

James 2 Part 2

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[0 : 00] Good morning. So today we're on James 2, part 2, is your faith alive?! Just a little bit last week, last week we saw James confronting the sin of partiality or favoritism.

He challenged us to examine how we view other people. Do we see them through the eyes of the world or through the eyes of Christ? Do we value people according to wealth or status and appearance or according to what value God puts on them?

At the heart of that passage stood one of the most beautiful statements in the letter. I don't know if any of you can remember it. It was mercy triumphs over judgment. But James is not finished. Today we're going to be looking at James 2.

And so if you can turn to your Bibles, James 2, and we'll read from verse 14. To the end. What use is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone says he has faith but he has no works?

Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, Go in peace, be warmed and be filled, yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is it?

[1 : 23] In the same way, faith also, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself. 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.

You believe God is one. You do well. The demons also believe and shudder. But are you willing to acknowledge, you foolish person, that faith without works is useless?

Was our father Abraham not justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was made perfected. And the scripture was fulfilled which says, And Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness. And he was called a friend of God.

You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. In the same way was Rahab the prostitute not justified by works, also when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way.

[2 : 31] For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead. I've got a dry throat, so excuse me.

Okay. The faith that talks but never walks. Having challenged the sin of favoritism in verse 1 to 13, James now moves to an even bigger question.

What does genuine faith actually look like? Verse 14 says, What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works?

Can that faith save him? Now notice carefully what James actually says. He does not ask, what if someone has faith? What he actually asks, what if someone says he has faith?

That single word is important. James is examining a profession of faith. A claim, a declaration, a statement.

[3 : 35] He is asking whether a faith that exists only in words can truly be saving faith. The answer that James gives is clear. No.

James is not questioning salvation by faith. He has already assumed that throughout the letter. What he is questioning is a faith that never produces visible evidence.

A faith that remains entirely theoretical. A faith that exists only in conversation. A faith that never affects our behavior. A faith that never changes priorities.

A faith that never alters conduct. So James asks, can that kind of faith save? The implied answer is no. Because genuine faith is never merely intellectual.

It affects the whole person. Let me use a simple chair illustration. Now imagine I place a chair in the middle of the room. And I ask, do you believe this chair can hold your weight?

[4 : 37] Most people would say yes. Why would they say yes? Because they have seen chairs before. They understand how chairs work. And they have confidence in its design.

But, how do I know that they are genuinely believers? Eventually they sit down. So faith is demonstrated by trust. The same principle applies spiritually.

Many people say, I believe in Jesus. But James asks, have you entrusted your life to him? Have you rested upon him? Have you surrendered to him?

Because genuine faith does not merely agree with facts about Christ. It depends upon Christ. It rests in Christ. And it trusts Christ.

There is a difference between knowledge and trust. That is the difference between knowing something, trusting someone. For example, a passenger may know a pilot is qualified, but faith boards the aircraft.

[5 : 38] A patient may know a surgeon is skilled, but faith lies down on the operating table. A traveller may know a bridge is safe, but faith walks across it.

Saving faith is not merely believing certain facts are true. It is placing ourselves into the hands of Christ. Another example, some of us don't argue with the sat-nav.

We challenge our spouse about whether the sat-nav is right. Eventually one of them turns out to be correct. And it's not usually the one holding the steering wheel.

Faith isn't just believing. Jesus knows the right road. It's choosing to follow his directions. It is trusting him with our lives. James then gives an illustration from everyday life.

Suppose a brother or sister lacks food and clothing. A Christian sees the need and says, Go in peace. Be warmed and filled. And then he walks away and does nothing.

[6 : 43] James asks, What good is that? The answer is obvious. Kind words do not fill empty stomachs. Good wishes do not provide warm clothing. Simply alone cannot meet practical needs.

The person may have spoken kindly. The person may even have meant well. But if nothing happens, the need remains unchanged.

James is not criticizing kindness. He is exposing the difference between words and actions.

Between profession and reality. Between sentiment and substance.

And the same principle applies to faith. A faith that never expresses itself in action is as useless as compassion that never helps.

But living faith produces evidence. Now we must be a bit careful here. James is not preaching or teaching perfection. He is not teaching sinless living.

[7 : 42] He is not teaching salvation by works. The New Testament is clear that salvation comes by grace through faith. But James is teaching that genuine faith leaves evidence behind.

