

Faith, Works and the Reward

A Discipleship Study

Part V

Understanding the Works Required of Christians

Hebrews 10:36 For you have need of endurance,
so that after you have done the will of God, you
may receive the promise...

In Part IV of our Discipleship study we have spent a good bit of time looking at *the faith required by Christians* as it relates to the full scope of our salvation. We know that faith in what God has said is the basis for everything related to our life as a Christian. And in this Part of our study we will see that ó in *working out our own salvation in fear and trembling* ó faith needs to be the basis of all of our good works as well. Here we will look more closely at what a good work is and what it is not. We will also see that in the overall scope of things, there is a great need for our doing good works ó it is the will of the Father. It will be these good works that will allow us to receive the promises.

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Part V — UNDERSTANDING THE WORKS REQUIRED OF CHRISTIANS

Lesson One: Is there a Need for Works?

NOTES:

In order to understand *the need for good works*, there must be an understanding of the full scope of salvation, otherwise one might be tempted to think (as so many do) that there is no need to do them. So let's begin with a brief review of the full scope of our salvation as it relates to God's ultimate purpose for us.

- The purpose of God ó from the beginning ó has always been that man would rule over the earth. This is not Plan B! Even when God created Lucifer and his host of angels, God knew that he would rebel, and knew that He would ultimately create man to rule over the earth in Satan's stead.
- God's purpose for saving man is the same as His purpose for His creating man.
- The Man was created in God's image and likeness:
 - Made in three parts spirit, soul and body:
 - Spirit the God-conscious part of man (God breathed His Breath His Spirit) into the Man
 - Soul the man-conscious (or the self-conscious his emotions, feelings and desires)
 - Body the flesh, bones and blood part of man (that which houses both the spirit and soul).
 - Covered in glory, awaiting the reception of the garments of splendor and majesty, reflecting God's image.

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- Adam's sin brought about death as it relates to all three parts.
- Every individual ever born to a man and a woman is born in the image and likeness of Adam; born dead in trespasses and sin (i.e., born separated from God and from his created purpose).

Salvation, in its full scope, addresses all three parts of man – the spirit and the soul and the body. Remember Paul wrote in **I Thessalonians 5:23** **Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.** From what we have studied thus far, can you describe how faith and works must work together in order to bring about our complete sanctification at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ?

And then, if we are found to have been sanctified entirely, what would this complete sanctification afford to us in the end?

Once we have been saved by grace through faith, there is a Scriptural expectation of works on our part! We have seen it already in several places, but we'll remember two places specifically for now. Paul says: **Ephesians 2:10** **For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.** And then in **Philippians 2:12** **So then, my beloved, just 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...** Here we see that the *working out of our own salvation in fear and trembling* has to do with *obedience*, which has to do with the salvation of the soul. In this facet of our salvation there is an ongoing expectation of work in

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order to bring our corrupted soul (our perverted emotions, feelings, and desires) under the control of the Holy Spirit. Herein is our moment to moment choice throughout every day: to either walk by the spirit and fulfill the desires of the Spirit, or walk by our corrupted fleshly desires and fulfill the desires of our flesh, with each choice having its own ramifications at the JSOC. Not only did we see that in our last lesson as we dealt with passages in Romans 8, but we can see it here, as well: **II Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.** According to this verse, what is going to take place at the JSOC?

Then we can also read: **Colossians 3:23 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men; 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve. 25 For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality.** How does this passage correspond with the verse above?

What are we supposed to do?

What will the Lord then do?

And how will the Lord mete out the consequences of our doing either right or wrong?

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The Basis for all Judgment

The basis for all judgment is works. Works *must* enter into each facet of our salvation from start to finish. It is the *work* of Jesus that allows us to be born again through faith, which is totally and completely apart from our own works. This is our spiritual birth, the facet of salvation related to our spirit. But thereafter, the facet of salvation related to our soul, and our judgment in the end *will be based upon what type of works we do*, whether good or bad¹.

