

We Show Our Faith Out Of Our Works



Foundations (Day 92)
by Derek Prince

The fourth example James gives of the relation between faith and works is that of Rahab. The story of Rahab is related in chapters 2 and 6 of the book of Joshua.

Rahab was a sinful Canaanite woman living in the city of Jericho, which was under the sentence of God's wrath and judgement. Having heard of the miraculous way in which God had led Israel out of Egypt, Rahab had come to believe that the God of Israel was the true God and that He would give Canaan and its inhabitants into the hand of His people Israel. However, Rahab also believed that the God of Israel was merciful enough and powerful enough to save her and her family. This was the faith Rahab had in her heart. This faith found expression in two things that she did.

First, when Joshua sent two men ahead of his army into Jericho, Rahab received these two men into her home, hid them and enabled them to escape again. In doing this, Rahab risked her own life. Later, in order to claim God's protection upon her home and family, she hung a line of scarlet from her window to distinguish her house from all the others. This was the same window through which Rahab had previously helped the two men to escape.

As a result of these two acts of Rahab, her house and family were saved from the destruction that later came upon all the rest of Jericho. Had Rahab merely believed secretly in her heart in the God of Israel but been unwilling to perform these two decisive acts, her faith would have been a dead faith. It would have had no power to save her from the judgement that came upon Jericho.

The lesson for us as Christians is twofold. First, if we profess faith in Christ, we must be willing to identify ourselves actively with Christ's cause and Christ's messengers, even though it may mean real personal sacrifice, perhaps the risking or laying down of our very lives. Second, we must be willing to make a definite, open confession of our faith, which marks us out from all the unbelievers around us. The scarlet line speaks particularly of openly confessing our faith in the blood of Christ for the remission and cleansing of our sin.

For a final summary of the relation between faith and works to close this week we may turn once again to the writings of

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Paul.

> "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure." (Phil. 2:12-13)

Here the relationship is plain. First, God works in us both to will and to do. Then we work out, in our actions, what God has first worked in us. The important thing to realise is that faith comes first, then works. We receive salvation from God by faith alone, without works. Once having received salvation in this way, we then work it out actively in our lives by our works – by the things we do. If we do not actively work out our salvation this way, after believing, this shows that the faith which we have professed is merely dead faith, and that we have no real experience of salvation.

We do not receive salvation by works. But our works are the test of whether our faith is real and the means by which our faith is developed. Only real, living faith can make a real, living Christian.

Devotional

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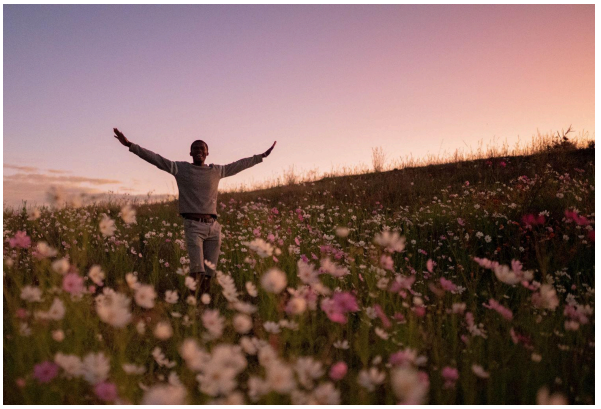

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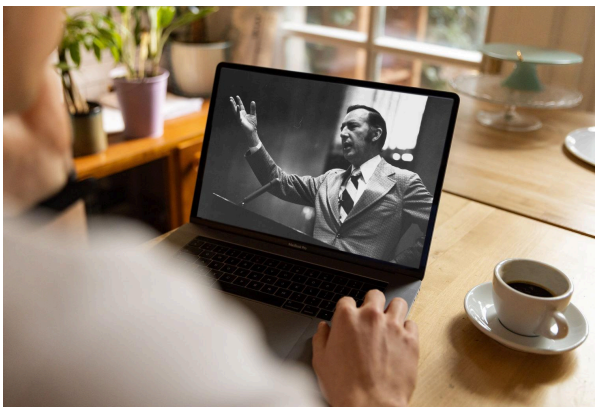

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