Just as a living tree eventually bears fruit. Just as a healthy spring produces water. Just as a living body shows signs of life. So genuine faith produces evidence.

Not perfect evidence. But evidence nonetheless. What kind of evidence? A growing love for Christ. A changed attitude towards sin.

A desire to obey God's word. A concern for other people. A hunger for holiness. A willingness to forgive. And a longing to please God.

These things do not save us. But they reveal that God is at work within us. Faith and fruit. Now Jesus taught exactly the same principle in the Sermon on the Mount.

[8 : 42] He said, A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit. Nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. The fruit does not create life. The fruit reveals life.

An apple tree does not become alive by producing apples. It produces apples because it is alive. The fruit is the evidence. Not the cause. I'd never gone into my garden and shouted at the apple tree.

Try harder. Produce more. If it's healthy apples, simply appear. It never bears fruit. And I don't give it a motivational speech. I start wondering whether something is wrong with the tree.

The same is true spiritually. Works do not create saving faith. Works reveal saving faith. The fruit does not save the tree.

The fruit demonstrates that the tree is alive. James and Jesus are teaching the same truth. One from the hillside in Galilee. The other through a letter to scattered believers.

[9 : 47] Genuine faith becomes visible. So James therefore leaves us with an uncomfortable question. If someone observed our lives but never heard our words, what conclusions would they reach?

Would they see evidence of Christ at work within us? Would they see mercy, compassion, integrity, humility, kindness, generosity?

Or would they struggle to find any visible difference? James is not asking whether we can remember when we first believed. He's asking whether there is evidence that faith is alive today. Because genuine faith is more than something we talk about. It is something that transforms the way we live. And having exposed the weakness of a faith that exists only in words, James now takes us even deeper.

For there is another kind of faith that may surprise us. A faith that possesses correct doctrine. A faith that knows the truth. A faith that believes all the right facts.

[10:51] Yet remains completely lost. James calls it demonic faith. If you read James 2, 18-20, James is now giving one of the most startling statements in the entire New Testament.

Verse 19 says, You believe that there is one God, you do well. But even the devils, demons believe that and shudder. That should make us stop and think.

James has already shown us that faith which produces no actions is dead. Now he goes further. He shows us that faith can possess correct theology and still not save.

Think about what James is saying. The demons are not atheists. They do not doubt the existence of God. They do not question the deity of Christ.

They do not deny the reality of heaven. They do not deny the reality of hell. They do not doubt that judgment is coming. In fact, throughout the Gospels, the demons often seem to understand who Jesus is before anyone else does.

[11:59] When Jesus encountered demonic spirits, they cried out, I know who you are, the Holy One of God. They recognized him. They knew exactly who he was.

They knew his authority. They knew his power. They knew their ultimate defeat was certain. Yet, they remain lost. Why? Because knowledge alone does not save.

The difference between knowing and trusting. And this is one of the great dangers in any Bible teaching church. People can accumulate enormous amounts of knowledge. Some Christians could tell you a lot about church history, but still struggle to love the person sitting three seats away.

They can know Bible verses. They can understand doctrine. They can even explain theology. They can defend the faith. They can answer difficult questions. Yet, none of these automatically mean they know Christ personally.

Knowledge is important. Truth matters. Doctrine matters. James is certainly not attacking sound theology. The problem is stopping there.

[13:06] The demons know correct theology. What they do not possess is saving faith. They know the truth, but they do not love the truth. They know Christ, but they do not submit to Christ.

They know God's authority, but they remain in rebellion against God's authority. And that's why James says, even the demons believe and shudder.

Notice that word shudder. The demons possess more knowledge. They possess fear. They know judgment is coming. They know God's holiness. They know his power.

And the result is terror. Yet, fear alone does not save either. Many people fear judgment. Many people fear death. Many people fear eternity.

But fear by itself is not faith. Fear can recognize danger without embracing salvation. Biblical faith involves more than intellectual agreement.

[14:04] It involves the whole person. The mind understands truth. The heart embraces truth. The will submits to truth.

And all three matter. Some people stop at the first stage. They understand Christian teaching. They agree with Christian teaching. They may even enjoy discussing Christian teaching.