All Christians will be judged at the JSOC to see how they lived their lives *after* becoming a Child of God. Succinctly stated, *the salvation of the soul is the process through which we learn to bring our corrupted soul under submission to the Holy Spirit, through our redeemed spirit*, and this salvation is inextricably linked to the redemption of the body. And this process is a continual work in and of itself. This is why, once we become saved, the choices that we make day in and day out will determine whether or not we will receive the full scope of salvation/redemption. The attainment of the fullness of this salvation will allow one to experience *life* in the Coming Age, which is receiving a position with Christ as His co-heir, and sharing in His glory and honor in His Kingdom. And if in the here and now we allow the process of the Father to *child-train* us, then we will not only have attained to the salvation of the soul, but also will receive the Redemption of the Body, as these two facets of salvation cannot be separated. But the loss of one's soul at the JSOC will prevent one from experiencing life in the coming age, which will be forfeiting the position with Christ as His co-heir, not being able to share in Christ's glory and honor in His Kingdom.

(This separation (this death) will only be experienced by the saved for the Coming Age. As things move into the eternal ages, God establishes a new order of things, having put down our last enemy ó death ó and wiping away all tears which have been shed by those who did not receive the salvation of their souls and redemption of their bodies.)

Another facet of our allowing God's work to take place *within* us is found in **Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And**

¹ Please remember the work that Jesus is *presently* doing on our behalf! He is offering us forgiveness and cleansing from our sin, as we confess that sin.

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do not be conformed to this world [Lit., *age*], but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. What are we not to be conformed to?

But instead, what are we to be transformed by?

And what is the reason for striving for this transformation?

And what has been the will of God for us from the very beginning?

The Work of Being Transformed from the Inside Out

It is only through the Word of God that we can discover the Will of God, and all things attendant to that. He reveals Himself to us through His Word, and it is only the Word that will transform us from the inside out. It is only His Word that shows us what the good and acceptable and perfect will of God is. Do you believe that?

We have looked at this verse in a previous lesson but we need to look at it again. Paul told Timothy how he should strive with respect to works: **II Timothy 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.** According to this verse, what are we to do?

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What would cause a Christian to not be ashamed at the JSOC?

In comparing Rom.12:2 with II Tim. 2:15, we recognize that our minds are renewed through accurately handling God's Word, thus allowing us to *be approved* by God (at the Judgment Seat) rather than *ashamed* before Him. Approval results in the reception of the reward of our inheritance; but our standing before Him in shame results in the loss of our inheritance. Either is our potential, which is why it is important to handle accurately the Word of God. Because Paul knew these things so that either of these two potentials face every Christian so he prayed in the following way for the Churches to which he ministered: **Ephesians 1:15 Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, 16 do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, 18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power 20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,** Why is it important for us to have a spirit of wisdom and of revelation?

Where do these things come from?

All in all for those who believe, what are the things that Paul prays for Christians to understand?

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Can you see how important faith is in this passage? Remember *faith is believing what God says in His Word*. And Scriptural faith is always accompanied by obedience. It all fits together! In a companion passage, Paul also prayed: **Colossians 1:9 For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; 10 that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.** According to this passage, what does it take to walk in a manner fully pleasing to the Lord?

Essentially, it is the *knowledge of His will* that allows us to walk in a manner worthy, fully pleasing Him and bearing fruit in every good work! This knowledge is gained through accurately handling God's Word, which allows us to be approved workmen and not ashamed. God has laid out His Word very clearly and succinctly. Through the Prophet Isaiah, He has revealed that His Word is laid out *precept upon precept, line upon line, a little from here, a little from there* (Isa. 28:10, 13). And it is through a diligent study of His Word that we can see these things correctly.

Additionally, God has indwelt Christians with His Holy Spirit to be our Guide, our Teacher. His desire for us is to understand His Word, so that we can live holy, separated lives, worthy of our high calling. God is for us, not against us, and He has given us everything for life and godliness! Accurately handling God's Word affects our life ó especially in our being able to produce good works acceptable to God!

Do you have any questions or comments about this lesson?

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Part V — UNDERSTANDING THE WORKS REQUIRED OF CHRISTIANS

Lesson Two: Inward Works Emanating Out of Faith

NOTES:

I Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.

