

**Scriptures and Doctrine :: Justification Faith Vs Works****Justification Faith Vs Works - posted by joeSOC, on: 2006/9/5 5:48**

Hello everybody My name is Joe. I wish to know what the Author meant by the verse below, as opposed to justification by Faith, which was expressed in the writings of Paul.

Jam 2:21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

Thank you

Joe

Re: Justification Faith Vs Works - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2006/9/5 9:42

Welcome to SI Joe, glad you have joined the forum and please do check out the treasure of resources here. You can find some great sermons and articles that cover many subjects including justification.

I think maybe Mr. John Wesley's explanation of the verse from James that you quoted may help shed some light... Was not Abraham justified by works - St. Paul says he was justified by faith, Rom 4:2, &c.: yet St. James does not contradict him; for he does not speak of the same justification. St. Paul speaks of that which Abraham received many years before Isaac was born, Gen 15:6. St. James, of that which he did not receive till he had offered up Isaac on the altar. He was justified, therefore, in St. Paul's sense, (that is, accounted righteous,) by faith, antecedent to his works. He was justified in St. James's sense, (that is, made righteous,) by works, consequent to his faith. So that St. James's justification by works is the fruit of St Paul's justification by faith.

-from *John Wesley's Explanatory Notes on the Whole Bible*

Re: Justification Faith Vs Works - posted by beenblake (), on: 2006/9/5 10:08

Dear Joe,

At first glance, it would seem the bible contradicts itself. Paul said in Romans 4:2 (NAS), "For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God."

We have to look at the verse in the context of the scripture in the book of James, and in context of the whole of scripture. In James, if we read further, we begin to see what James was speaking about.

James 2:22-24 (NAS)

"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."

The point James was trying to establish is that faith without works is an empty faith. It is not a true faith in a true God.

Think of this...we are to have faith that Christ can save us and work in us. If Jesus is truly working inside of us, then the Spirit in us should produce fruit. We should produce fruit in the way of works. The works we do, then, are not our own, they are not our works, but are the works of God. God is working in us, so that our works become His works.

James is trying to say that we need to produce good works as a result of our faith being true.

Paul also emphasized this in Ephesians 2:10 (NAS), "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them." And in Colossians 1:10, Paul said, "...bearing fruit in every good work."

So you see, the works are not our own, but instead are fruit. In the above scripture, when Abraham was justified by works, it was not his "own" works, but the "works" of God in him. James tries to establish this point by following the above scripture with a quote from the old testament saying that the righteous works of Abraham were credited by way of believing.

This is such an important thing because Jesus said plainly...

Matthew 3:10(NAS) "The axe is already laid at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

At first, you might think that we need to rush out and do a bunch of good works. However, we cannot do anything on our own. Our works are nothing unless they are the fruit of God. In the book of John, Jesus was quoted as saying, (John 15: 5,6 - NAS) "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned."

And so, "working" or "works" are important, but they are not achieved by "working" by our own accord. Our works are only good when we abide in Christ. When we truly abide in Christ, and Christ in us, we are made one with Christ. When this happens, we produce fruit naturally. We do good works because we are one with Christ. Often times, these good works are not even recognizable by us, but only by God who knows all things and sees all things. We often judge by what we can see, but God judges differently.

And so, the important thing for us is to allow God to work in us. How do we do that?

Luke 9:23(NAS) "And He was saying to them all, 'If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.'"

We need to die daily to the world and self, and give ourselves to Jesus. Every day, we need to give ourselves to Jesus and ask Him to come into us.

In John 6, Jesus said He was the bread of Heaven. In the model prayer, Jesus said we should ask for our daily bread. Everyday, we need to ask for Jesus and accept Him into our heart. We should confess our sins before God, ask Jesus to remove them, and then abide in Christ. When this happens, our faith becomes true. When our faith is true, it produces good works.

Otherwise, according to James, if we are not producing works, then our faith is dead (James 2:26). Our faith should produce works.

