

James 2:14-26 - Faith Without Works is Dead

This week we continue our journey through the book of James in Chapter 2:14-26 where we learn about two kinds of works and two kinds of faith. Firstly, there is faith without works. This is a dead kind of faith, a faith that cannot save, which produces dead works. Dead works in Hebrews refers to legalism or religion.

Then, secondly, there is living faith, a saving faith, which produces living works which are the fruit of a changed, regenerated or transformed heart.

The context of both the book of James and the book of Hebrews is very important to today's study. Both epistles or letters were written to Jews. Both were combating legalism and religion. Both seek to turn people back to a true, authentic, or genuine relationship with Jesus. James talks about dead faith, and the writer to the Hebrews talks about dead works. They are actually talking about the same thing, with James referring to the cause (dead faith — a person without true or saving faith), and Hebrews talking about the effect (dead works — religious works done by the power or effort of the sinful human nature).

Hebrews 6:1b NKJV

...let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,

Hebrews 9:14 NKJV

...how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Again, there are two kinds of works and two kinds of faith. Firstly, there is faith without works. This is a dead kind of faith, a faith that cannot save, which produces dead works or religion. Then, secondly, there is living faith, a saving faith, which produces living works which are the fruit of a changed, regenerated or transformed heart — the motive of service being love for Christ. It's important that we see the proper connection between the two kinds of faith and works, because many have taken the verses that we will read today and use them out of context to support a belief that we can be justified by good works.

James 2:14-26 NKJV

What *does it* profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what *does it* profit? ¹⁷ Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

¹⁸ But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. ¹⁹ You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! ²⁰ But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? ²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? ²² Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works

faith was made perfect? ²³ And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “*Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*” And he was called the friend of God. ²⁴ You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

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

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

Let’s start with an illustration; a story of hockey or football. Here is a summary of the story:

- I can only play one sport at a time because both are played on Saturdays.
- I can only play the sport if I become a member of the team and wear their shirt.
- I was raised playing football from a young age. It was all I knew.
- One day the hockey coach invites me to play on the hockey team, with all expenses paid. It will cost me nothing to play hockey. However, I must remove my football shirt before I put on the hockey shirt, and turn up to the hockey games. He tells me that to be a hockey player I must first be willing to give up football.
- I choose not to play hockey because I love football too much.
- Another man later tells me that I can play both hockey and football. All I have to do is put on the hockey shirt that he is offering me over my football shirt and tell everybody that I play hockey. I love this idea, because the hockey team is really great and I know that they are going to win.
- I never actually meet the hockey team or hockey coach or play a hockey game because I am playing football every weekend.
- At the end of the hockey season, the hockey team wins and I go to the awards night to get my medal because I think that I am a part of the team. After all, I have been wearing the hockey shirt all season and telling people that I play hockey.
- The real hockey players and coach look at me and ask, “Who are you? We don’t know you. Why are you wearing a hockey shirt over your football shirt? Why are you wearing a hockey shirt if you don’t play hockey? Please take that fake hockey shirt off and leave immediately. No pretenders here please!”

We’ll come back to the story at the end.

Dead Faith vs Living faith (Saving faith)

James 2:14-17 NKJV

What *does it* profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what *does it* profit? ¹⁷ Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

v 14 **What *does it* profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?:** *James is here saying that it’s impossible that someone could have genuine saving faith with no good works to show for it. Someone may say that they have faith, but not demonstrate any good works. James asks, “Can [this kind of] faith save him?”*

David Guzik says concerning “**Can faith save him?**”: ‘James did not contradict the Apostle Paul, who insisted that we are saved *not of works* (Ephesians 2:9). James merely clarifies for us the *kind of faith that saves*. We are saved by grace through faith, not by works; but saving faith will have works that accompany it. As a saying goes: *faith alone saves, but the faith that saves is not alone*; it has good works with it.’

We often only quote Ephesians 2:8-9 which talk about being saved by grace through faith alone, and not of works. But let’s look at these wonderful verses in context. Let’s add Ephesians 1:10 to the mix. Let’s look at what fruit this new, genuine, faith in Christ for salvation produces in our lives:

Ephesians 2:8-10 NKJV

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast. ¹⁰ *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

What are believers created for? ... *good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.* Again, we are saved by grace through faith, but clearly, true faith will produce good works as a natural consequence. As an apple tree produces apples, so a true christian, one who has been regenerated by the Holy Spirit and given a new heart with new desires, will produce the fruit of righteous living and good deeds.