In the initial OVERVIEW Lesson of this study we *very* briefly touched on the topic of good works, somewhat categorizing them into either of two categories ó *inward* and *outward* works. While this division of works is not named in Scripture, for our study purposes it does seem practical for us to use this division. *Inward works* would be that which a Christian does in order to allow the *metamorphosis* to take place within. We can see this in a passage we touched on in our last lesson: **Romans 12:1** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. **2** And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. What do you think would come into play as one presents their bodies a living sacrifice?

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Who is responsible to do this work?

We are also familiar with this verse: **Philippians 2:12 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.** What do you think it would look like to work out your own salvation in fear and trembling?

Who is responsible to do this work?

As we have noted in a previous lesson, our working out our own salvation is only accomplished through obedience, *which in itself is a good work*. But let's look at the verse that follows this one: **Philippians 2:13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.** Even previous to this verse in Philippians, Paul says this: **Philippians 1:6 being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.** Whose work also comes into play here?

According to these two verses, *how* does God work in our lives?

What would it mean that God works in us both *to will* and *to do* His good pleasure?

What good work do you think God has begun that He would want to complete?

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And so we can see that our metamorphosis cannot take place apart from God's work in us. We cannot do this apart from God! Obviously, it is the Father Who *began* the good work through providing the means by which people can be saved in the first place - Jesus' death on the cross; and His desire is to complete this good work!

So when an individual accepts through faith what He did for us, He then provides His Holy Spirit, our Helper, to help us. But He won't force us to comply; we must be willing to! And as we remain willing, He will continue to do this good work in us until the Day of Christ. Let's look to see how all of this works together.

Our Work in Conjunction with God's Work

We'll remember that prior to our spiritual birth all three parts of our being were dead, separated from God. But once a person puts faith in Jesus' death, that person has a redeemed spirit - one that is now in union with God through His Holy Spirit Who comes to dwell within that person. And it is through God's Spirit that He performs His work within us. But there are obstacles to overcome, namely our unredeemed nature.

Let's look at it like this - once a person is saved, they now have two natures within them:

- A *new* nature - an alive spirit which is indwelt by the Holy Spirit and influenced by God.
- The *old* nature - the soulical (fleshly) nature that remains very much connected to flesh and the world, both of which are influenced by the devil.

Paul succinctly states this condition, as he described himself:

Romans 7:18 For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the wishing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. 19 For the good that I wish, I do not do; but I practice the very evil that I do not wish. 20 But if I am doing the very thing I do not wish, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. 21 I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wishes to do good. 22 For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, 23 but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.

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24 Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? 25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.

Please spend a bit of time studying through this passage. Make study notes in the margin, and come prepared to discuss what we can learn from Paul's statements here, and *then* let's answer a few questions.

Summarize our two natures as Paul explains them.

What is the question Paul asks in v. 24?

From what we have previously studied about the three parts of man and how sin affected each part, what do you think Paul meant when he made reference to his "body of death"?

In seeing Paul's self-description, how can we see our own condition is as it stands now?

What is the only thing that can save us from this body of death?

Seeing all of this at the end of Romans 7 could be totally deflating of any hope! Ah! But there is hope! Let's take a look at the very next verse: **Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to**

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the flesh, but according to the Spirit. The first part of this verse makes a wonderful statement. What is it?

But the last half of this verse puts a conditional clause on the first half. What is the condition?

Ok. So once again, I am going to ask you to stretch your mind! Can you put what you have learned so far in this lesson into your own words?

Our Inward Works

The inward work that we are to do can be summed up in this verse: **Colossians 3:9b since you laid aside the old self with its [evil] practices, 10 and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him.** How would this transformation through renewal take place?

How a person would be renewed to a true knowledge is only accomplished through correctly and diligently studying His Word on an ongoing basis. Very early on in our study we looked at this

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passage. Let's look at it again. **II Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.** *Profitable* is an accounting term (and remember, we *must give an account* to Christ at the JSOC). The word infers that there can be a return on the *initial investment*. The initial investment is the death of Jesus ó laid down as the foundation in the life of one who has believed. And now that individual must be careful how he builds upon the foundation ó wood, hay, straw, gold, silver, precious gems. What do you think it means that God's Word is profitable for doctrine (teaching)?

What do you think it means that God's Word is profitable for reproof?

