

Sunday, November 15, 2020

Text: James 2:20-26

Title: Justified by Works

*Proposition:* Saving faith is accompanied by works (v.20).

*Outline:*

1st Argument: Abraham's Example (vv.21-24)

2nd Argument: Rahab's Example (v.25)

Concluding Illustration (v.26)

*Study Guide Questions:*

(As always, leaders who use these questions can pick and choose which they think are best for their group. I include more than enough so you have freedom to give direction, and not so you feel like you need to ask or answer them all.)

1. Print out Hebrews 11 and read through the Hall of Faith. As you read, underline what actions demonstrated faith. How would this chapter be different without works?
2. How has God worked in your life following your study and meditation of James 2:14-19?
3. In Chapter 2:20, James bluntly says "that faith without works is useless." Is that difficult for you to agree with? Why or why not? Was there a time in your life in which you would have disagreed?
4. Did you learn anything about Abraham's life that made the story of his sacrifice of Isaac even more compelling?
5. How does Paul use the word *justified* in Romans 3:23-28 differently than James' does in James 2:21-25?
6. How does faith work *with* works in v.22? In what way is faith perfected by works? Do these verses mean that we aren't saved by grace through faith in Christ (Ephesians 2:8)?
7. How is your faith currently working with works and being perfected by works in your life?
8. In Genesis 22:12, God encouraged Abraham: "for now I know that you fear God." Can you think of a time in your life in which God reckoning you righteous through

faith (James 2:23; Genesis 15:6) was particularly evidenced in your life, whether by your repenting of sin or by acts of righteousness?

9. What kinds of works has James been talking about so far in the letter?
10. In James 2:24, James says, "You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone." Try explaining the verse in your own words (using as many words as necessary): "You see that a man is ... by works and not by faith alone."
11. What works did Rahab do which demonstrated her faith? (James 2:25; Judges 2)
12. James uses an example of sacrificial works for Abraham and risky works for Rahab. These extreme examples were well-known. Do these extreme examples make other works God calls us to seem more manageable? Do these examples challenge you about what works God is expecting from you? Do you think we should push ourselves to works that are risky and sacrificial or wait till they come to us? Why or why not?
13. How do you allow v.26 to have its full weight in your life, neither feeling uncalled for doubts nor making wrongful assumptions? Can v.26 be encouraging?
14. If you were listed in the Hall of Faith, what works would follow your name? Can every day acts of obedience be done by faith and in perfection of faith?
15. What distinguishes the true believers work in faith from the moral deeds of those without Christ?