

James 2

Introduction:

1. James further defined the pure religion of Jesus as having no respect of persons or faith without works.
2. The definitive harshness of this apostle and his epistle is desperately needed in our compromising world.
3. Cliques are as common in American churches as stained glass and steeples, all three of which are profane.
4. Decisional regeneration and easy-believism produce confident reprobates that this epistle coolly condemns.

The Outline of James 2

- 1 Partiality with persons condemned (2:1-9).
- 2 Partiality in the law condemned (2:10-13).
- 3 Justification by works explained (2:14-26).

Meditative Readings

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| Luke 7:36-50 | Malachi 2:9 |
| Acts 2:41-47 | II Peter 1:5-15 |
| II Cor 5:13-21 | Matthew 7:21-29 |

1 ***My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.***

- A. Having given many duties of pure religion, James now condemned respect of persons (2:1-9).
- B. He described two very incompatible things – the religion of Jesus and honoring the worldly rich.
 1. *Have not* is an imperative verb construction that denies respect of persons for all Christians.
 2. *With* is to be understood as *along with*, for we cannot have respect of persons in addition to our profession of Christianity. Jesus Christ does not have respect of persons, so the *with* is forbidden.
 3. As we have seen so far and shall see throughout the epistle, James addressed carnal Christians.
- C. The *faith of our Lord Jesus Christ* is the doctrine, gospel, or religion of Jesus Christ – Christianity.
 1. Genitive phrases of this sort are either subjective-genitive or objective-genitive by their context.
 2. A subjective-genitive sense, Christ's own personal faith, makes no sense in light of the context.
 3. Rather, the object of the preposition, our Lord Jesus Christ, is the object of our faith, or religion.
 4. Faith is belief, so the faith of a thing is the belief of that thing (Acts 24:24; Titus 1:1; Rev 14:12).
 5. The belief of a thing divine or spiritual is a religion of that object (Acts 6:7; 13:8; 14:22; 16:5; Rom 1:5; 14:1; I Cor 16:13; II Cor 13:5; Gal 1:23; 3:23; Eph 4:13; Phil 1:27; Col 1:23; 2:7; I Tim 1:2; 3:9,13; 4:1; 5:8; 6:10,21; II Tim 3:8; 4:7; Titus 1:13; 3:15; Jude 1:3; Rev 14:12).
 6. The faith or religion of Christ is the doctrine of Christ (I Tim 6:3; Tit 2:10; Heb 6:1; II John 1:9).
 7. James used *religion* twice in the previous two verses – here he used *the faith* for the same thing.
- D. The Lord Jesus Christ is *the Lord of glory*, and from this fact we should not have respect of persons.
 1. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Lord of glory, but unrecognized by this world's princes (I Cor 2:8).
 2. The Lord of glory is so far above all men that relative differences among men become nothing!
 3. The Lord of glory is worthy of our highest adoration and esteem to ignore trivial concerns here!
 4. The Lord of glory was born poor, raised poor, and died like a poor man ... so respect the poor!
 5. The Lord of glory is the holy and just God of Israel, Who does not at all respect persons Himself!
- E. *Respect of persons* is treating others by external appearances to the neglect of actual value or worth.
 1. The Holy Spirit uses the very word *respect* in the context to identify the sin very clearly (2:3).
 2. Judges are warned throughout the Bible to ignore differences in station or wealth (Ex 23:3; Lev 19:15; Deut 1:17; 16:19; 27:19; II Chron 19:7; Ps 82:2; Prov 18:5; 24:23; 28:21; I Tim 5:21).

3. This character trait and duty is based on the holy and just nature of God Himself (Deut 10:17; I Sam 16:7; Job 34:19; Acts 10:34-35; Rom 2:11; Gal 2:6; Eph 6:9; Col 3:25; I Pet 1:17).
4. Godly men do not judge persons or situations by appearance, but by righteousness (John 7:24).
5. The grace of God that brings salvation has made all men entirely equal (Gal 3:28; Col 3:11).
6. James has already declared God's offer of wisdom to all men – even the poor and weak (1:5).
7. James has already reduced all men financially to a common ground in the first chapter (1:9-11).
8. James has already defined pure and undefiled religion as loving the poor and helpless (1:27).