But they never move beyond information to transformation. Christianity is not merely knowing facts about Jesus. It is knowing Jesus himself.

A person may know details about a famous historical figure. And still have no relationship with them. Likewise, a person may know many facts about Christ. And yet never truly trust him.

Faith that sits down. Let's go back to the chair illustration. Knowing a chair can hold your weight is one thing. Actually sitting on it is another. Faith sits down.

[15:02] Faith rests. Faith trusts. Faith commits itself. Faith transfers confidence from self to Christ. Many people admire Christ.

Some respect Jesus. Some study Jesus. Some even debate Jesus. Saving faith trusts Jesus. It rests entirely upon him. James warns about the danger in some Bible teaching churches. And perhaps this is where James speaks most directly to churches like ours. We value biblical teaching. We value sound doctrine.

We value careful exposition. And rightly so. But James reminds us that knowledge alone is never the goal. The goal is transformation. The goal is Christ-likeness.

The goal is obedience flowing from love. The Pharisees knew the scriptures. The religious leaders knew the law. Yet many rejected the very Messiah to whom the scriptures pointed.

[16:04] Knowledge is a wonderful servant. But it's a terrible saviour. Only Christ can save. James asks us a deeply personal question. Do we merely know about Christ?

Or do we know Christ? Have we simply agreed with certain truths? Or have we entrusted ourselves to him? Have we merely accumulated information? Or have we experienced transformation?

The distance between heaven and hell is not always the distance between belief and unbelief.

Sometimes it is the distance between mere knowledge and genuine trust.

It is possible to know the order of Israel's kings. To be able to explain the difference between justification and sanctification. And identify of every missionary journey of Paul.

And yet still not know Christ. There will be people in heaven with little theological knowledge. But great faith. There will be nobody in heaven with great theological knowledge.

[17:08] And no faith. James has now shown us two inadequate forms of faith. A faith that talks but never acts. A faith that knows but never trusts.

Now he turns to two living examples of genuine faith. One is Abraham. The respected patriarch of Israel. And the other is Rahab.

The despised prostitute from Jericho. One is honoured. The other is dishonourable. One is an insider. The other is an outsider. Yet James places them side by side.

Because both demonstrate the same truth. Genuine faith obeys. James 2.21-24 He now introduces his first witness.

Abraham. Now if any name carried authority with Jewish readers. It was this one. Abraham was the father of the nation. The recipient of God's covenant promises.

[18:06] The man known throughout scripture as the friend of God. If James can demonstrate his point from Abraham. His argument is virtually complete. Verse 21 says.

Was not Abraham our father justified by works. When he offered up his son Isaac on the altar. Now at first glance. This sounds like a direct contradiction of Paul.

After all. Paul repeatedly teaches that Abraham was justified by faith. So what's happening? Once again the answer lies in understanding the question each writer is addressing.

Paul asks. How was Abraham declared righteous before God? James asks. How was Abraham's faith shown to be genuine? Paul takes us to Genesis 15.

And that distinction. And sorry. James then takes us to Genesis 22. And the distinction is crucial. In Genesis 15. God promises Abraham descendants as numerous as the stars.

[19:10] At that point. Abraham has no son. No visible evidence. No apparent possibility of fulfillment. Yet. Yet. Abraham. Believes God.

And scripture says. Abraham believed God. And it was counted to him. As righteousness. That is the verse Paul repeatedly quotes.

Abraham is justified by faith. Not by works. Not by merit. Not by achievement. By faith. But James takes us forward to Genesis 22. And something remarkable that often goes unnoticed.

Roughly 30 years have passed. 30 years. That's a long time. James is not describing a single moment. He is describing a lifetime of faith.

The faith that trusted God in Genesis 15. Is still trusting God in Genesis 22. The seed planted in Genesis 15. Has now produced fruit.

[20:10] The faith that received God's promise. James is now willing to obey God's command. James is showing us faith. Reaching maturity. Faith working together with works.

Verse 22 says. You see that faith was active along with his works. And faith was completed by his works. The word translated active along with.

Is a fascinating one. It means working together. Faith and obedience are not enemies. They are partners. Abraham's works did not replace faith.

His works revealed faith. His obedience demonstrated what had already been present for decades. Abraham's obedience did not create his faith.

