

Grace



It's all about what Christ has done **for me.**

Holiness



It's all about what Christ is doing **in me.**

1 John 3



It's all about what Christ is doing **through me.**

James 2

The apparent conflict

Paul (Faith = justification > deeds)

Ephesians 2:8-9

“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast.”

John
(Faith = faithfulness > justification)

1 John 3:9

“No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.”

James
(Faith + works = justification)

James 2:24

“You see that a man is justified by works, and not by faith alone.”

What is the relationship between a faith confession and faithful conduct?

Jewish	Roman Catholic	Reformed Protestant	Radical Grace
Faithfulness is all that matters	Faithfulness is an expression of faith	Faithfulness is a marker of faith	Faithfulness is a fruit of faith
Faithfulness	Faith	Faith	Faith
=	=	/	>
Faith	Faithfulness	Faithfulness	Faithfulness

Possible interpretations

1. Paul and James reflect a tension in the early church. (Historical critics)
2. Good works are the marker of authentic faith. (John Calvin)
3. Good works justify us before God. (Roman Catholic)
4. Good works justify us before man and save us in our usefulness in this life.



Principle #1

Faith without action is dead with respect to **our ministry.**

“14 **What use is it**, my brethren, **if a man says** he has faith, but he has no **works**? Can that faith **save** him? 15 If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,” and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? 17 Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.”

Principle #1

Faith without action is dead with respect to **our ministry.**

“What use is it”

James is looking at faith in a temporal practical sense.

“if a man says he has faith”

James is looking at the claim to faith (talking the talk).

“but he has no works?”

Think of James’ use of “works” as “deeds” which is the more common meaning.

“Can *that* faith save him?” James is clearly stating that we are saved by works.

The question is “saved from what?”

The context of the word “saved” in James is not “eternal life” but “usefulness in this life.”

1 Timothy 3:15

“But women shall be **preserved (saved)** through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.”

1 Corinthians 3:10-17

“¹⁵ If any man’s work is **burned up**, he shall **suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved**, yet so as through fire. ¹⁶ Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? ¹⁷ If any man destroys the temple of God, God will **destroy** him,”

Principle #2

Faith without action is dead with respect to our witness.

“¹⁸ But someone may well say, “You have faith, and I have works; **show me** your faith without the works, and **I will show you** my faith by my works.” ¹⁹ You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. ²⁰ But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works **is useless?**”

Principle #2

Faith without action is dead with respect to our witness.

“show me . . . and I will show you”

James is looking at faith as it is seen by man (by action) not God (who looks at the heart).

“is useless?”

James is looking at faith in a practical sense or usefulness in this life.

Matthew 5:16

“Let your light shine **before men** in such a way that they may **see your good works**, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”

It is possible to have real light but not to have it seen by men so as to glorify God.

Such light is useless.

Principle #3

Faith without action is dead with respect to our identity.

“²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? ²² You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; ²³ **and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness,”** and he was called the friend of God. ²⁴ **You see that a man is justified by works, and not by faith alone.** ²⁵ And in the same way was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works, when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? ²⁶ For **just as the body without the spirit is dead**, so also faith without works is dead.”

Principle #3

Faith without action is dead with respect to our identity.

“²⁴ You see that a man is justified by works, and not by faith alone.”

James is looking at justification before man. Paul refers to justification before God.

Romans 4:2-3

“For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about; **but not before God.** For what does the Scripture say? ‘And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.’”

“²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? ²² You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; ²³ and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “*And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.*” and he was called the friend of God.”

Abraham is declared to be justified by faith in Gen.15

A private declaration

Abraham's faith is perfected and fulfilled in Gen.22

A public display

“²⁶ For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.”

Faith claims are like a dead, inanimate body being useless.

Action is like the energizing spirit that renders the body useful.

Ephesians 2:8-10

“For by grace you have been **saved through faith**; and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus **for good works**, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

Galatians 5:6

“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but **faith working** through love.”

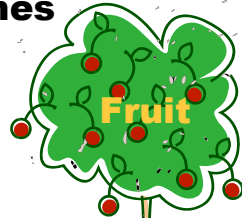
That which is of use in saving us in this life.

That which justifies before man.

That which saves us in the life to come.

That which justifies before God.

James



Faith



Paul

Justification before God is not by the Spirit but by the Cross.

Surrogate (Substitute)

Redemption, Reconciliation, Satisfaction

before God

Paraclete (Enabler)

Assurance, Usefulness, Fulfillment

before man

True Faith

Yes

Yes

Justifies before God

Paul says “No!”

Produces Fruit of the Spirit

- inner change
- outer deeds

Ephesians 2:8-10

“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

Our identity, witness, & ministry

“In Christ” by faith

“tell me the good news”

Holiness



Christ in us
“show me God’s love”

Time