2 *For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment;*

- A. This is a very specific illustration and application of the commandment against respect of persons.
- B. James here introduced a lengthy rhetorical question created by his hypothetical illustration (2:2-4).
- C. This discrimination that James wrote against was in the house of God – discrimination in *assemblies*.
 1. Therefore, the rule here cannot be used to discriminate in hiring, renting, buying, marrying, etc.
 2. The use of *assembly* limits the lesson to discriminating among the worshippers of God by class.
- D. Clothing is a common way of measuring men, for the rich can wear what the poor cannot afford.
 1. Therefore, women are told plainly to wear modest apparel that is neither flashy nor revealing.
 2. Therefore, we do not turn assemblies into a fashion show for either sex in any way whatsoever.
 3. We still understand the Bible rule to dress reverently (Gen 35:1-3; Ex 19:14-15; Heb 12:28-29).

3 *And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:*

- A. Here is the *respect* of persons – showing better treatment to those in rich clothing than those in poor.
- B. When we come into the house of God, or when we are dealing with matters pertaining to our salvation, there is no difference at all between rich and poor, bond and free, male or female, etc., etc.
- C. We may make differences by appearance for hiring, renting, buying, marrying; but that is not condemned here.

4 *Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?*

- A. James here concluded a lengthy rhetorical question created by his hypothetical illustration (2:2-4).
- B. *Partial* is a horrible word – meaning to corrupt justice – which we understand clearly as *partiality*!
 1. God condemned ministerial partiality to Timothy and personal to us (I Timothy 5:21; Jas 3:17).
 2. God condemned the priests of Israel for not keeping His ways by their partiality (Malachi 2:5-9).
 3. The partiality here is not in the scriptures but rather in the personal treatment of others in Christ.
- C. These carnal Christians had become *judges of evil thoughts* by judging other men by evil criteria.
 1. Here again is a genitive case to rightly divide between subjective-genitive or objective-genitive.
 2. If the object of the preposition is the subject of the judging, these brethren were judging evilly.
 3. If the object of the preposition is the object of the judging, these brethren were judging evil.
 4. We choose the former option by virtue of the context, for these brethren were judging by wealth.
 5. Preferential treatment given a person in the assembly of God for his clothing was evil thinking!

5 *Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?*

- A. After a condemning rebuke (2:1) and illustration (2:2-4), James wanted their attention by *hearken*.
- B. With the wisdom of the Master, James called them *beloved brethren*, though sharply rebuking them.
- C. Does anyone still want to cavil about the origin of *faith*? James assumed it was by God's choice!
- D. Does anyone still want to cavil whether election is true? James assumed heaven was God's choice!
- E. Loving God is not the condition for heaven, but rather the evidence of it (Rom 8:28; II Tim 4:8).
- F. He provoked right thinking by reminding them God had a great proportion of *poor* in His kingdom.
 - 1. Here is another rhetorical question, which is a very powerful form of reasoning and instruction.
 - 2. Notice that the question is of relative value, not absolute, because God has chosen some rich.
 - 3. It was the common people and publicans and harlots that heard Him gladly (Mark 12:37).
 - 4. God hid His kingdom from the wise and prudent and revealed it to babes (Matthew 11:25-26).
 - 5. Paul told Corinth they could see the election of the poor by looking around (I Cor 1:26-29).
 - 6. Compare and contrast the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31). Which would you rather be?

6 *But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?*

- A. God had clearly chosen the poor for salvation, but these carnal Christians despised them anyway.
- B. Jesus had warned His disciples that they better be very careful with little believers (Matt 18:1-10).
- C. The rich were most often persecutors of Christians by their pride and power to do so (Acts 13:50).

7 *Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?*

- A. Riches in general lead to arrogance and harsh speech toward God and men (Proverbs 18:23; 30:9).
- B. Our Lord taught the probability of rich men obeying the gospel as near impossible (Matt 19:23-26).
- C. James will blast the rich and prophesy of their destruction before he ends the epistle (5:1-9).