His obedience revealed his faith. The command in Genesis 22 remains one of the most difficult passages in scripture. God commands Abraham to offer Isaac.

[21 : 07] The promised son. The long awaited son. The miracle child. The son through whom God's covenant promises would come. Humanly speaking. None of it makes sense.

And yet Abraham obeys. Why? Hebrews 11 gives us the answer. Abraham believed that God could even raise the dead. He trusted God's character when he could not understand God's command. That's real faith. Now real faith does not merely trust God when circumstances make sense. Real faith trusts God when circumstances seem confusing.

Anyone can trust when everything is clear. Faith becomes visible when everything is unclear.

Abraham walked up Mount Moriah with unanswered questions.

But unwavering confidence in God. And this is a beautiful truth. The story is not ultimately about Abraham's faithfulness. It's about God's faithfulness. God had made promises.

[22 : 07] God always keeps his promises. Abraham's confidence rested not in himself but in God's character. Faith is only as strong as its object.

The strength of Abraham's faith lay not in Abraham. It lay in the God he trusted. And that remains true today. Sometimes Christians speak as though salvation depends upon the strength of their faith.

The Bible points us elsewhere. The question is not how strong is my faith. The question is how great is my Saviour. Even weak faith placed in the strong Saviour saves.

Even trembling faith placed in Christ saves. Even struggling faith placed in Christ saves. Because salvation rests ultimately on him and not on us.

Here we have a glimpse of Christ. Ray loves to do this. I've taken a thing out of his book. Genesis 22 points beyond Abraham and Isaac.

[23 : 07] It points to Christ. Think about the parallels. A father and his beloved son. A journey to Mount Moriah. A willing son. Wood carried up the mountain.

A sacrifice provided by God. None of these details are accidental. Centuries later on a mountain. I believe Moriah as well.

A substitute. Sorry. A father would offer another son. But this time no substitute would be provided. For Jesus himself would become the substitute.

Isaac was spared. Christ was not. Abraham received his son back. The father gave his son for us. The story ultimately points beyond Abraham's obedience to God's redeeming love.

Verse 23 concludes, And he was called a friend of God. What an extraordinary description. Not merely a servant. Not merely a believer.

[24 : 07] A friend. Abraham's life was marked by trust. Not perfect trust. Not flawless obedience. But genuine faith. A faith that endured.

A faith that matured. A faith that obeyed. And a faith that was demonstrated over a lifetime. James is teaching us that genuine faith is not measured by a single moment.

It is revealed through a lifetime of trust in God. And having presented the most respected man in Jewish history, James now presents someone completely different.

A woman. A Gentile. A prostitute. A woman whom society would have dismissed entirely. And yet James places her alongside Abraham as another example of genuine saving faith.

So Rahab. This is a faith from an unexpected place. James 2 verse 25 says, And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way.

[25 : 14] James now does something quite remarkable. After presenting Abraham the most respected figure in Jewish history, he immediately introduces Rahab. The contrast could hardly be greater.

Abraham was a patriarch. Rahab was a prostitute. Abraham was the father of the nation. Rahab was a Gentile outsider. Abraham was respected. Rahab was despised.

Abraham was a man. Rahab was a woman. Abraham was known for his righteousness. Rahab was known for her sin. Because the point of this chapter is not greatness of Abraham or the weakness of Rahab, the point is the power of genuine faith.

James is reminding us that saving faith is available to every kind of person. The respected and the rejected. The moral and the immoral.

The insider and the outsider. The religious and the irreligious. The gospel is not reserved for a particular class of people. It is for sinners.

[26 : 15] And both Abraham and Rahab qualified, as we do. Let's look at Rahab's faith. The story takes us back to Joshua 2. Israel is preparing to enter the promised land.

Two spies enter Jericho. Rahab hides them and helps them escape. Now at first glance, it appears to be a simple act of courage. But behind her action lies something much deeper.

And Rahab explains. She says, I know that the Lord has given you the land. She had heard about the Red Sea. She had heard about the mighty acts of God. She had heard about Israel's God.

And unlike the rest of Jericho, she believed what she heard. The citizens of Jericho had the same information. They knew Israel was coming. They knew extraordinary things had happened.

Yet they responded with fear and resistance. Rahab, however, responded with faith. Her actions revealed what her heart already believed.

