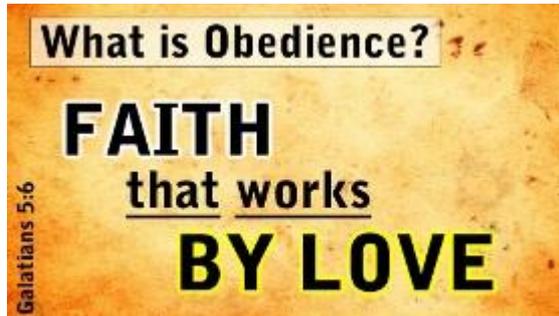


DO YOU HAVE A FAITH WHICH WORKS BY LOVE?

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There are many sermons available today that speak of faith, and salvation through faith alone, which is true. But you rarely hear a sermon that shows us from the Bible **what faith should LOOK LIKE in our lives**. Christians are so afraid of doing works today, because deceivers have come into our midst, lulling the people into a sleepy faith that brings no glory to God. "*Just believe!*" we are told, and the message goes no further and people are left languishing in a 'faith' that does not allow Jesus to work **His mighty works in and through them** (Colossians 1:29). So what is obedience? Is it merely conforming to a set of rules, because 'God said so'? No! Everything done in our lives, must be of faith, in love. The apostle Paul put it this way:

Galatians 5:6 ...'For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but FAITH WHICH WORKETH BY LOVE.'

Can you see what the apostle is saying above? What does true faith do? It WORKS. And not just that, it works BY LOVE. There are many professed Christians in the world who are in two categories, and BOTH categories are NOT of faith. The one says that we just need to 'believe' in Jesus, going no further, and not experiencing a true sanctifying life of faith. And the other says that we must do works to be saved. I would not want to be in either category. No, what the apostle Paul confirmed is what REALLY COUNTS, and that is a "*FAITH that works BY LOVE.*"

We are **not** saved by faith AND works, we are saved **by grace through faith**. But true faith in Christ Jesus will produce works of love. It is Christ who works in us (Philippians 2:13). So to have faith in Christ and do no works, when we have opportunity, is not faith at all. To be just is to be righteous, and a righteous man will **do** righteous acts. That is the fruit of righteousness. But how does he do these works? By faith:

By faith Abel **offered** a more excellent sacrifice - Hebrews 11:4.

By faith Noah **moved with fear** preparing an ark to the saving of his family - Hebrews 11:7.

By faith Abraham **obeyed** and he went out not knowing where he went - Hebrews 11:8.

John 8:39 ...'Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.'

Mark this point well - Who resides in us by FAITH? Jesus Christ through the Spirit. So who will LEAD us each day? Jesus Christ. **And what will the Lord lead us into?** Sin? Laziness? Worldliness? Entertainment? Selfishness? NO! - Obedience and good works. So if we have a true, living faith, we will gladly **DO as the Lord DIRECTS!** Yet it is not us doing the work. It is the Lord through the Spirit. We simply have to ALLOW Him to do His work in us. The problem is, many of us are NOT allowing the Lord to work in us. Surrender and sacrifice is what we need!

Philippians 2:13 ...'For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.'

Now there are many who like to quote what Paul said of Abraham, but don't like to quote what James said of Abraham. So let us look at both, so we can receive the WHOLE council of God. Both Paul and James were inspired by the Holy Spirit right? So we must use them both and thus gain a clear understanding:

Romans 4:2-3 ...'For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.'

James 2:21-24 ...'Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered 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.'

Is there a contradiction between Paul and James? No, as James also confirms that righteousness was imputed to Abraham due to his faith in God. But James takes it a step further, a step that many Christians today are afraid to take. James confirms that Abraham's faith "WROUGHT with his works". Now that word 'wrought' in the original language means to 'help'. In other words, Abraham's faith (of which was imputed to him righteousness), HELPED him to work. And that's what true faith will do for all of us. It will CAUSE us to work. Abraham was a 'doer' of God's Word (James 1:22), BECAUSE he believed in God and His promises.

*Hebrews 11:8 ...'By **faith** Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.'*

Abraham had a "**FAITH that works BY LOVE**".

Jesus confirmed Himself what James said and complements both Paul and James. Look at what Jesus said in *John 15:4-6 ...'Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me, I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.'*

*Matthew 25:33-45 ...'And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, **Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.** Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me **no** meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me **no** drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me **not** in: naked, and ye clothed me **not**: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me **not**. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, **Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.**'*

So if we abide in Christ, then we will bring forth fruit [works], because Christ will be in us doing the work. But if we are not bringing forth fruit, then that shows we are NOT abiding in Christ and will be 'cast into the fire'. **This is a serious message that we must understand.**

Many are so quick to take the odd verse from Paul which speaks of 'faith only', and yet they ignore what the REST of the Bible, including Paul's writings, say about what faith LOOKS LIKE in our lives. Can we be saved merely professing faith and yet continuing to live in sin? Can we be saved merely professing faith and yet doing no good works, if we have the chance to? [NOTE: The thief on the cross did not have a chance to SHOW his faith in Christ]. Let's take a look at what Jesus said:

*John 14:12 ...'Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that **believeth** on me, **the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.**'*

Now I ask this question to people who have been professing Christians for a long time. Are you doing the 'works of Christ'? Can you 'boast' of having faith and being saved and yet at the same time manifest no good works in your life? Look at the apostles and disciples of Christ. Did they simply boast about having faith? No! They were DOERS of the Word. They laboured day and night for the gospel and allowed Christ to perform His works in and through them. Look at our church pioneers. Did they simply boast of 'faith'? No! They too laboured day and night for the gospel, allowing Christ to work in them. They all had true faith - a "**faith that works by love**".

