

From Belief To Faith

Text : **James 2: 18-20 ; Mark 9: 14-29**

S#1.

A. Due to its controversial content, we are taking a closer look at the second half of James 2.

1. James 2 is controversial because it is contrary to the teachings of John Calvin.
2. Calvin claims that, whether good or evil, one's life has no bearing on his salvation.
3. His teaching, called the TULIP, affirms the doctrine of "*Once Saved Always Saved.*"

B. Our previous lesson observed that though the words are often used interchangeably, there is a significant difference between faith and belief.

S#2.

1. James clearly illustrates that one can have belief without having faith.

James 2: 19 – You believe that God is one. You do well;
the demons also believe, and shudder.

S#3.

2. Many of the Jewish leaders believed in Jesus, but they had no faith.

John 12:42 – Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue;

C. Belief must become faith before it has the power to cause a person to be saved.

1. We are saved BY grace through faith FOR good works.

Eph. 2: 8-10 – For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; ⁹ not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand **so that** we would walk in them.

S#4.

2. Belief may affect the way one thinks, but faith affects the way one lives.

S#5.

James 2: 18– But someone may well say, "You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works."

3. Faith gives one the confidence of his eternal destiny. (*Assurance of salvation*)

S#6.

- a. **II Tim. 1: 12** – For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day. (**4: 6-8**)

- b. "*If I were to die this very moment, I know for certain I would go to be with God*"

4. This confidence of our destiny gives one a peace that the world cannot know.

S#7.

Phil. 4: 6-7 –Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

D. This lesson answers the question, “How does one get such faith.”**S#8.**

1. One must first come to believe in God and in His Christ.
2. One must learn the will of God and internalize it.
3. One must begin practice what he has learned.
4. One must learn to think in spiritual terms.

I. One must come to believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God.**S#9.****A. Any discussion about faith must begin with God.****S#10.**

1. One must be of a disposition that he will accept the existence of God.

Heb. 11: 6 – Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

2. Then He must accept that it is only through Jesus that one may draw near to God.

Heb. 10: 19-22 – Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. **S#11.**

B. One must first recognize a need for salvation.**S#12.**

1. Every person needs to be forgiven for the sins he has committed.

a. **Rom. 3: 10 , 23** – There is none righteous, not even one. ... ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

b. **I John 1: 8** – If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.

2. All who commit a sin separate themselves from God.

S#13.

a. **James 2: 10** – For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.

b. **Rom. 6: 23** – For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

C. Jesus is the only way one can be saved eternally.

1. **John 14: 6** – Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me. **S#14.**

2. **John 8:24** – Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."

3. **Acts 4: 12** – And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved

II. One must learn and internalize the word of God.**S#15.****A. Faith is not randomly given as a gift from God.****S#16.**

1. The Calvinist teach that God gives faith to those He sovereignly selects.
2. They erroneously interpret passages to teach this :
 - a. They interpret Hebrews 12 to say that Jesus originates faith in each person individually, instead of originating the system of faith whereby all are saved.

Heb. 12: 2 – Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding **S#17.** us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **2** fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

- b. In Ephesians 2 they interpret the gift of God to be faith, not salvation.

Eph. 2: 8-10 – For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of **S#18.** yourselves, it is the gift of God; **9** not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. **10** For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

B. Faith grows out of believing the gospel message.**S#19.**

1. **Rom. 10: 14, 17** – How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? ...
17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.
2. Faith is a response to a message, **NOT** a miraculous experience given by God.
 - a. **Rom. 1:19-20** ... One can look on the creation and see there is a creator God.
 - b. One only learns who is that creator by receiving the revelation of God .. His words

C. When that word of God is internalized, it will produce fruit in our lives.**S#20.**

1. We are made, i.e., created as a Christian by our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ
Eph. 2: 10 – For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works.
2. The Lord uses one's response to the message of the gospel to “create” him.
James 1: 18 – In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of **S#21.** truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.
3. In order to bring us forth by the word, the word must be received and applied.
James 1: 21 – Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. (*Like seeds, we must plant the word.*)

D. Our status in the judgment will be affected by our response to the message. S#22.

II Thes. 1: 7-9 – ... when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, ⁸ dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

* *One must have the character of heart to believe before he can develop faith.* S#23.

S#24.