[27 : 15] She trusted the God of Israel. And that trust changed everything. Because faith acts. James once again makes the same point. Rahab's actions did not create her faith.

Her actions revealed her faith. She believed God. And therefore she acted. The spies were hidden because she trusted God. The scarlet cord was displayed because she trusted God.

The risks she took was evidence of faith already present in her heart. James is showing us exactly the same principle he showed us with Abraham. Faith becomes visible.

Living faith acts. Living faith obeys. Living faith risks something. Living faith changes behavior.

There is another wonderful truth here. Rahab reminds us that nobody is beyond the reach of God's grace.

Many people can understand why God would save Abraham. A patriarch. A respected leaver. A man of faith. But Rahab? A prostitute living in a pagan city?

[28 : 19] Surely not. Yet that is exactly the point. The Bible consistently reminds us that salvation is by grace. Not respectability. Not achievement. Not religious pedigree.

Just grace. Rahab's story reminds us that God delights in saving unlikely people. And when he does, God receives all the glory. Think about some of the people God used throughout scripture. Moses. He was a murderer. David committed adultery and also arranged a death. Peter denied Jesus three times. Paul persecuted Christians. Rahab was a prostitute.

Yet God transformed all of them. The gospel is not a reward for worthy. It is good news for the undeserving. But the story becomes even more remarkable. Rahab does not disappear after Joshua 2.

She appears again in Hebrews 11. The hall of faith. Among the great heroes of faith. And she appears again here in James 2. Among the great examples of living faith.

[29 : 20] And she appears somewhere else. Matthew chapter 1. In the genealogy of... Contains... Support surprising names. I have a struggle with genealogy.

We get a tongue twister, that is. But these surprising names. We have Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba. Women whose stories all speak of God's unexpected grace.

Before Jesus is even born, Matthew is quietly reminding us that the Messiah came into a family tree filled with broken people whom God redeemed. Grace is woven into the very genealogy of Christ.

Think about that. Rahab the prostitute becomes Rahab the ancestor of Christ. The woman once living behind the walls of Jericho becomes part of the family line through which the Messiah enters the world.

Only grace can do that. Only the gospel can do that. The Bible never pretends that Rahab's past did not exist. Instead, it demonstrates that God's grace is greater than her past.

[30 : 24] And the same remains true today. Many people live burdened by mistakes that they cannot undo. Regrets that they cannot erase. Failures that they cannot forget.

Rahab reminds us that God's grace is greater than our worst chapter. Christ does not merely forgive sinners. He transforms sinners. There is something beautiful about James placing Abraham and Rahab together.

Humanly speaking, they have nothing in common. Yet both are saved by faith. Both demonstrate their faith through obedience. Both become examples for future generations.

And together they remind us that the ground at the foot of the cross is level. The patriarch and the prostitute stand together. Not because of who they are, but because of the God who saves them. James could hardly have chosen two more different people. Yet he uses both to prove exactly the same truth. Genuine faith is visible. It acts, it obeys, and it perseveres.

[31 : 25] James 2.26 looks at the body and the spirit. James concludes with a final illustration. For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.

It is simple, it's direct, and impossible to misunderstand. Imagine a body without breath. A body without life. A body without movement.

A body without response. The outward form remains. The appearance is still there. But there is no life. James says the same thing can happen spiritually. There may be religious language.

There may be theological knowledge. There may be church attendance. There may be even outward activity. But if genuine faith is absent, spiritual life is absent.

The form remains. The reality is missing. And that is the warning running through this chapter. Not that Christians must earn salvation. Not that Christians must achieve perfection. Not that Christians never fail.

[32 : 24] We do. But that genuine faith possesses life. And where life exists, evidence eventually appears. A living body breathes. A living tree bears fruit.

A living spring produces water. A living faith produces works. So as we come to the end of this chapter, it is worth returning to the question with which we began last week.

Are Paul and James contradicting one another? The answer remains a clear and emphatic no.

Remember what we said last week? Paul says we are justified by faith apart from works.

James says faith apart from works is dead. Paul preaches that work cannot save. James teaches that saving faith works. Paul opposes legalism.

James opposes empty profession. Paul is dealing with those who trust in their own righteousness. James is dealing with those who claim righteousness without evidence. Paul tells us how to become Christians.

