

TITLE: James (Lesson 15)

TEXT: James 2:24-26

INTRO: James has been hammering away at the relationship between faith and works. Now faith is what leads us to Christ, but we learned in verses 14-17 that genuine faith is evidenced by works. In verses 18-20 James points out that a dead faith is worthless even if it is theologically correct because there is no fruit because there is no life. In verses 21-23 he used the example of Abraham. By comparing Scripture we learned that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to our account the moment we trust in the Person and work of Christ just as it was in the life of Abraham the father of faith. By his willingness to offer Isaac as a sacrifice in obedience to God's command Abraham showed himself *justified!* In today's lesson we will look at another historical example of faith.

I. (vs. 24) The context of James teaching about works.

NOTE: Unlike Paul who taught justification without works (Rom. 3:28), James emphasizes that the Christian life declares our *righteousness* by our works. (Rom.1:17) John Stott wrote: "Faith is the eye that looks to Him, the hand that reaches out to receive His gift, the mouth that drinks the living water. Faith is nothing but the means by which we receive Christ."

A. Who am I trusting?

1. Anyone other than Christ is evidence that we are lost.

B. Why am I working?

1. We work because we are saved, not to be saved.

II. (vs. 25) The example of Rahab.

NOTE: A pagan woman with a bad reputation. (Josh. 2:1-24; 6:17, 22-25)

A. Rahab's declaration of faith; "...for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath." (*Josh. 2:11b*)

B. The evidence that her faith was genuine.

1. She risked her life to help the spies.

NOTE: Heb. 11:31

2. She's listed in the genealogy of Joseph the father of James.

NOTE: Matt. 1:5; 16 Abraham and Rahab demonstrated both their need and trust in God.

3. The sign of the **scarlet line**.

NOTE: Ex. 12:13; Heb. 9:19-28

III. (vs. 26) The comparison.

A. It is not a comparison of faith and works.

B. It is a comparison between a genuine faith and a false faith.

NOTE: Titus1:16; 3:8

CONCLUSION: Rahab's faith was a genuine faith. She responded to the truth with her *mind* believing what God revealed to her. She responded with her *emotions* recognizing her predicament. And thankfully she responded with her *will* determined to act. Her life was never the same because saving faith is a living faith!