Also consider what Paul wrote in Titus 3:3-8. It follows the same pattern that we saw in Ephesians 2:8-10:

Titus 3:3-8 NLT

Once we, too, were foolish and disobedient. We were misled and became slaves to many lusts and pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other.

⁴ But—When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, ⁵ he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. ⁶ He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. ⁷ Because of his grace he made us right in his sight and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life. ⁸ This is a trustworthy saying, and **I want you to insist on these teachings so that all who trust in God will devote themselves to doing good.** These teachings are good and beneficial for everyone.

Don’t miss the point here. A true, genuine, born again believer will not devote themselves to doing good works because they *must* or *have to* or *got to*, but because they *get to*, they *want to*. Look again at what Paul teaches in verse 8. *Paul tells Titus to emphasise that we are saved only because of God’s grace and mercy, that we are completely undeserving of this lavish gift called salvation and redemption. Why? So we will love God and therefore obey Him with an attitude of gratitude.*

This is the structure of most of the epistles. The first part of the letter tells us all about the wonderful things that God has done for us, with the second part detailing how we should respond to God’s abundant goodness, His unfailing love, His loving kindness, His mercy, His steadfast love towards us.

People say that James is a hard book to understand because it says that we are saved by faith and works. But I think that if we read scripture in context, if we are honest with ourselves, then we will acknowledge the fact that true, genuine, saving faith will produce the fruit of good works is consistently presented and taught throughout the bible. We just choose not to see it because it brings responsibility to us to put into practice what we say we believe. Why? Because we love our sin are are selfish by nature.

Something to consider: how many of us memorised the 'saved by grace through' faith verses (Ephesians 2:8-9)? Now, how many also memorised the resulting good works verse in Ephesians 2:10? And if you did memorise verse 10, how often do you recite all three verses together? If you are like me, you'll love learning about what God has done for us, but find it easy to forget that we now have a logical and reasonable response to God — obedience motivated by gratitude and love. **We need to link the cause (a grateful heart), with the effect (good works, works motivated by love for Jesus)**

Another place we see this clearly spelled out is Romans 12:1. Paul has just spent 11 chapters describing our justification, sanctification, and future glorification, emphasising God's amazing love, grace, and mercy shown to us. Then he says in:

Romans 12:1 NLT

And so, dear brothers and sisters, **I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you** [reasonable, rational, or logical service]. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.

Romans 12:1, like Titus 3:8, is another clear teaching as to our correct motivation to obey Christ; it must be '**because of all he has done for you.**' Our walk with God can be summarised like as follows:

- The more I am in the word of God, the more I know God (John 8:31, 15:7, 17:17)
- The more I know God, the more I love God (John 14:26-27)
- The more I love God, the more I want to obey God (John 14:15, 21, 23-24)
- The more I obey God, the more I abide in or walk in agreement with God (Amos 3:3, John 15:10)
- The more I abide in Christ, the more fruit I will produce (love, joy, righteous living and good works etc, John 15:4-5)
- The more fruit I produce, the more glory I bring to God (John 15:8, Isaiah 43:7)

Remember last week we talked about the 'law of liberty' (James 2:12). We are free to obey or not obey as Christians. Why doesn't God force us to obey Him? Because He is seeking a love relationship. God wants us to follow Him because we want to, and not with a grudging, forced, unwilling, resentful, legalistic, and ungrateful attitude. Obeying God with any other attitude but loving gratitude is both grievous and offensive to God and always results in legalism — I begin to think that God now owes me because of all the wonderful things that I have done for Him and all those massive and costly sacrifices I have made for Him.

James 2:15-17 NKJV

If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what *does it* profit? ¹⁷ Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

So after making the statement in verse 14, ‘**Can this [kind of] faith save?**’, and giving an example of someone who talks the talk but doesn’t walk the walk, someone who lives a life of good words but without good works in verses 15-16, James comes to the very blunt and hard conclusion in verse 17 — this kind of faith is dead. James declares in verse 17, ‘**Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead**’. In other words, this kind of faith is fake. This kind of faith is not a genuine saving faith. This kind of faith that does not produce good works that are motivated by a grateful heart **is dead**. This kind of faith will not **profit** you (verse 16).

