Faith Without Works

By: John E. Drury 06-06-10

It seems to be an age old war raging between those who believe that works are required for salvation and those who say no works are required. What is the truth? Let’s find the answer from those who are the true authorities. It really doesn’t matter what we humans think, what matters is what the originator of the law thinks and what He has to say. The Word of God is NOT a lot of sayings that we can pick and choose from to suit our own desires. The Word of God is NOT a book that contradicts itself either. When there seems to be contradictions we are either misunderstanding what it says or we are looking at a bad translation. Let me make it abundantly clear, THE BIBLE GOES TOGETHER AS A WHOLE.

Isai 28:10 (KJS) For precept [must be] upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, [and] there a little: Because THE BIBLE IS A COMPLETE BOOK and everything works together we must keep it together when we study it.

We must also put aside ALL ideas of men and accept only the truth from God. In addition to that we must study thoroughly the Word of God keeping everything in proper context. Finally we must understand WHAT IS BEING SAID.

Look carefully

Let’s look at some of the arguments and scriptures used to bolster those arguments. What does Paul say to the Romans? I refer you to the International Children's Bible because it makes this much clearer and does not disagree with other translations like the King James and the Revised Standard Version.

Romans 3:27 (ICB) So do we have a reason to brag about ourselves? No! And why not? It is the way of faith that stops all bragging, not the way of following the law.

This verse is talking about bragging in regards to works, and the reason this is the subject is that the Pharisees did brag on their works and Paul wanted to stop that bragging. Since faith, which is something the Pharisees did not have, was being introduced to them, it was important that they applied faith to their works, and that they did not go around bragging about it.

What is being said to the Galatians in chapter 2

Please notice carefully that nowhere in these verses does it say, or even hint at the law being done away. It is talking strictly about faith and its necessity, but does NOT say that we are to substitute faith for works. It IS pointing out the importance of faith. But as we study more of what God says in His word we find that faith AND works BOTH are required. This is NOT what has been preached and taught by those who willfully refuse to obey the laws of God!

Gala 2:15-16 (RSV) We ourselves, who are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners, 16 yet who know that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified.

He is saying that works do not justify one, why does he say this? Because MORE than works are required, therefore works alone will NEVER justify anyone.
Galatians 2:17-18 But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were found to be sinners, is Christ then an agent of sin? Certainly not! 18 But if I build up again those things which I tore down, then I prove myself a transgressor.

What? He is saying that if he goes back and corrects the errors he made, that those works only prove that he did transgress (break) the law. He is not building up to the point to saying that works are not needed as we shall see in other scriptures in other places.

Galatians 2:19-20 For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. 20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

He is telling us that faith had been given to him through Jesus Christ and that he now lives in Christ. He is NOT saying that he no longer has any works to do.

Galatians 2:21 I do not nullify the grace of God; for if justification were through the law, then Christ died to no purpose.

This only goes along with what he has already said, in effect, works do not justify, but that faith is also required or else Christ died for no good reason. It was Jesus Christ who through His life and His sacrifice brought what was already there, but unknown to the Israelites, that is faith. Now because He brought this to us, we are obligated to do both. Jesus Christ Himself said that He did not come to do away with the law but to make it full and complete.

Matt 5:17 (ICB) "Don't think that I have come to destroy the law of Moses or the teaching of the prophets. I have not come to destroy their teachings but to do what they said.

This should tell us that more than works are required, but that works ARE required! Why did Christ say this? Because He knew that some would try to say that He had done away with the law. If works were not required in addition to faith, then we could sin all we want and God would not call it sin, as some believe. BUT, God says that we will be called in to answer for our works, He says this more than once.

Matt 16:27 (KJS) For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then HE SHALL REWARD EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS WORKS.

Rewards for his works does not mean a free pass to salvation!

Additional Scriptures: Prov 24:12, 2 Cor. 11:15, Rev. 20:12-13

We cannot justify our beliefs by ripping the scriptures apart and taking only what suits our needs, the whole bible is the whole word of God and must be taken together. Remember what we are told in Revelation about taking away or adding to the word of God.

Reve 22:19 (KJS) And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and [from] the things which are written in this book.

Let’s continue to look at these scriptures which those who would twist the scriptures in order to use them use as their justification.

Gala 3:1-5 (ICB) You people in Galatia were told very clearly about the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. But you were very foolish. You let someone trick you. 2 Tell me this one thing: How did you receive the Holy Spirit? Did
you receive the Spirit by following the law [works]? No! You received the Spirit because you heard the Good News and believed it.

3 You began your life in Christ by the Spirit. Now do you try to continue it by your own power? That is foolish. 4 You have experienced many things. Were all those experiences wasted? I hope not! 5 Does God give you the Spirit because you follow the law? No! Does God work miracles among you because you follow the law? No! God gives you his Spirit and works miracles among you because you heard the Good News and believed it.

The Truth about Faith and Works

Works AND faith both are required. By what criteria are we judged for salvation? If we wish to receive salvation, then it is most important that we know what God has to say on the subject. The truth is that both works and faith are required.

Jame 2:12-26 (KJS) So speak ye, and **SO DO, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.** 13 For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment. 14 **What [doth it] profit,** my brethren, **though a man say he hath faith,** and **have not works? can faith save him?** 15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, 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? 17 Even so **FAITH, IF IT HATH NOT WORKS, IS DEAD, BEING ALONE.** 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. 19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. 20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? 21 **Was not Abraham our father justified by works,** when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? 22 Seest **thou how faith wrought with his works,** and **by works was faith made perfect?** 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. 24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. 25 Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent [them] out another way? 26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, **SO FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD ALSO.**

Why are both faith and works required? Each one brings about a specific result. Faith is required because without it salvation is not obtainable. So now that you have obtained salvation through faith, where do you go from there? Works are required because they define who you are and what you stand for. As an American, one stands for freedom of religion, to bear arms, to assemble, and freedom of speech. All these are works that are required to be a citizen of this country. How much more do we want to be a citizen of the Kingdom of God?

2Cor 6:1 (ICB) We are **WORKERS** together with God. So we beg you: Do not let the grace that you received from God be for nothing.

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