

The Work of Faith in Trials

James 2:21-26

Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness” —and he was called a friend of God. You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.

In the midst of trials, Biblical faith is strong when...

1. Faith is expressed by works.

Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? James 2:21

Abraham, our Father

- . Physically with all Jews
- . Spiritually with all Christ-followers

Rom. 4:11; Gal. 3:7

Justified – 2 meanings

- . Acquittal – Rom. 3:24
- . Vindication - Rom 3:4, 1 Tim. 3:16

Phony Faith?

- . No sacrifice.
- . No commitment.
- . No effort.
- . No real giving up of anything.
- . No change of priorities.

You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. (24)

“No one can be good and do good unless God’s grace first makes him good; and no one becomes good by works, but good works are done only by him who is good – all works that are good flow from grace.”

Martin Luther

2. Faith is evident in works.

You see that faith was active along with his works. James 2:22a

“And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute.”
(2:25a) (a woman, a Gentile, a harlot)

Rahab

Listed with Abraham

Heb. 11:8,17,31

(people of faith)

Great-grandmother of David

Matt. 1:5

(human lineage of Jesus)

. Identify with Abraham? Spiritual father, blessed, revered; Sacrificial!

. Identify with Rahab? Desperate; prostitute; redeemed; far from God; willing to change her allegiance; Courageous!

Justified by works –

When she received the messengers

... and sent them out by another way?

She protected them
She identified with them – trusted them
She obeyed them
She was ready to sacrifice her life.

3. Faith is enclosed by works.

... faith was completed by his works
James 2:22b

Not faith plus works, but saving faith is wrapped with works.

The seed planted has the DNA of the fruit that it will produce later.

“Faith alone justifies, but the faith that justifies is never alone.” John Calvin

“Let all who hold this faith and hope in holy deeds abound; thus faith approves itself sincere by active virtue crowned.”

“completed”

- . Brought to its intended goal
- . Accomplished its purpose

For as the body apart from
the spirit is dead (26)

... so also faith apart from works
is dead.

“Grace is the cause, the source,
the catalyst to all true obedience. Such obedience is
enabled by grace, motivated by love and gratitude and
flowing from transformed hearts.”

Matt Chandler

Not all who say they believe in Jesus are really saved.
Not everyone who says to Me,
Lord, Lord will enter the kingdom of Heaven, but the one
who does
the will of my Father
“I never knew you.”
Matt. 7:21-23

And therefore it produces...

**1. Righteousness – being right
with God**

And the Scripture was fulfilled that says Abraham believed God...

James 2:23a

God can be trusted

God's promises can be trusted

And it was counted to him as righteousness...

He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for

His name's sake.

Psalm 23:3

... in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

2 Cor. 5:21

2. Relationship – being a friend of God

... he was called a friend of God

James 2:23b

A Friend of God

. Abraham – 2 Chron. 20:7; Isa. 41:8

. All Christ-followers

“You are my friends, if you

do what I command you.
I have called you friends.”

John 15:14-15

“Reconciled!” – Enemies have become friends!
For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God
by the death of His Son... Rom. 5:10

That is in Christ God was reconciling the world to Himself,
not counting their trespass against them...
2 Cor. 5:19