Poole comments: “He doth not say, faith is dead without works, lest it should be thought that works were the cause of the life of faith; but *faith without works is dead*; implying, that works are the effects and signs of [or the fruit of] the life of faith.” (Poole)

Of course, the opposite of a dead faith is a living faith, a faith that is real, genuine, and life-changing. True faith always results in action and change.

David Guzik gives a good description of saving faith. What does saving faith look like?

- It is faith that looks not to self, but to Jesus Christ.
- It is faith that agrees with God’s word, both inwardly and with words.
- It is faith that in itself is not a work that deserves reward from God.
- It is faith grounded in what Jesus did on the cross and by the empty tomb.
- It is faith that will *naturally* be expressed in repentance and good works.
- It is faith that may sometimes doubt; yet the doubts are not *bigger* than the faith nor are they *more permanent* than the faith. This faith can say, “Lord I believe; help my unbelief.”
- It is faith that wants others to come to the same faith.
- It is faith that says *more* than “Lord, Lord” as in Matthew 7:21–23.
- It is faith that not only *hears* the word of God but *does* it, as in Matthew 7:24–27.

As an aside, there is a good application here for believers here. Sometimes we should pray less and do more to help the person in need. Prayer is not a substitute for action.

A dead faith has no works

James 2:18-19 NKJV

But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. ¹⁹ You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!

Just like we can’t see the wind but we can see the effects of the wind, so we can’t see a person’s faith, but we can see the effects of their faith. If the trees are swaying and the dust blowing we know that the wind is blowing. So to, if we see someone living out their Christian walk, then we know that they have faith. The opposite is also true.

v 19 **You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!** James here gives an obvious example of those with dead faith, faith that does not save — the demons. Of course they believe in God, but it does them no good. They believe that God exists but this doesn’t change their behaviour or their thinking towards God. The demons, the fallen angels, just like the false convert, have never repented.

Examples of living faith — The faith of Abraham and Rahab is demonstrated by their works

James 2:20-24 NKJV

But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? ²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? ²² Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? ²³ And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “*Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*” And he was called the friend of God. ²⁴ You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

v 20 ...**faith without works is dead.** So far James has demonstrated that a faith that is not accompanied by works is a dead faith that cannot save.

v 21-22 **Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? ²² Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?**

Now we see an example of someone who has a living faith — Abraham. The good work that James points to that clearly demonstrates Abraham’s faith and love for God is when Abraham willingly obeyed God’s command to offer up Isaac on an altar at Mt Moriah. You can read the account in Genesis 22. Even though God stopped Abraham from sacrificing Isaac at the very last second, Isaac was already dead in Abraham’s mind. His desire to please God was so complete that he had already decided to go through with sacrificing Isaac, his promised child, the child that he loved, even before they started the three day hike. This was a clear demonstration that Abraham loved God more than the blessings that God gave. Abraham’s faith was demonstrated to be a true or genuine faith.

v 21 **Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?:** When was Abraham saved or justified (forgiven); when did his saving faith begin? It was long before this event with Isaac. Genesis 15:6, quoted in verse 23 of James chapter 2, records the event: ‘**Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.**’ Abraham was accounted as righteous before God, meaning Abraham was justified (declared righteous or innocent) by God, when he simply believed God’s promises (see Mark 1:15 and John 6:28-29 — only have to repent and believe — we do not have to do any works to earn our salvation).

So what does it mean in v 21 when it says that Abraham was **justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?** Simply that Abraham’s faith was real and not fake or dead. Abraham’s obedience to God demonstrated that his faith was real — that he already had faith, that he was already justified. The very next verse tells us that Abraham’s **faith was working together with his works, and by works his faith was made perfect** (v 22).

Therefore, the context here clearly shows that James is not saying that the reason Abraham was saved was because he was willing to offer up Isaac. We need to be clear about this. James is not saying that Abraham earned his salvation by doing a good work. Rather, James clearly states that Abraham already had faith (his **faith was working together with his works**), and that his faith was made **perfect** or complete by his good works. His works confirmed that Abraham’s faith was real or genuine.

v 24 **You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only:** Again we see that James is not saying that we are saved by *only* doing good works. The works are always connected to, and are a demonstration or proof of, a living faith. A person is saved by faith that produces good works, but **not by faith only** — *the kind of faith that does not produce good works, that produces no good fruit*. Remember how at the start we talked about the two kinds of faith, and the two kinds of works.