As a side note, though this is true, this is not a means by which we can judge other people. We have no place saying who is saved and who is not. Just because a person is not producing any fruit, we cannot say, "You are not a Christian." We can, however, point out that they have no works, or that their works conflict with the bible. In this, we should always encourage others in love, with the soul purpose of strengthening their faith. However, our goal should never be to use force. Christ never used force, but always gave Himself unto others. We should do no less.

Hope this helps,
In Christ,

Blake

Re:, on: 2006/9/5 13:11

Quote:
-----"We have to look at the verse in the context of the scripture in the book of James, and in context of the whole of scripture. In James, if we read further, we begin to see what James was speaking about."... "The point James was trying to establish is that faith without works is an empty faith. It is not a true faith in a true God."

Actually Been, contextually speaking, the whole of James is really referring to the faith of Jesus Christ having been made manifest in the new born of Christ Jesus. A new plumbline in Him has now been established that can only honor God. Failure to do so is displeasing to Him.

:-)rm

Re: - posted by joeSOC, on: 2006/9/7 4:50

Thanks I really appreciate it

Quote:

Re: - posted by GraceAlone (), on: 2006/9/7 12:50

Saved life timeline:

---->salvation(justification)---->fruit(sanctification)---->death(glorification)

NOT

---->fruit(sanctification)---->salvation(justification)---->death(glorification)

Re:, on: 2006/9/7 12:59

NOT

---->fruit(sanctification)---->salvation(justification)---->death(glorification)

But thats the way Abel did it.

:-D

Re: - posted by brentbarnett (), on: 2006/9/7 15:34

The clear teaching of James is that faith without works is dead. James never says that faith itself is a work. He says that it is meaningless to simply believe that Jesus is God. Even the demons believe that. In other words, it is not necessarily sufficient for salvation for a person to have mere intellectual assent to a proposition about the divinity of Christ. True salvation comes with it a regeneration of the heart, a rebirth of the spirit, and a renewing of the mind. The Christian is truly a new creation in Christ. This comes when a person responds to the revelation that God has given him (creation, conscience, Scripture), repents of his sin, and puts his trust in the work of Christ on the cross to forgive him of his sin. There is a change of belief accompanied by a change of heart and will. This is salvation. Sanctification is making the mind more and more in line with truth, training the will more and more in self-control, recalibrating the emotions, and taking any desire of the heart that is toward sin and making it obedient unto the Lordship of Christ. This is a process which is completed when we are glorified. When we are glorified, we even get new bodies. Works are the fruit of salvation which starts with the Spirit convicting men and women of sin. Mankind responds in faith and repentance leading to fruit and obedience.

God bless.

Brent Barnett

www.relevantbibleteaching.com

Re:, on: 2006/9/7 16:07

Brent Barnett,

I just read your doctrinal statement. For me, you are already in trouble.

:-(:-D

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2006/9/7 19:04

A dead man named Jesus was brought back to life after three day- how can you ever remain the same?

This is what it all boils down to. Or as I once saw philogos say: Jesus is Lord, so now what are you going to do about it ?

This is what all this debate ultimately boils down to, and what the entire justification by faith doctrine centers around.

Re: - posted by CJaKfOrEsT (), on: 2006/9/7 19:38

Quote:

Ormyly wrote:

But thats the way Abel did it.

Notice that in Hebrews, the author writes "**By faith** Abel offered...by which he obtained **witness that he was righteous ness..**" (Heb 11:4). This comes back to the age old Judaic question, "Was Abraham **justified by** his circumcision?" Of course we know that Abraham was Justified **by faith**. The circumcision was just a **sign** of his covenant, not the covenant itself. Abel wasn't "saved" by his sacrifice, but by his sacrifice, his righteousness (which was by faith) was displayed. One can assume that there was an event, that is unspoken in Scripture, where he came to a realisation of his need for an atoning sacrifice. It was his faith in that sacrificial atonement that saved him, not the act of sacrifice. I know it sounds somewhat antic, but allow me to explain the reason for this deliberate distinction.

