

**“The law tells me
how crooked I am.
Grace comes along
and straightens
me out.”**

— D. L. Moody

Works Or Grace?

Harry Todd

*If you can go to Heaven
By the works you do,
Then who is keeping score,
Is it God or you?*

*If you could gain some points
For the good deeds you do,
Then losing points for bad deeds
Must be also true.*

*Then at the end of day
You add up the score,
Can you tell you’ve done enough
To enter Heaven’s door?*

*Then if your bad deeds
Are more than the good you had,
Then how many good deeds
Will make up for the bad?*

*Now all these good deeds
That you think are right,
How do you know these deeds
Are pleasing in God’s sight?*

*If you can go to Heaven
By good deeds that you do,
Then why did Jesus come
To die for me and you?*

*It was on the cross of Calvary,
Jesus shed His blood for you;
If His blood was not sufficient,
Then your good deeds will
never do.*

*By grace you are saved, by faith,
That is the Bible way,
So stop trying, start trusting,
Receive Christ as Saviour today!*

**“Let your
religion be less of a
theory and more
of a love
affair with God.”**

— Chesterton

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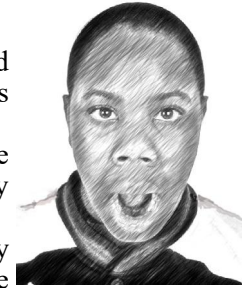
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False Faith

Bill Brinkworth

The one thing that has kept many out of Heaven, even professing Christians, is discussed in James 2:4-26.

Sadly, those people may have thought they had done



what was necessary to obtain Heaven but were mistaken. The faith they thought would bar them from everlasting torment was not “real.”

Just believing in God is not saving or trusting faith! Even the devils believe in God (James 2:19). They tremble at the mention of Him, yet their “faith” will not save them any more than that kind of faith will save anyone. Satan has even talked to God, yet his knowing the Creator will not get him into Heaven either.

Knowledge is not necessarily faith. I can believe there is a president in the Whitehouse, but that faith does not make me a

member of his family or even part of his cabinet. Genuine Christian faith is more than knowing about spiritual things.

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I Have a Mighty Castle

From A Story by C. H. Spurgeon

Charles Spurgeon likened a man in his unsaved, natural estate to a man who lived in what he thought was a strong, impenetrable castle. Within it, the man hid behind its protective outer and inner moats. Beyond those deep, water-filled waterways were tall, thick walls, and further within, if an enemy could ever get beyond them were protective fort-like dungeons.

The first moat that goes around the sinner’s trusting place is his good works. “Ah,” he says, “I am as good as my neighbor. I pay my bills on time. I tithe to the church on even the smallest amount I earn. I am a good, respectable gentleman, indeed.”

When the Lord comes to save this man, He easily storms the first obstacle the man has created.

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False Faith

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The ingredient that makes faith real is that one trusts one's belief physically. That trust is exhibited by one's works.

A believer trusts the Bible is God's Word and tries to follow every commandment its pages reveal. One who believes Jesus will hear one's prayers talks to Him often. The saved person, by faith, also will believe that God will meet every need.

The born-again child of God patiently waits for Him to meet needs, rather than impatiently racking up credit card debt because God did not provide in the time expected. One tithes because God commands it, and the child of God knows God will somehow help him live on less. Those steps may seem foolish to one not living by genuine faith, but to the faithful and God, they prove one's trust is real.

Faith without these "works" (proofs) is not genuine faith. Three times (James 2:17, 20, 26) faith without works is referred to as "dead."

"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."

James 2:17

Many know the "works" part is essential and try incorporating it into their theology. They put the works first and think they will save and prove that they have faith. Unfortunately, they get the order wrong.

They participate in religious ceremonies or good deeds to prove they have faith. Often, they try to clean up their life, attempt to act righteously, and do other good works. As noble as they may appear, these acts are not by faith. They are attempts to pay for God's approval. One cannot work oneself to Heaven.

Faith is extending one's trust in God. The proof of belief is that the "works" show one is acting on faith's behalf. This may seem like a fine line to some, but it is the line that separates the saved from the unsaved. Is your faith manifested by your works of faith?

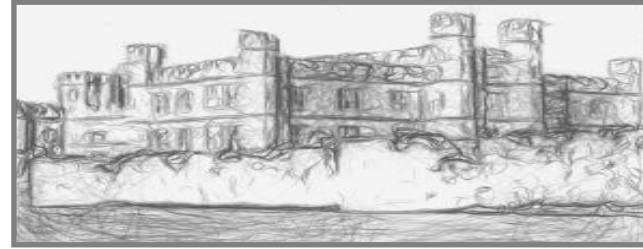
I Have a Mighty Castle

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God's approaching, thundering voice shouts, "Salvation is of the Lord! If salvation is of God, how can it be of good works?" Instantly, the moat is dried up.

"There is still the moat of ceremonies," the man thinks. "Well, I may not be able to trust in my good works, but I have been baptized. I have been confirmed. Do I not take of the sacrament? That shall be my trust!"

The convicting army of God again attacks and approaches this second barrier. Again, the mas-



ter shouts, "Salvation is of the Lord!" This watery obstacle is also dried up.

Confused, the man retreats further into his fort of protection. He never expected this protection to fail him. Behind the tall, thick, strong walls, he stows himself away. Looking over the fort's walls, the sinner convinces himself of his safety and says, "I can repent. I can believe whenever I like. I will save myself by repenting and believing."

Up the walls God's conviction approaches. The walls are easily battered down. His voice shouts, "Salvation is of the Lord. Your faith and repentance must all be given you or else you will neither truly believe nor repent of sin."

The castle of self is overcome. Any hopes the sinner had are all cut off. He knows now salvation is not of anything he could have done as he reads the banner that replaces his own. It proudly waves, "Salvation is of the Lord!"

Is the battle over? Oh, no. The sinner has retired to the dungeons in the center of the castle. He now uses another tactic, "I cannot save myself. There is no salvation for me." The sinner sits down and cries, "I cannot be saved. I will perish."

The Lord also attacks this battlement. The Lord's commanding voice shouts, "Salvation is of the Lord. It is

not of man; it is of God. I can save even the worst sinners. This sword, you see, cuts two ways. It cuts pride down, and then it cleaves the skull of despair. If many say they can save themselves, it will half their pride at once. If another says one cannot be saved, it dasheth despair to the Earth, for it affirms that one can be saved when one truly sees salvation is of the Lord. Jesus came to save all that would believe and trust that His payment for sin is the only way to victory!"

Rotten Covering

John Bates

A man walking over a rotten covering of a deep pit will, in all probability, fall in and be killed. Likewise, the man who trusts his good works to get to Heaven will find that they are all rotteness and will give way under him and sink him into the punishment of Hell.

"The trials of the Christian life you shall find heavy, but grace will make them light."

— Spurgeon

"Faith is an inside job that works its way out."
— Author Unknown