As James has already said, **faith without works is dead**. Faith alone, a dead kind of faith without any works, will not save you. A person needs a living faith, a faith that works, a saving faith that results in them becoming a new creation in Christ, if they are going to be accepted by God.

David Guzik: ‘Works *must* accompany a genuine faith, because genuine faith is always connected with regeneration—being born again, becoming a *new creation* in Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:17). If there is no evidence of a new life, then there was no genuine, saving faith.’

Charles Spurgeon is reported to have said: “The grace that does not change my life will not save my soul.”

James 2:25 NKJV

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

David Guzik: ‘Rahab demonstrated her trust in the God of Israel by hiding the spies and seeking salvation from their God (Joshua 2:8–13). Her faith was shown to be living faith because it *did* something. Her belief in the God of Israel would not have saved her if she had not *done* something with that faith.’

The lesson from Abraham is clear: if we believe in God, we will do what He tells us to do. The lesson from Rahab is also clear: if we believe in God, we will help His people, even when it costs us something.’

James 2:26 NKJV

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

This is an obvious analogy that James uses to seal his argument. Once the spirit has left the body, the body is dead. It is only a corpse. As a body without a spirit is only a dead corpse, so faith without works is only a dead faith, unable to save.

Burdick comments: “Therefore, if no deeds are forthcoming, it is proof that the professed faith is dead. Notice that James does not deny that it is faith. He simply indicates that it is not the right kind of faith. It is not living faith, nor can it save.”

Calvin: “Man is not justified by faith alone, that is, by a bare and empty knowledge of God; he is justified by works, that is, his righteousness is known and proved by its fruits.”

Just like baptism doesn’t save a man, but is an outward sign of an inward change that has already happened. So also good works don’t save a man, they only prove that the heart has been truly regenerated or born again. Good works are works which are done by faith and motivated by love for Christ and gratitude for what He has done for us.

True and false conversion

Why is James being so dogmatic about this? Why is he insisting that real or true faith will produce or result in good works? Why this insistence that there should be evidence of our faith? Actually, surprise, surprise, James chapter 2 is a natural follow-on from James chapter 1. Think about what we have learned so far:

James 1:22, 26-27 NKJV

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ... ²⁶ If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion *is* useless. ²⁷ Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, *and* to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

Do you remember our story from the start of the message, the one about me having to choose between football and hockey? Remember that I deceived myself into thinking that I was really a hockey player when I was still a football player. Do you remember the consequences of this deception? I was kicked out of the awards night. I was bitterly disappointed. That deceiver that told me that I could be a hockey player without actually playing hockey was my best friend for a while. I thought that the hockey coach was simply too harsh. But eventually I soon realised the truth, and it was too late. I had rejected the truth and believed the lie.

The point here is that nothing has changed. There were false converts in Jesus day and one of the purposes of the book of James is to show the difference between a true convert and a false convert. Listen to what Jesus had to say to the false converts in His day:

Matthew 7:21-23 NKJV

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²² Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ ²³ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

Think about what Jesus is saying in Matthew 7:21-23:

- Not everyone who makes a verbal confession of faith in Jesus Christ, that is, not everyone who prays the sinners pray, will end up in heaven.
- Of those who make a verbal confession of faith, the only ones that will enter into heaven are the ones who actually do the will of the Father in heaven. These are those who actually repent of their sins and turn to God. These are those who surrendered their will to God's will. Like Jesus said, “not My will but Your's be done.”
- There will be *many* false converts, who will have satanic power to prophecy, cast out demons, and do many wonders in the name of Jesus (Notice that Jesus doesn't deny that they did these things, but He does not acknowledge that they were done by His power or leading, i.e. not actually in His name — they did not reflect His character or nature). So if they were not actually done in Jesus' name, as claimed, then whose name were they really done in?

2 Corinthians 11:13-15 NKJV

For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. ¹⁵ Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.