8 *If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:*

- A. What is the *royal law*? It is the law given by the great King, requiring king-like conduct from each.
 - 1. Jesus our King taught love of neighbor as one of the two great commandments (Mark 12:28-34).
 - 2. God our King shows some love even to His enemies, which we are to emulate (Matt 5:43-48).
 - 3. It is the greatest law ruling our treatment of others, and it includes the whole law (Rom 13:8-10).
 - 4. The nobility necessary to love others as much as you love yourself makes this a royal law, much as we use the name "golden rule" for treating others as we wish to be treated by them (Luk 6:31).
 - 5. Remember how Araunah behaved *as a king* in his treatment of King David (II Samuel 24:23).
- B. This law did not originate with the N.T., for it was written before in the Jews' *scripture* (Lev 19:18).
- C. We can *do well* by keeping this glorious law in all its aspects and forms, which are taught in the N.T.
 - 1. It is hard to overemphasize this law of conduct, for the N.T. makes it the chief rule as well.
 - 2. Note how Paul obliterates all religious accomplishments without loving others (I Cor 13:1-7).
 - 3. Love is the great test of character and proof of eternal life, which James will address (2:14-26).

9 *But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.*

- A. *Respect to persons* violates the royal law, for it makes religious distinctions based on mere externals.
- B. You *commit sin* when you show favors to men in the house of God based on personal preferences.

- C. The *law convicts you as a transgressor* when you are guilty of partiality in loving the brethren.
- D. Humble yourself before God's broad commandments, which reach wide to condemn our evil habits.
 1. Jesus said anger against a brother without cause breaks the Sixth Commandment (Matt 5:21-26)!
 2. Bow again before His rule to befriend and entertain those who cannot repay (Luke 14:12-14).
 3. Receiving this text, there should never be preference shown in the church for economic position.
 4. Offices or roles may differ, but there are no differences in Christ Jesus (Gal 3:28; Col 3:11)!
 5. The Lord Jesus even defended the little children that believe in Him (Matthew 18:1-10).

10 *For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.*

- A. James continued reasoning from their respect of persons (2:1-9), but he also introduced a new rule.
 1. The coordinating conjunction *for* indicates that he is drawing an inference from previous verses.
 2. His reference shortly to mercy and judgment indicates he did not fully leave respect of persons.
 3. As minor as respect of persons may seem, it was sufficient to make you guilty of all the law!
 4. He had condemned partiality among brethren (2:4). Now he condemned partiality in the law.
 5. The implication by the argument indicates that these carnal Christians boasted in their obedience.
- B. The hypothetical case here is to show full condemnation by the law for anyone breaking one point.
 1. It is clearly hypothetical, because no man can keep the whole law and only offend in one point.
 2. It should be clear to honest readers that breaking one point does not make you guilty of others.
 3. Yet, the full condemnation of the law declaring you a guilty sinner is obtained by only one point.
 4. The full weight of the law – you are a sinner and are under God's wrath – is by only one point.
 5. And that point may be as minor and insignificant as showing respect of persons by their money!
 6. The illustration following clarifies the point – offending in one point makes you a transgressor.
 7. Since love includes the whole law, then any violation of love is a violation of the whole law.

11 *For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.*

- A. These are two commandments dealing with others – violating either point breaks the law of God.
 1. If you love your neighbor as yourself, you will protect his marriage in every conceivable way.
 2. If you love your neighbor as yourself, you will protect his life, liberty, peace, reputation, etc.
- B. A man may boast he is free by the Seventh, but if he has broken the Sixth, he is guilty before God.
- C. It is very common for men to categorize or rank God's commands, but any point will condemn you.
- D. The force of this passage declares even respect of persons is enough for the law to condemn you!
- E. If we see our Lord's full breadth of these two commands – all men are guilty of both (Matt 5:21-32)!

12 *So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.*

- A. The adverb *so* opening this verse has the sense of ... in the manner specified in the previous context.
- B. Therefore, both our words and our deeds should reflect our accountability to God for all the law.
 1. Crush every idle word before it leaves your tongue, for you shall be judged for it (Mat 12:36-37).
 2. Whether your deeds were done in secret or not, they shall be revealed (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).
- C. Why is it the *law of liberty*? Because its penalty has been lifted by Christ (Gal 2:4; 3:25; 4:31; 5:1).
 1. It is not called the law of liberty to justify neglect of its precepts as not having any more force.
 2. Jesus Christ paid its penalty, but it is still the law that shall judge our conduct as His children.
 3. Using it as means for justification creates bondage, but it is still the guide and rule for our lives.
 4. It has eliminated all the differences between Jew and Greek and other external distinctions.