1 Corinthians 15:10 ...'But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.'

*Colossians 1:28-29 ...'Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Whereunto **I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.**'*

*Galatians 6:8-9 ... 'For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; **but he that soweth to the Spirit** shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And **let us not be weary in well doing**: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.'*

Titus 2:13-14 ... 'Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.'

Titus 3:4-8 ... 'But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 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; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.'

Why did Paul 'labour more abundantly' if he preached a 'believe only' message? It is because he did NOT preach a 'believe only' message. He preached a message of "FAITH that works BY LOVE". It is faith that compels us to work. Our own works cannot redeem us from sin. Only faith in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ can save us. But that faith, if it is a **genuine faith, WILL WORK.**

*Philippians 2:5-8 ... 'Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, **he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.**'*

Now this is the key to this whole message. We are to have the mind of Christ. Now what did the mind of Christ do when He was on earth? He surrendered self, had complete faith in His Father, kept the Father's commands perfectly, performed the Father's works, healed the sick, preached the gospel, and much more. Now is the mind of Christ any different now than it was then? No! So if this mind is in us, what will this mind COMPEL us to do? The works that Jesus did (John 14:12).

So the REAL question is, **do you have the mind of Christ?**

What do we need to do in order to HAVE the mind of Christ and allow Christ to WORK in us? ... *Galatians 2:20 ... 'I am **crucified** with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.'*

*Romans 6:11 ... 'Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be **dead indeed unto sin**, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.'*

So we can see that self needs to be crucified in order to have the mind of Christ and **Him living** in us through faith. THAT then becomes a LIVING faith; a true, genuine faith that works the works of Christ. And we can then understand what the apostle James was saying that 'faith without works is DEAD'. This means there are TWO kinds of faith - a LIVING faith that saves and a DEAD faith that does nothing for us. A living faith is one that allows

Christ to dwell in us, surrendering self and the world, and allowing Christ to do His Work in us. A dead faith is one that James spoke of. One that thinks you only need to simply 'believe' in Jesus without allowing Him to CHANGE you and WORK in you.

Now there are some who worry about works and worry about whether they are doing enough works to be saved. Their thoughts are on 'works', rather than on Christ Himself. And this kind of thinking will get us nowhere. We need to fix our minds on Christ in order to work, because as Christ said Himself ... "**without Me, ye can do nothing.**" (John 15:5)

*"The man that is so anxious and so dreadfully afraid that you will not let him have any works to do and that you are going to destroy all his works--if **Christ is dwelling in His heart, He will find works to do.** Brethren, don't be so anxious about works; find the Lord Jesus Christ and you will find work, more than you can do. [Congregation: "Amen!"] But the difficulty is, when the people get their minds on works and works and works **instead of upon Jesus Christ in order to work**, they pervert the whole thing. Satan does not care how much a man professes justification by faith, and righteousness by faith, so long as he keeps his mind on works." (A.T.Jones, General Conference Bulletin, 1893, p.298)*

So in saying all of this, we must be careful to have the proper order of things. Remember, we need the mind of Christ in order to work. So that is what we are to do. Do not get your mind on works for salvation, fearing that you will be lost because you are not doing enough works. **Get your mind on Christ IN ORDER TO WORK.** And as we behold the lovely Jesus each and every day, **surrendering self**, allowing Him to put His mind in us, He will CAUSE us to work for Him.

*Ephesians 2:8-10 ...'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. For we are his workmanship, **created in Christ Jesus unto good works**, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.'*

Yes, we are saved by the grace of God through faith. But faith does not sleep. Faith does not slumber. Faith is not lazy. Faith is not selfish. True faith GIVES ALL, just as Jesus Christ GAVE ALL for us. This is what obedience and true faith is. It is a "**faith that works by love**" (Galatians 5:6).

*1 Thessalonians 1:2-3 ...'We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; Remembering without ceasing your **work of faith, and labour of love**, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father.'*

"Let this mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus." - Are you surrendering self in order for Christ to work?

*Matthew 5:16 ...'Let your light so shine before men, **that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father** which is in heaven.'*

*Matthew 25:21 ...'His lord said unto him, well done, thou good and **faithful servant**: thou hast been **faithful** over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.'*

*1 Corinthians 15:58 ...'Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, **always abounding in the work of the Lord**, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.'*

*"The Lord Jesus **expects fruit** from every soul that professes to believe in Him. He expects of all of us much more than we give Him. **Those who will take Him as their Helper will be branches that will bear fruit abundantly.** 'Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me.' [Verses 3, 4.] In the kind of fruit we bear, we give to the world an evidence as to whether or not we are united to the true vine. Some branches bear fruit, but not good fruit. So some people profess to be children of God; but unless they bear fruit in harmony with the character and example of Jesus Christ, they give to the world a false representation. If we would make a right use of all the light and opportunities that have been granted to us, we must represent the truth in its purity. We must seek to copy after the example of our Saviour. 'I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in Me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing.' [Verse 5.] If as branches we draw our nourishment from the vine Jesus Christ, we have a right to expect that He will give us of His Holy Spirit. **He will work with us, and His power will rest upon us.**" (Ms45-1908, Lodi, California - Sermon 'That Ye Should Go and Bring Forth Fruit', May 5, 1908)*