by many who teach that unless you “persevere” in your Christian walk, then you are not saved.
3. So people will try their best to earn their way to heaven by pleasing the Lord by doing good works?

Because no matter what works we do we cannot be saved by works?

Titus 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

1. There are no works that a person can do to place that person as righteous before God on judgment day. None.
2. But yet there are people who teach that, and there are people who believe that to be the case.
3. That in order for them to gain acceptance into heaven, they need to be holy and live a righteous life to merit salvation or to enter the kingdom of God.

✚ Now let me say this from the outset. That living a righteous life before God, is what the Lord requires for us after salvation, but it is not a requirement for salvation. Otherwise there would be none saved.

Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

And there are many other verses in the bible that teach salvation is by faith alone and grace alone.

- **Romans 10:13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.**
- **John 3:15 ¹⁵ That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.**
- **John 3:16 ¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.**
- **John 1:12 ¹² But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:**

- **John 20:31**³¹ But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; **and that believing ye might have life through his name.**

Romans 3:20 Therefore by the **deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified** in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Galatians 2:16 Knowing that a **man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ**, even **we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.**

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: **for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth**; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Romans 10:10 For **with the heart man believeth unto righteousness**; and **with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.**

2 Timothy 3:15 And that from a child thou hast known **the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.**

Hebrews 5:9 And being made perfect, **he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;**

1 Peter 1:5 Who are **kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation** ready to be revealed in the last time.

1 Peter 1:9⁹ **Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.**

Jude 1:3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the **common salvation**, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly **contend for the faith** which was once **delivered unto the saints.**

- In Jude 1:3 the bible even uses the word faith as a way of implicating the gospel message that it is required to be received by faith.

Romans 4:1 What shall we say then that **Abraham our father**, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?

2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.

3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

- Then go to James 2:21 and let's take another look. Let's compare scripture.

James 2:21²¹ **Was not Abraham our father justified by works**, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

1. Was Abraham justified by works before God, was the question asked – Ans, No.?
2. Does he have a reason to glory? – Yes. And who was he justified before – man.
3. **Romans 3:30 – says** ²⁰ Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall **no flesh be justified in his sight:**
4. Therefore man cannot justify himself before God by works.
5. Do works have anything to do with being justified before God then? – No.
6. But works however justify us before man?
7. So in *James 2: 18-¹⁸ Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.* –
8. This is what mans says in James 2:18, it's not the Lord speaking, its man's opinion.

- There is more. Take a look at Romans 4.

Romans 4:3-6 ³ For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

⁴ Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

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

⁶ Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,

- ❖ So you see again, over and over again here in Romans 4, not of works, not of works.
- ❖ Now again look further in Romans 4; in that passage of scripture we see even more evidence of faith being responsible for salvation and not works.

Romans 4:8-12

⁸ Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute *(charge or hold accountable for)* sin.

⁹ Cometh **this blessedness** then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? **for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.**

¹⁰ **How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.**

¹¹ **And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised:** that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:

¹² And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the **steps of that faith** of our father Abraham, **which he had being yet uncircumcised.**

- ❖ Let me ask you this question?

- ✓ When did Abraham believe?
- ✓ Was it before he was circumcised or after he was circumcised.
- ❖ Genesis 12 – we see Abram calling upon the Lord by faith.
- ❖ He got saved when he was 75 years old as Genesis 12:4 tells us how old Abram was when he got saved.
- ❖ And in Genesis 12:8 it tells us he got saved by calling upon the name of the Lord.
- ❖ It was only after Abraham was 100 years old was he circumcised.
- The bible tells us in Joshua 24 verse 2 that up to this point in Abraham's life he was still worshipping other gods and was not saved until we read in Genesis 12:8 where he calls upon the name of the Lord and is saved.

Joshua 24:2 ² And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of **Abraham**, and the father of Nachor: **and they served other gods.**

❖ **When we read in James 2:21** ²¹ **Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?**

- This event of Abraham wanting to sacrifice his son upon the alter was after Abraham had believed.
 - Abraham here was well over a 100 years, because he already had a son (a strong son able to carry wood, so he must have been a grown boy at least). So Abraham must have been about 130 years old when he wanted to sacrifice his only son.
 - Abraham believed God before he was circumcised. That was when he was 75 years old (Gen 12:4).
1. So is this verse talking about Abraham's personal salvation? – No its not.
 2. Abraham had been justified by God way before he had offered up his son upon the alter.
 3. Because Abraham was already being called a prophet by God before the sacrifice of his son.
 4. So he was already doing great things for God, so how ridiculous is it that he must have been saved here by his works in James 2:21. It makes no sense.

And in 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.

1. Here we see the scripture being fulfilled which God had promised to Abraham back in Genesis 15, that he would make a great nation in him.
2. So this is the fulfillment of the OT in Genesis 15, it's not that he got saved here in James 2:21.
3. You see Abraham was already saved, but when he sacrificed his son upon the alter, that was when he was justified by man, because of the works which he showed to men.
4. Because until that time, just building an alter unto God was nothing, but sacrificing you son was a big deal, and that's when man justified him before them because of the faith that he had and would carry out that command by the Lord.

But let me say this, as I said last week.

- ✚ There are other preachers out there like Paul Washer and David Cloud, and many others who teach and preach that to be a Christian you need to repent of your sins.
- ✚ But repenting of your sins is you trying to do good works to be saved.
- ❖ **Nowhere in the entire bible does it say that a person needs to repent of their sins to be saved. Nowhere.**
 - Yet the book of John which was written so that we might know the will of God, and come to salvation never ever mentions, not even once, the word repent or repentance.
 - ✓ So how is it – that a book which is specifically geared up to teach and to preach salvation never mentions to repent.
 - **The reason is- repentance is not part of salvation.**
 1. Yet the whole book is geared for the salvation and understanding of who Jesus is.
 2. It therefore makes no sense at all that there are these preachers who continue to preach that in order for you to be saved you have to repent of your sins, and somehow continue to live a life without sin to be saved.
 3. That's works my friend. And you don't get saved by doing works.
 4. But - This is what is taught today in many Baptist churches throughout the world.

Titus 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, **Repent**, and be baptized **every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins**, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Acts 3:19 Repent ye therefore, and **be converted**, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.

Acts 20:21 Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, **repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Acts 26:20 But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should **repent** and **turn to God**, and do works meet for repentance.

- ✓ Others say - you need to repent of your sins to get saved.
- ✓ But look at the bible's way of how to get saved.

Mark 16:16 He that **believeth** and is baptized shall **be saved**; but he that **believeth not shall be damned.**

Acts 2:21 And it shall come to pass, that **whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.**

Acts 15:11

But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall **be saved**, even as they.

Acts 16:29-31 King James Version (KJV)

²⁹ Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, ³⁰ And brought them out, and said, **Sirs, what must I do to be saved?**

³¹ And they said, **Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved**, and thy house.

Romans 10:8-10 King James Version (KJV)

⁸ But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

⁹ **That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.**

¹⁰ For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and **with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.**

Romans 10:13 **For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.**

❖ Again,

2 Thessalonians 2:10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; **because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.**

Romans 1:16

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for **it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth**; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Ephesians 2:7-9 ⁷ That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

⁸ **For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:**

⁹ **Not of works, lest any man should boast.**

So: How shall they be saved?

PRAYER.....CLOSE