- D. How shall we be judged by this law? God measures by it now and will require our accounting later.
1. The law brought forward will be the basis for our judgment (Romans 14:10-12; II Cor 5:9-11).
 2. This does not include carnal ordinances of O.T. worship from Moses (Heb 9:1-10; Col 2:16-23).
 3. The respect of persons here is sin (2:9), and you will face it as such in that great day (Rev 20:11).

13 *For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.*

- A. There is no need, nor liberty, to divorce this verse from its context and lose the sense of its words.
1. The mercy in context is that which we show the poor in spite of their poverty (2:1,4,6,8-9).
 2. The judgment in context is particularly that of the final judgment of all men (2:9-10,12).
- B. What does *no mercy* mean? By the context, we presume it means showing partiality or lack of love.
1. Partiality, or respect of persons, shows no mercy to the poor by despising them for economics.
 2. Lack of love shows no mercy by violating others' rights given by God in the second command.
 3. The righteous and wicked will be judged in the great Day by their mercy (Matthew 25:31-46).
- C. What is *judgment without mercy*? The way God will judge those who were partial or lacked love.
1. God judges fairly: so if we have sinned against others by showing no mercy, neither will He.
 2. God judges without respect of persons, which will condemn you, if you sin respecting persons.
 3. The opposite is clearly implied – a man who shows mercy in loving the poor will receive mercy.
 4. God is merciful to the merciful, and ... (II Sam 22:26-27; Ps 18:25-26; Pr 21:13; Matt 6:15; 7:2).
- D. How does *mercy rejoice against judgment*? In a variety of ways, for mercy is superior to judgment.
1. Mercy rejoices against judgment by superiority to judgment (Is 28:21-22; Ezek 18:32; Mic 7:18).
 2. You should always choose mercy over judgment, whenever you can (Proverbs 21:3; Isaiah 58:6-7; Daniel 4:27; Hosea 6:6; Micah 6:8; Matthew 5:7; 12:7; 18:28-35).
 3. Mercy rejoices against judgment by preparing confidently for the Day of Judgment (Luke 16:9; II Cor 5:9-11; I Timothy 6:17-19; I John 3:18-24; 4:17-21).

14 *What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?*

- A. Here begins the third lesson of the chapter, in which the apostle blasts his carnal Christian audience.
1. What a lesson for a generation of easy-believism, decisional regeneration, and carnal believers!
 2. While Paul opposed Jewish legalism much of the time, James blasted those trusting *sola fide*!
 3. James, an apostle of Jesus Christ, has no use for those professing faith but living fruitless lives.
 4. As the followers of Jesus, we should as dogmatically deny the salvation of those without works.
 5. There is a connection between lessons, because love is the proof of faith (Gal 5:6; I John 5:1).
- B. The question is rhetorical, which you can easily answer – Such faith has no profit! It cannot save!
- C. How does *faith save*? It only saves by laying hold of eternal life for evidence of coming salvation.
1. Election is not based on faith, for God chose us in Christ without faith (Ps 14:1-3; Eph 1:3-12).
 2. Justification needs no faith, for God justified freely by Christ (Rom 5:15-19; 8:28-34; Tit 3:4-7).
 3. Regeneration is not based on faith, for the new life must come first (John 1:13; 3:3,6,8; 5:24).
 4. Conversion definitely requires faith, for it is our belief of the gospel of God's gracious salvation.
 5. Glorification can only be known and trusted to the degree that a child of God brings forth works.
 6. We believe on Christ, not to be justified or regenerated, but to lay hold of coming salvation.
 7. James did not write a theoretical lesson for their evangelistic program, but for their own conduct!
 8. Actual, legal, literal, or vital salvation is not pursued here, or you end up being saved by works!
 9. The point pursued is the evidence of eternal life resulting in future salvation – faith plus works.
- D. Faith provides evidence of eternal life only when it bears good works (II Pet 1:5-11; I Thess 1:2-4).

15 ***If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,***

- A. Here is a simple rhetorical question illustrating the vanity and worthlessness of faith without works.
- B. The hypothetical case is to shame carnal believers for thinking professions of faith carry any weight.