- These people are not people who were saved but then walked away from God and lost their salvation. Jesus says about these false converts, “I *never* knew you.”
- These false converts, the ones that Jesus asks to depart from Him, are the ones who never repented of their sin and turned to God. Jesus described them as, “you who [continuously] practice lawlessness.” The tense of the verb “practice” is present tense and describes continuous action. They did practice lawlessness, and continue to practice lawlessness. There has never been a time when they didn’t practice lawlessness. There was never a time when they repented of their sins. There was never a point in their life when they genuinely turned to God and surrendered their will to God’s will.

This is what James is emphasising in James 2:14-26. Three times, in verses 17, 20, and 26, James says, “faith without works is dead”. Do you think that James is trying to make a point!

Listen to what Paul says in:

2 Corinthians 13:5 NKJV

Examine yourselves *as to* whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.

James is not the only person to say that what we do determines if we are saved or not. Both Paul and John said the same thing. The apostle Paul said in:

Ephesians 4:17-29 NLT

With the Lord’s authority I say this: Live no longer as the Gentiles do, for they are hopelessly confused. ¹⁸ Their minds are full of darkness; they wander far from the life God gives because they have closed their minds and hardened their hearts against him. ¹⁹ They have no sense of shame. They live for lustful pleasure and eagerly practice every kind of impurity.

²⁰ But that isn’t what you learned about Christ. ²¹ Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him, ²² throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. ²³ Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. ²⁴ Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.

²⁵ So stop telling lies. Let us tell our neighbours the truth, for we are all parts of the same body. ²⁶ And “don’t sin by letting anger control you.” Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry, ²⁷ for anger gives a foothold to the devil.

²⁸ If you are a thief, quit stealing. Instead, use your hands for good hard work, and then give generously to others in need. ²⁹ Don’t use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.

The apostle John said in:

1 John 3:4-10 NLT

Everyone who sins is breaking God's law, for all sin is contrary to the law of God. ⁵ And you know that Jesus came to take away our sins, and there is no sin in him. ⁶ Anyone who continues to live in him will not sin. But anyone who keeps on sinning does not know him or understand who he is.

⁷ Dear children, don't let anyone deceive you about this: When people do what is right, it shows that they are righteous, even as Christ is righteous. ⁸ But when people keep on sinning, it shows that they belong to the devil, who has been sinning since the beginning. But the Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil. ⁹ Those who have been born into God's family do not make a practice of sinning, because God's life is in them. So they can't keep on sinning, because they are children of God. ¹⁰ So now we can tell who are children of God and who are children of the devil. Anyone who does not live righteously and does not love other believers does not belong to God.

Summary and Conclusion

The bottom line is this, as Jon Courson puts it so well:

It is not faith or works
It is not faith and works
It is faith that works.

Jon Courson: 'Arguing that faith without works is dead, the Book of James so incensed Martin Luther that the reformer called it "a veritable straw Epistle that should be thrown into the Rhine River." Yet James proves that faith without works is dead by pointing to the example of Abraham. It's not that Abraham was saved by taking Isaac up the mountain to sacrifice him in obedience to God. No, James says the work that saved Abraham took place years before that when he simply believed in God (verse 23).

When was Abraham declared righteous? As James quotes Genesis 15:6, we understand that Abraham was declared righteous when he simply believed God would do what He said He would do when He told Abraham He would make his descendants more numerable than the sand on the seashore. Interestingly, Paul would also point to Abraham as proof that man is justified by faith apart from works (Romans 4:3).

James and Paul are in full agreement because they both maintain that the moment Abraham simply believed God was the moment God imputed righteousness unto him. It is not faith *and* works that saves a man. It is not faith *or* works. It is faith *that* works. All Abraham was doing on Mount Moriah was showing the reality of what had taken place in his life years earlier when he simply believed God.

If your faith is real, it will show itself. How? By obeying the Word of God and following the leading of the Lord, even though you may not understand where it will lead. At the time, Abraham could not have understood the significance of what he had done on Mount Moriah. But this side of Calvary, we see it was a perfect picture of what God the Father would do in sending His Son to that same mountain to die for the sins of the world.

You know you're truly born again when you find yourself obeying God. We're not saved by obedience. But our obedience proves we're saved, for true faith works.'

**It is not faith or works
It is not faith and works
It is faith that works.'**

Another way of looking at it is this way: good works are the fruit of a genuine relationship with God, of genuine repentance that leads to genuine salvation. Jesus said it this way:

Matthew 7:15-20 NKJV

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶ You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor *can* a bad tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Therefore by their fruits you will know them.