III. To develop faith one must incorporate what he has learned about God into life.**A. We must obtain faith in the same way Abraham obtained faith. S#25.**

1. Abraham learned to trust God through years of following His instructions.
 - a. When Abraham was called, he went only as far as Haran until his father died.
 - b. **Gen. 13: 2** ... While following God, Abraham became very rich
 - c. Abraham followed God for 25 years before his covenant son, Isaac, was born.
2. During Abraham's travels with God he learned to trust God completely. S#26.
Gen. 15: 5-6 – And He took him outside and said, "Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be." ⁶ Then he believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.

B. When believers keep learning more about God and keep on living what they have learned, their belief naturally matures into faith. S#27.

1. God is available, but those who do not seek God will not be forced to comply.
Acts 17: 26-27 – He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, ²⁷ that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; ²⁸ for in Him we live and move and exist, ... S#28.
2. Those who seek after God will find Him.
Matt. 7: 7-8 – Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸ "For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. S#29.
3. God makes Himself readily available to those who seek Him.
 - a. **Deut. 4: 29** – But from there you will seek the Lord your God, and you will find Him if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul. S#30.
 - b. **Jer. 29: 13** – You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. ¹⁴ I will be found by you,' declares the Lord,

4. Remember, God can be found in two ways :
 - a. **Rom. 1: 19-20** ... We can know there is a God by observing His creation.
 - b. **Rom. 10: 17** ... God is revealed to us in His written word.

C. God will not approach us individually; we must seek Him.

S#31.

1. **John 3: 16** ... God came to earth and reached out to us; we must respond.
2. God will receive all who surrender to Him.
James 4: 8 – Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.

IV. In order to develop faith one must learn to think in spiritual terms.

S#32.

A. Belief will generate love before it generates faith.

S#33.

1. **Matt. 22: 37** – And He said to him, **“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.”**
2. If one loves with all his heart, soul, and mind, he will think about the one loved.

B. The one who seeks to grow in faith, thinks about his goal.

1. **Rom. 8: 5-8** – For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. ⁶ For **the mind set on the flesh is death**, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, ⁷ because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, ⁸ and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. **S#34.**
2. The goal of faith is to die to self and to live as though you were Christ on the earth.
Col. 3: 1-3 – Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. **S#35.**
² **Set your mind on the things above**, not on the things that are on earth.
³ **For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.** **S#36.**

C. One does not suddenly wake up with faith. How can grow from belief into faith ?

1. One must first come to believe in God and in His Christ.
2. One must learn the will of God and internalize it.
3. One must begin practice what he has learned.
4. One must learn to think in spiritual terms.

D. Most of us are believers, but has our belief produced faith ? *Test*

S#37.

1. *“If you were to die this very minute, do you know for certain you would go to be with God eternally.”* **If you just HOPE SO, you do not yet have faith.**
2. A person who has surrendered faith knows without a doubt.

S#38. ... Communion slide

Lesson Text :**James 2: 18-20**

18 But someone may well say, "You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works." **19** You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. **20** But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless?

Mark 9: 14-29

14 When they came back to the disciples, they saw a large crowd around them, and some scribes arguing with them. **15** Immediately, when the entire crowd saw Him, they were amazed and began running up to greet Him. **16** And He asked them, "What are you discussing with them?" **17** And one of the crowd answered Him, "Teacher, I brought You my son, possessed with a spirit which makes him mute; **18** and whenever it seizes him, it slams him to the ground and he foams at the mouth, and grinds his teeth and stiffens out. I told Your disciples to cast it out, and they could not do it." **19** And He answered them and said, "O unbelieving generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him to Me!" **20** They brought the boy to Him. When he saw Him, immediately the spirit threw him into a convulsion, and falling to the ground, he began rolling around and foaming at the mouth. **21** And He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. **22** "It has often thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, take pity on us and help us!" **23** And Jesus said to him, " 'If You can?' All things are possible to him who believes." **24** Immediately the boy's father cried out and said, "I do believe; help my unbelief." **25** When Jesus saw that a crowd was rapidly gathering, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You deaf and mute spirit, I command you, come out of him and do not enter him again." **26** After crying out and throwing him into terrible convulsions, it came out; and the boy became so much like a corpse that most of them said, "He is dead!" **27** But Jesus took him by the hand and raised him; and he got up. **28** When He came into the house, His disciples began questioning Him privately, "Why could we not drive it out?" **29** And He said to them, "This kind cannot come out by anything but prayer."