16 ***And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?***

- A. Mere words do absolutely nothing to provide peace, clothing, or food for those naked and starving.
- B. This is the same as someone saying they believe and love Jesus, but never do anything to obey Him.
- C. If choices and actions are not made producing good works, then faith or claims of faith are nothing.
- D. The illustration is not teaching charitable performance, for that is taught elsewhere (I John 3:17-19).

17 ***Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.***

- A. In precisely the same way – *even so* – as the illustration, faith without works is vain and worthless.
- B. Belief or profession of a thing without actions confirming and proving it is alone – naked and vain.
- C. It is dead, for true faith is a living expression of trust in God by actively seeking Him (Heb 11:6).

18 ***Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.***

- A. There are two options about works for men with faith – you can confirm your faith, or you cannot.
- B. Which would you rather have? Faith that you cannot prove, or works that prove faith a reality?
- C. Give us the works, Lord, for even if we have weak faith, but strong works, we know we are thine!
- D. Evangelical religion today guarantees salvation for a trite formula that often does not even have to admit that Jesus is Lord (Lordship controversy), but James here takes the whole mess and flushes it!

19 ***Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.***

- A. The man with faith and a carnal life professes to any who listen, “I believe there is one God ... and this faith in the monotheistic religion of Israel (and maybe even His Son) proves I have eternal life.”
- B. The words of James here – *thou does well* – are not sarcastic irony, due to the following context.
 - 1. Faith in the one God of Israel, which is the fact considered here, is good (Deut 6:4; I Cor 8:4-6).
 - 2. James commended the man with this faith as far as it goes, for it is a blessing to believe this fact.
 - 3. He then declared that devils also believe, which reduced any vain confidence in such a faith.
 - 4. And he added that the devils tremble in fear, which proves its certainty, but denies their sincerity.
 - 5. In the next verse, the disjunctive *but* indicates that James is criticizing the faith he praised.
 - 6. If he had just annihilated his faith by sarcastic irony, he would not have contrasted v.20 by *but*.
- C. The devils believe on Jesus Christ as God’s Son, as their confessions while He was on earth proved.
 - 1. The devils would fall and worship Jesus Christ – they knew Him well (Mark 1:23-25; 5:6-12).
 - 2. The devils knew Jesus and His servant Paul, but they did not know gypsies (Acts 19:13-17).
 - 3. The trembling of the devils is their devilish fear of their coming torment from the Son of God.

20 ***But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?***

- A. Though I have commended you for faith in one God as doing well, there is still a need for works.
- B. Though the devils believe there is one God and tremble concerning it, there is still a need for works.

- C. In contrast to whatever you may think about your faith, without works it is nothing but a dead thing.
- D. Presuming on a decision or faith in Jesus is a vanity, for He will condemn many such (Matt 7:21-23).

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

- A. This is very different historical reasoning than that of Paul, who traced Abraham's justification to his faith in Genesis 15:1-6, and referred to that event often (Rom 4:3,9,22; Gal 3:6).
 - 1. Paul did not oppose easy believism, but rather many Jewish legalists in love with Moses' law.
 - 2. Therefore, he referred to that event in Abraham's life where God declared him righteous by faith.
 - 3. Paul argued from faith to silence Jews who trusted (a) works of the law, (b) circumcision, (c) Moses religion, or even (d) Abraham's genes ... but Abraham the father of Israel was justified while uncircumcised, 430 years before the law, and then by faith without any respect of persons!
- B. God declared Abraham truly did fear Him after he went the distance to sacrifice his son (Gen 22:12).
- C. What *justification* is considered here? Our legal position before God, or our knowledge of it? Our legal position before God, or His declaration of it? Our legal position, or our assurance of it?

22 *Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?*

- A. These rhetorical questions indicate that this concept of justification by works should be easy to see.
- B. Faith leads to works to please God, for faith believes God rewards diligent seekers (Hebrews 11:6).
- C. The faith of Abraham in Genesis 15:6 was made complete and true by his works in Genesis 22:12.
- D. Faith is dead and devilish without works; but it is complete or perfect by works, as with Abraham.

