

Faith versus Works

A false choice

“...for by grace ye are having been saved, through faith,
and this not of you—of God the gift—not of works, that
no one may boast...”

(Eph 2:8-9)

An argument has raged which has simmered down into a
deadly cliché.

The apparent conclusion of modern western Churchianity is one extreme of religious activity, or no activity at all.

The simplest expression of it is simply 'we are saved by
faith, not by works'.

Or simply "Faith versus Works".

Or "Sola Fide".

But this doctrine as quoted today by the stunted sheople is demonic wisdom, ascended from below. It is not God's wisdom from above.

The choice between faith and works, as if they are opposites, is a false choice, based on a false division.

The real division is between flesh and Spirit.

Not between works and faith.

There are works that can be and are performed by the flesh, attempting to fulfill a righteousness of the law.

These are dead works.

There are works performed by the Spirit, fulfilling a
righteousness of faith.

These are living works.

So the real division is between dead works and living works.

The real division is between the flesh, and the Spirit.

The real division is between the law, and faith.

There is something called “works of law” and truly,
works of law do not save.

Quite the opposite, they condemn:

“And we have known that as many things as the law saith, to those in the law it doth speak, that every mouth may be stopped, and **all the world may come under judgment to God**; wherefore by **works of law** shall no flesh be declared righteous before Him, for through law is a knowledge of sin.”

(Rom 3:19-20)

“...having known also that a man is not declared righteous by **works of law**, if not through the faith of Jesus Christ, also we in Christ Jesus did believe, that we might be **declared righteous by the faith of Christ**, and not by **works of law**, wherefore declared righteous by **works of law** shall be no flesh.”

(Gal 2:16)

There a 'law of faith' and a 'law of works':

“Where then *is* the boasting? it was excluded; by what law? of works? no, but by a **law of faith**: therefore do we reckon a man to be declared righteous by faith, apart from **works of law**.”

(Rom 3:27-28)

When the miraculous is performed, it is by the works of the Spirit by faith, not by works of the law, because only the Spirit can perform miraculous...for man miracles are impossible:

“He, therefore, who is supplying to you the Spirit, and working mighty acts among you—by **works of law** or by the hearing of faith *is it?*”

(Gal 3:5)

“...for as many as are of **works of law** are under a curse, for it hath been written, 'Cursed is every one who is not remaining in all things that have been written in the Book of the Law—to do them,' and that **in law no one is declared righteous with God**, is evident, because 'The righteous by faith shall live;’”

(Gal 3:10-11)

The writer of Hebrews makes clear that works performed by men which are held accountable by the law, are dead works:

“Wherefore, having left the word of the beginning of the Christ, unto the perfection we may advance, not again a foundation laying of reformation from **dead works**, and of faith on God,”

(Heb 6:1)

“...how much more shall the blood of the Christ (who through the age-during Spirit did offer himself unblemished to God) purify your conscience from **dead works** to serve the living God?”

(Heb 9:14)

But here's the thing that has to be recognized:

- 1) The Spirit works living works, performed by the Spirit
- 2) The Flesh works dead works, performed by the flesh

So which of those two kinds of works is James referring to when he writes:

“What *is* the profit, my brethren, if faith, any one may speak of having, and works he may not have? **is that faith able to save him?**”

(Jas 2:14)

“Is that faith without works able to save him?” is a rhetorical question.

The answer, of course, is “No, faith without works is unable to save.”

But what kind of works?

Clearly James is not talking about works of the law, but rather works of the Spirit!

So there is no contradiction between James and Paul.
None.

“and if a brother or sister may be naked, and may be destitute of the daily food, and any one of you may say to them, 'Depart ye in peace, be warmed, and be filled,' and may not give to them the things needful for the body, what is the profit? so also the faith, if it may not have works, is dead by itself.”

(Jas 2:15-17)

“And dost thou wish to know, O vain man, that the faith apart from the works is dead? Abraham our father—was not he declared righteous out of works, having brought up Isaac his son upon the altar?”

(Jas 2:20-21)

“...dost thou see that the faith was working with his works, and out of the works the faith was perfected? and fulfilled was the Writing that is saying, 'And Abraham did believe God, and it was reckoned to him—to righteousness;' and, 'Friend of God' he was called. Ye see, then, that out of works is man declared righteous, and not out of faith only;”

(Jas 2:22-24)

“...for as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also the
faith apart from the works is dead.”

(Jas 2:26)

Paul says in Ephesians that we were created for good works.

Is he talking about dead works of the law? No!

He is talking about living works of the Spirit:

“...for of Him we are workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to good works, which God did before prepare, **that in them we may walk.**”

(Eph 2:10)

So let's talk about Abel, who was killed by Cain.

Abel offered a sacrifice to God of his flock.

Cain offered a sacrifice to God of the ground.

Why was Abel's sacrifice accepted, and Cain's rejected?

Have you considered it?

Is God 'unfair' for rejecting Cain's offering?

A question:

Was Abel's sacrifice a work of the law by the flesh, or a work of faith, by the Spirit?

A question:

Was Cain's sacrifice a work of the law by the flesh, or a work of faith, by the Spirit?

It is true the law was not yet given...so why did they offer anything at all?

What was the difference between their offerings?

Have you considered it?

Consider:

Abel's offered by faith back to God what only God could produce without any of Abel's effort: a lamb of the flock.

By this act, Abel was acknowledging his sin could only be covered by innocent blood...blood he had no part or effort in producing.

Abel came in faith depending on God's mercy.

Cain on the other hand offered fruit of the ground.

Ground which had been cursed due to man's sin.

Fruit which consequently came of Cain's own effort.

Notice that both Cain and Abel performed what appear externally to be similar works.

They both built altars. They both produced fires. They both sacrificed of their possessions.

But one of them offered in faith, and one of them offered in the flesh.

One proclaimed his guilt and need for mercy, the other proclaimed his own effort and placed a demand.

So proclaiming 'saved by faith, not by works' without understanding what kind of works is very dangerous.

James makes very clear that faith without works is dead,
and dead faith is not able to save.

Please check yourself to make sure your proclamation
isn't just a cover for your lack of living works of the
Spirit!

Put the division back where it belongs:

1. Between the Spirit and the Flesh
2. Between the Living and the Dead
3. Between Faith and the Law
4. Between Living works and Dead works