What do you think it means that God's Word is profitable for correction?

What do you think it means that God's Word is profitable for instruction in righteousness?

And the purpose for all of this is what?

Now let's see the passage above in conjunction with one that we looked at in our last lesson, which is also found in II Timothy: **II Timothy 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.** In these two passages, how do you

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see the idea of understanding Scripture correctly being connected with good works?

And in the end, what is the promise all of this hold for us?

The inward works that we must be doing *on an ongoing basis* are works that we do in conjunction with the God the Holy Spirit Who works within us in order to bring us to completion at the Day of Christ Jesus. This work must be ongoing. For example, we are to put off our old self and put on the new in order to be renewed according to the image of Him (Col. 3:8, 9). We must *continuously* renew our minds (by handling accurately the Word of God [II Tim, 2:15]), as God brings about the transformation (the metamorphosis) within us (Rom. 12:1, 2), which will then allow us to be as Christ when He comes in glory, which is our end goal. But this must all be done in conjunction with God, according to His ways laid out in His Word. Then, these inwards works will allow us to do what God has called us to do outwardly, which is the topic of our next lesson.

We will close with the passage we opened with: **I Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.**

Do you have any comments or questions about this lesson?

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Lesson Three: Outward Works Emanating Out of Faith

NOTES:

Colossians 1:9 For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

In our last lesson we learned what it took to be transformed from the inside out. In this lesson we will see *how* that inward transformation should manifest itself outwardly in our lives as well — manifest through outward works. From the passage above we can see that the *knowledge of His will* (gained through accurately handling His Word) will allow us to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, bearing fruit in good works! And that is our goal for the here and now, which allows us to reach our goal for the Coming Age.

So with understanding the need to work in conjunction with God inwardly, let's take a look at what that would mean outwardly, as there are some outward works that are to be done in secret, and some that are to be seen by men. (Those works that are to be seen by men are not for the purpose of our own glory here and now, but rather that God may be glorified! But we will get to that!)

Outward Works Done in Secret

There are really several places in Scripture where one could go to in order to gain understanding of the type of outward works that are expected of Christians. One place to begin might be with what we have come to call "The Sermon on the Mount" found in Matthew chapters five through seven. The context of this "sermon" given by Jesus reveals that we are *to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness* (Mt. 6:33). The entire sermon is filled with the how-

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toø of this type of seeking. (It might be a good idea to take some time this week to read through these three chapters. Lots of õgood worksö explained here.)

Within this discourse Jesus explained what works need to be done in secret! Letø read what Jesus said about outward works done in secret.

Charitable Deeds

Charitable deeds imply acts of kindnesses or generosity done for the poor. Jesus said: **Matthew 6:1 “Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. 2 Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 3 But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.**

What are we to do here?

What are we **not** to do?

Why are we to do/not to do these things?

Praying

Then Jesus mentions praying. Letø read **Matthew 6:5 “And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 6 But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.** (This would not apply to praying aloud in

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a group of like-minded believers about shared concerns one for another, but rather praying long prayers to be seen as pious.)

What are we to do here?

What are we not to do?

Why are we to do/not to do these things?

Fasting

Then Jesus mentions fasting: **Matthew 6:16** “Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 17 But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, 18 so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

What are we to do here?

What are we not to do?

Why are we to do/not to do these things?

Look back at all three passages and see what the last thing was that Jesus said in each. What did He say?

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What do you think that means?

Outward Works to be done before Men

Then beyond these works that are to be done in secret, there are certain types of work which *should be* seen by men! Jesus said: **Matthew 5:14 “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do men light a lamp, and put it under the peck-measure, but on the lampstand; and it gives light to all who are in the house. 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.** According to this passage, what are we supposed to do? And why are we to do it?

How can we let our light shine before men?

And when this happens what is the result?

The only way to let your light shine before men is to *have* the Light! And the only way to have the Light, is to *be enlightened*. The only way to be enlightened, is to *accurately handle the Word of God*. And as we do that, we grow in our faith because faith comes by hearing the Word of God.