23 *And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.*

- A. Abraham's trust in God's promise secured a preliminary declaration of his righteousness (Gen 15:6).
- B. God's declaration of Abraham's righteousness was confirmed by his actions on Moriah (Gen 22:12).
- C. Abraham was called the friend of God as a result of his faithful actions (II Chron 20:7; Isaiah 41:8).
- D. Please remember Abraham was a just and righteous man, living by faith, long before he got to Gen 15:6. It is one of the travesties of Bible interpretation to hear that Abraham was justified in 15:6 in any other way that God declaring his faith in an impossible promise as evidence of his righteousness.

24 *Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.*

- A. What can we see from Abram's history? The real evidence proving righteousness requires works.
 - 1. What we see is that Genesis 15:6 is only part of the picture. It is incomplete without Gen 22:12!
 - 2. Those who cry, "Sola Fide," and think that Genesis 15:6 is the end of justification are wrong.
 - 3. Abraham's subjective justification by faith was made complete or perfect by his further works.
 - 4. Justification is being declared righteous by God: Abraham was declared so by faith and works.
 - 5. It is vain confidence to trust in some belief, decision, or profession of Jesus without good works.
 - 6. Abram's actual justification, or acceptance and acquittal with God, was without faith by Christ!
- B. James did not teach justification by the works that Paul condemned, or the Bible lies (II Peter 1:20).
 - 1. Paul rejected Jewish legalists and their trust in Moses' law by teaching the historical fact of God's declaration of Abraham's righteousness by virtue of his great act of faith (Gen 15:6).
 - 2. James taught that any man's faith without works was not nearly enough evidence or proof to claim righteousness, justification, or the hope of future glorification.

25 *Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?*

- A. Not content with his glorious explanation of Abraham's case, James used Rahab as another example, which he by the Spirit considered to be an exact match to Abraham with Isaac (Gen 22:12).
- B. For those ignorant of Rahab, she was a mother of Jesus and in the *hall of faith* (Mat 1:5; Heb 11:31)!
- C. Bless the great God for exalting such a Gentile woman so highly and forgiving such a great sinner.
- D. The actions described here – hiding the spies and lying to her city's leaders – were done by faith, but they constituted works that proved her faith to be real and true (Joshua 2:8-21).
 - 1. She had come to believe and trust the God of Israel, so she willingly risked her live to serve Him.
 - 2. She received the spies in through her front door, but she sent them out through her window.
- E. What is this *justification*? The same as Abraham's – evidence and proof of righteousness by works.
 - 1. Who wants to ride this horse to heaven? Did God legally accept Rahab based on her noble lying?
 - 2. Rahab definitely believed the God of Israel was the LORD Jehovah, and she acted upon it.
 - 3. Did this change her status in heaven, in the book of life, in the sight of God ... or only display it?
 - 4. If the justification here is actual legal justification, then salvation is by works, which it is not.
 - 5. We understand this verse to declare Rahab's justified character and status by works, just as the Bible declares the same thing for Phinehas by his zeal in using his javelin (Ps 106:30-31).

26 *For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*

- A. A body without the spirit is very dead indeed ... it is clearly nothing more than shaped, damp clay.
 - 1. The animating, vital component of a living person is missing – the spirit bringing the clay to life.
 - 2. The body without the spirit is an empty house or tabernacle, for the substantial soul life is gone.
- B. As dramatic as a dead body is, so is faith or a profession of belief without any supporting works.
- C. James here condemned those in his audience who were confident of eternal life by their faith only.
- D. A church without its candlestick is dead – a corpse – a congregation of the dead (Rev 2:5; Pr 21:16).

Conclusion:

- 1. The law of liberty, which will judge you shortly, condemns religious partiality and requires neighborly love.
- 2. So much for easy believism! The great God declared with harsh severity that decisions for Jesus are nothing!

For Further Study:

- 1. The sermon outline, "[Love is the Greatest](#)," which puts love higher than faith as an evidence of eternal life.
- 2. The Salvation Manual from the 2006 Malaysian Bible Conference – Session 4 – "Multifaceted Justification."
- 3. The sermon outline, "[Salvation by Works](#)," which shows how the whole Bible emphasizes works much more than faith.
- 4. The sermon outline, "Abraham and the Gospel," or, "Abraham's Righteousness," dealing in depth with his justification.
- 5. Samuel Richardson's, "[Justification By Christ Alone](#)," from 1647, which identifies faith as an evidence of justification.