Therefore, GraceAlone's order is correct without exception. Rearrange the order, and you don't have salvation, but damnation. Fruit that comes before salvation is **self righteousness** and therefore is as **filthy rags** before God. Those of us who have come to a place of usefulness in God, have come to a keen realisation the "in me and my flesh there is no good thing". Paul made it clear that he had much to boast about, in a worldly sense, but he counted it all as **dung** when compared to the glories of Christ. He would rather boast in his weaknesses, knowing that when he was weak, Christ was made strong.

Herein is the genius of God's grace revealed:

Quote:

-----"For by grace (from God) are ye saved (by God) through faith (in God); and that is not of yourselves: it is a gift **of God.**"
Eph 2:8 (emphasis added)

Note the contrast that follows:

Quote:

-----"Not of works (by us), lest any man should boast."
Eph 2:9 (emphasis added)

And then the following reason behind this salvation:

Quote:

-----"For we are **His workmanship**, created in Christ Jesus **unto good works**, which God (not us) hath before ordained that we should walk in them."
Eph 2:10 (emphasis added)

I hope this helps in clarification.

Re:, on: 2006/9/7 20:18

The point is made that Abel was NOT depraved. He could make choices from a freewill. His fully choosing and giving his best, pleased God. Was he saved? He was justified but had to wait for the Blood of Jesus to be shed that peace with God would be made complete, allowing him entrance into the presence of God. Paradise held him secure for that moment when Jesus set him free.

Respectfully,

Orm

Re: - posted by CJaKfOrEsT (), on: 2006/9/9 5:57

Quote:

Ormy wrote:

The point is made that Abel was NOT depraved.

Where is this point made? Is it actually stated in Scripture, or is this an Arminian interpretation of the events?

As on who leans more on the Arminian side of the predetination debate, I am consantly aware of the need to remove such "glasses", as they have often led to my missing a profound revelation of God's truth, plainly spoken in Scripture.

Re:, on: 2006/9/9 6:39

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Abel, himself, makes the point.

However, please point out the "plainness" to me, that I missed, if you believe me to be in error.

Respectfully,

Orm

Re: - posted by GraceAlone (), on: 2006/9/10 17:22

Romans 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

Re: - posted by CJaKfOrEsT (), on: 2006/9/10 19:15

Quote:

Ormyly wrote:

Quote:

Abel, himself, makes the point.

However, please point out the "plainness" to me, that I missed, if you believe me to be in error.

Not stating that you are in error, only asking to point out where it is clearly stated, and citing a reason for my saking. That's all.-)

Re: - posted by CJaKfOrEsT (), on: 2006/9/10 19:22

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Not stating that you are in error, only asking to point out where it is clearly stated, and citing a reason for my saking. That's all.-)

God had respect for his blood sacrifice. Abel honored God and was pleased to do so. Sure doesn't sound like depravity to me. Of course, there were others we can both point to and conclude the same about them. I shouldn't think that necessary. But then you may wish to state they were special people God specifically chose, i.e., the special grace thing. If that is so, then you will have come up with where that is stated to be the case.

Turnabout is fairplay. :-D

Re: - posted by CJaKfOrEsT (), on: 2006/9/13 10:45

Quote:

Ormlly wrote:

God had respect for his blood sacrifice. Abel honored God and was pleased to do so. Sure doesn't sound like depravity to me.

One one hand we have someone saying that Abel wasn't depraved because he made a blood sacrifice that God respect ed, and on the other we have someone who says that Abel sacrificed because he realised that his own depravity require d it, and this pleased God. I think that either conclusion requires a certain amount of speculation. Obviously I take the latt er stance, based on the later revealed principle that "without the shedding of blood, there is no remision of sin".

Don't get me wrong, I don't believe that Abel was born "depraved" and therefore we was destined to sin, but more that A bel was bor into a sinful family, and the likelihood of him sinning was so probable that it was nigh on impossible to avoid . Once he sinned, he became depraved.

