

## How Does Faith Work?

### The Preview of Faith

- James is writing to \_\_\_\_\_ (James 1:1, 18)
- It is unlikely that James is going to tell the audience \_\_\_\_\_ to become saved, but he will show us \_\_\_\_\_ saving faith looks like.

### The “Problem” of Faith

- James 2<sup>24</sup> – You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone.
- Romans 3<sup>28</sup> – For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.

### A Pretend Faith (James 2<sup>14</sup> – 2<sup>17</sup>)

1. What use is that?
  - a. It is possible to \_\_\_\_\_ to have faith
  - b. The claim is ... someone says they have faith ... but they have no \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. That claim is \_\_\_\_\_
2. Is that faith able to save?
  - a. The Greek grammar assumes the answer is NO
3. Poorly clothed is the intended sense in this context
4. Middle voice for the commands implies contempt for the poor.
5. What use is that?
6. Even so ... faith without works is \_\_\_\_\_

### The Product of Faith (James 2<sup>18</sup> – 2<sup>19</sup>)

- James continues to argue his point via an imaginary opponent
- He issues the challenge ... \_\_\_\_\_ me!
- His use of the \_\_\_\_\_ tense implies those works will come after the faith.
- If you are, what you were, then you’re not.
- True saving faith requires a proper response to the basic intellectual tenants of Christianity

### The Proof of Faith (James 2<sup>20</sup> – 2<sup>24</sup>)

1. Example of Abraham
  - A. When does James say Abraham was justified?
    - “when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar”
  - B. What was the result?
    - Faith was \_\_\_\_\_
  - C. Key phrase – “and the Scripture was fulfilled ...”
    - James quotes Genesis 15:6 “it was reckoned to him as righteousness ...”
  - D. When does Paul say Abraham was justified?
    - He also quotes Genesis 15:6, but he says in Romans 3:28 that Abraham was
  - E. Central verse – 2<sup>24</sup> You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone  
Conclusion is ... Paul’s use of “justify” is positional, that justification given to us with the new birth; James is using “justify” in the “proof is in the pudding” sense.
2. Example of Rahab

### The Prolog (James 2<sup>26</sup>)

- <sup>26</sup> For just as the body without *the* spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

Τί τὸ ὄφελος, ἀδελφοί μου, ἐὰν πίστιν λέγη τις ἔχειν ἔργα δὲ μὴ ἔχη; μὴ δύναται ἡ πίστις σῶσαι αὐτόν; (James 2:14)

What the use, brethren my, if faith he says someone to have works but not he has? Is able that faith to save him?

Ἀβραὰμ ὁ πατὴρ ἡμῶν οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων ἐδικαιώθη ἀνεύγκας Ἰσαὰκ τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον; (James 2:21)

Lexical data for δικαιόω – I justify

1. *to show, exhibit, one to be righteous* (i. e. from their life, character, and deeds) – James' use
2. *to declare, pronounce, one to be just*, which never means *to make worthy*, but *to judge worthy, to declare worthy, to treat as worthy; to declare guiltless* one accused or who may be accused, *acquitted of a charge or reproach* – Paul's use

Questions for Discussion:

1. Have you ever witnessed a false conversion? What led you to believe it was a false conversion?
2. Consider the argument from Sunday ...
  - a. When does James say Abraham was justified? James 2:21
  - b. When does Paul say Abraham was justified? Romans 4:1–12
  - c. How is this apparent “contradiction” resolved?
3. How does Paul's appeal to circumcision in Romans 4:10–11 help distinguish the difference in the use of “justify” by Paul and James? Is circumcision a work?
4. Get a volunteer or two to paraphrase James 2<sup>24</sup> in their own words with explanation.