Faith that propels us to Actions

So what actions would/should faith propel us to do? For the answer to this question, let's look at a few passages in James. First James opens his epistle on the subject of good works with this statement: **James 1:2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience [endurance]. 4 But let patience have its perfect [complete; mature] work, that you may be perfect [complete; mature] and complete [complete in every part; whole], lacking nothing.**

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What is James saying here, and how does this relate to good works?

A few verses later, James says: **1:12 Blessed is the man who endures temptation** [same word as *trials* in v. 2]; **for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.** What is James saying here about the work of enduring through trials?

With these things in mind, now let's see how James leads this into dealing with inward and outward works in relationship to the salvation of the soul: **James 1:21 Therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. 22 But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.** How would v. 21 reveal the inward work we are to do?

Then, once v. 21 is in play, according to v. 22 what are we supposed to do?

Hearing God's Word grows our faith; *doing* God's Word brings that faith to completion! From this faith there should be an outward flow of good works, as we will see in a minute. But first, let's bring the whole idea of enduring through trials full circle.

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Enduring through our trials in life (which is the lot of every human being!) should be accepted with joy (as James says at the opening of his epistle) because of what trials and testings produce in us *if* we allow it to. The crown of life, mentioned in v. 12 is equivalent to receiving the salvation of the soul. And part of the way in which this is accomplished is through *the hard work* of enduring through our trials! It is *our love for God* and *our knowledge of His will* that compels us to persevere under trial; and it is our faith in what He has revealed about future things that will not allow us to give up! (Think about that for a moment!)

Peter deals with the exact same idea with regards to this work of endurance but from a little different perspective. Contextually, Peter is dealing with our incorruptible inheritance that is on offer to us as Christians: **I Peter 1:6 In this** [in our understanding of the things surrounding our inheritance] **you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, 8 whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, 9 receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of your souls.** What does Peter say will happen *for a little while* (v. 6) and what do you think he means by that?

What is the purpose of these trials (v. 7)?

When will our endurance be turned into praise, honor and glory?

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And in rejoicing with joy in expressible and full of glory, what will we receive in the end?

Then Peter even gets more specific about our enduring through trials here: **4:12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; 13 but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation.** Essentially, what does v. 13 say about the work of enduring through suffering?

How does this relate to what James says?

Works bring our Faith to its Goal

Let's get back to James for a moment. Keeping in mind what James said in 1:21, 22, let's read what else he says about faith and works: **James 2:14 What use is it, my brethren, if a man says he has faith, but he has no works? Can that faith save him?** Good question. In order to answer James question correctly you would have to stay in context. What facet of salvation is James dealing with in his epistle, and how do you know?

So with respect to this facet of salvation, how would you answer his question?

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And then James offers examples of outward works that a person might do to prove their faith: **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** [contextually this would be faith to the saving of the soul], **if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.** In very simple terms, what do you think James is saying here?

If a person (who says he has faith to the saving of the soul) sees a brother or sister in need, and gives to help them in their need, on all accounts, what do you think would be the outcome?

But if that person (who says he has faith to the saving of the soul) does *not* give to the one in need (even though he has the means to do so), on all accounts what do you think would be the outcome?

James is showing us that if we say we have faith to the saving of the soul, but do not have works that prove this faith, then our faith is not brought to its intended goal, its expected outcome! *Faith, with respect to the saving of the soul, is dead if it remains apart from the works that are designed to complete it.* The example here is only one example of the type of good works that should come about as a result of our faith. Many, many different examples can be seen throughout Scripture. The epistles are especially replete with example after example of what we should be *doing* because of our faith.

James goes onto solidify his point: **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.”**

í **20 But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless?** (Again, please remember that James is dealing with the salvation of the soul.) Then, an example

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inspired by the Holy Spirit: **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 [Lit., breath] is dead, so also faith without works is dead.**

Explain in your own words how Abraham's faith seen in v. 23 (which is a quote from Gen. 15:6) was brought to its goal when he offered up Isaac on the altar. (This may cause you to have to do a bit of study and thought processing! But you can do it!)

All in all, can we just say that God gives us many, many ways in which we can work out our salvation? Before we close, will you just spend a few minutes listing some other things that Scripture says we are to do? Give about three or four references and write out any thoughts you have related to them.

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Do you have any questions or comments about this lesson?