Can offered a product that was the result of the sweat of his brow, which is a type of trying to come to God in our own str ength. God could not honour this, as it denied his depravity. Abel realised that the fruit of the ground would not suffice to cover his sin, and that the only answer was "blood for blood", "life for life". God honoured this, because it acknowledged his depravity in a practical sense.

The issue of "depravity" is the issue of "goodness". Depravity is the absence of goodness. Note that Jesus responded th at there is "none good but God", when one tried to call him "good teacher". If that be the response of God Incarnate, the n how much more mortal Abel.

I welcome you expounding on Abel's lack of depravity, and how it maintains consistency with the rest of revealed Scriptu re, which states that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God".

Re: Justification Faith Vs Works - posted by Logic, on: 2006/9/13 11:31

Quote:

-----joeSOC wrote:

Hello everybody My name is Joe. I wish to know what the Author meant by the verse below, as opposed to justification by Faith, which was expressed in the writings of Paul.

Jam 2:21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

Thank you

Rom 4:2 if Abraham were justified by works, he has grounds for to glory; but not before God.

This is talking about circumcision(Rom 4:9-12) which is works of the Law.

Notice it sais in Jam 2:21, "when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar"

This is works of faith and not of the law.

Why did He offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

it was obediance to the command Genesis 22:2.

It would be a sin not to offer Isaac his son upon the altar.

Therefore not haveing works of faith is sin.

Faith is a collaborator with works.

We can't have faith without works, but we can but shouldn't have works without faith.

Re: - posted by GraceAlone (), on: 2006/9/13 19:16

Hebrews 11:4, 6

"BY FAITH Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks."

"But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."

He did it by Faith, thats why Abel's sacrifice was acceptable.

Hebrews 11:17

"17 By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son"

Romans 4:9

"For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness." (Genesis 15:6)

Faith was accounted to Abel just as it was Abraham. Now why need it be accounted if the man was already righteous?

Eph 2:8-9

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast."

Psalms 51:16-17

"For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart— These, O God, You will not despise."

1 Timothy 1:15

"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"

Romans 5:12

" Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because ALL sinned—"

Romans 3:22-26

"22 even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, 26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith."

Did Christ come to die for a bunch of righteous people? He didn't. He died for sinners. Otherwise why would we need to be justified? "There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable;...There is no fear of God before their eyes." Romans 3:10

Isaiah 9:17

"For everyone is a hypocrite and an evildoer, And every mouth speaks folly."

Re: - posted by GraceAlone (), on: 2006/9/13 21:41

"We can't have faith without works, but we can but shouldn't have works without faith."

I agree that "faith" without works is dead faith.
But we can not have works without faith.

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2006/9/14 2:29

We can't have the Faith of Christ without the Works of Christ. The Faith of Christ brings forth the the Works of Christ. We cannot have Christ's Works without the Faith of Christ. Without the faith of Christ, then faith has to be reckoned to u s because the Faith of Christ is not in us, but in believing God faith was reckoned to Abraham.

We believe God by the Christ that is birthed in us. It is His Faith that gives us righteousness.
It is His Works in us that are righteous, not ours.

1 Corinthians 1:28-31 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things w hich are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of Him are ye in Christ Jes us, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

In other words: God has chosen the Gentiles to be in Christ to show to all the things that are not, those other than Gentil es, that no flesh can glory in His presence. "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus". He is our wisdom, righteousness, sancti fication and redemption. Let us Glory in Christ.

That is why Israel Killed Jesus, because He said, "He was the Son of God", and He is the only one that can make man ri ghteous. They wanted to glory in Abraham.

This is our Justification: Galatians 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Je sus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

This is our Life: Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the lif e 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.

In Christ: Phillip

Re: - posted by GraceAlone (), on: 2006/9/14 17:00

Amen

Re:, on: 2006/9/14 19:19

I'm done

Re: - posted by GraceAlone (), on: 2006/9/19 23:54

Phil 2:12-13 "Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure." IT IS GOD WHO WORKS.