[33 : 23] James tells us how Christians should live. Paul focuses on the root. James focuses on the fruit. Paul speaks of the means of salvation. James speaks of the evidence of salvation.

So as we discovered last week, far from contradicting one another, they complement one another beautifully. And as one writer observed, Paul and James stand back to back defending the gospel from opposite errors.

Paul says you cannot work your way into heaven. James says if heaven has truly entered your heart, it will eventually show. Both are true. Both are necessary.

Both protect the gospel. Now James leaves us with a searching question that every one of us must answer. Not, do I attend church? Not, do I know Christian doctrine?

Not, can I explain the gospel? Not even, did I make a profession of faith at some point in the past? But, is my faith alive? Is there evidence that Christ is at work in me?

[34 : 23] Can his grace be seen in my relationships? Can his mercy be seen in my attitudes? Can his truth be seen in my speech? Can his love be seen in my actions?

Can his presence be seen in my life? None of these things save us. Christ alone saves. But where Christ saves, he changes people. Sometimes slowly.

Sometimes painfully. Sometimes through many struggles. But he changes them. The Christian life is not perfection. It's transformation. A word of encouragement. Before we finish, some believers may hear a chapter like this and immediately become discouraged.

They see their failures. They see their inconsistencies. Their weaknesses. Their ongoing battles with sin. And they wonder, is my faith real? James is not calling us to examine whether we are perfect.

If perfection were the standard, none of us would stand. James is calling us to examine whether there is life. Even small signs of life matter. A newborn child may be weak, but life is present.

[35 : 27] A young tree may bear little fruit, but life is present. A struggling believer may still battle sin. Yet, if there is repentance, growth, conviction, and a desire for Christ, life is present.

The question is not, am I everything I should be? The question is, is God at work within me? Where the Holy Spirit dwells, he will always leave his evidence of presence.

The greatest example, ultimately, James points us beyond Abraham, beyond Rahab, beyond every other example in Scripture. He points us to Christ himself. For Jesus is the only one whose

faithfulness was perfect.

The only one whose obedience was complete. The only one who fulfilled the law without failure. The only one who loved his neighbor perfectly. The only one who showed mercy without limit. The only one whose works were entirely righteous. And it is his righteousness that saves us, not ours. We are not saved because we have lived like Christ.

[36 : 28] We are saved because Christ lived for us. Died for us. Rose for us. And now intercedes in heaven for us. And when we place our trust in him, he not only forgives our sin, he begins transforming our lives.

And that is James' message. Living faith trusts Christ. Living faith follows Christ. Living faith obeys Christ. And living faith demonstrates that Christ is truly at work within us.

So James has shown us that genuine faith is not merely something we profess. It is something that becomes available. Living faith produces living evidence.

It changes priorities. It changes relationships. And it changes our behavior. Next week, James turns to one of the clearest indicators of what is happening in the heart.

Our words. The tongue is small, yet powerful. It can encourage or it can destroy. It can build up or tear down. It can bring healing or cause great harm.

[37 : 36] And James is about to ask a very uncomfortable question. If Christ has truly changed our hearts, what difference should that make to our speech? And that's where we return to in chapter 3 next week.

James has spent this chapter asking, is your faith alive? Next time we ask another question. If your faith is alive, what does your tongue reveal about your heart?

For James, one of the clearest tests of spiritual maturity is not found in what we claim to believe. It is even found in what we say. And that makes chapter 3 both deeply challenging and immensely practical.

Let's just close in prayer. Heavenly Father, thank you for your precious word and for the challenge that James has brought to our hearts today. Thank you that our salvation is not earned by our efforts, but is the free gift of your grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We rejoice that Christ has done everything necessary for our salvation through his death and resurrection. Yet, Lord, we confess that it is easy to speak about faith without allowing that faith to shape the way we live.

[38 : 42] Forgive us for the times when our words have been louder than our actions, when compassion has been replaced by convenience, and when we have been hearers of the word without faith living it out.

By the power of your Holy Spirit, make our faith a living faith. Help us to love as Christ loved, to serve without seeking recognition, to show mercy to those in need, and to reflect Jesus in our homes, our workplaces, our church, and our community.

Give us the courage of Abraham, who trusted you even when he could not see the outcome. Give us the willingness of Rahab, who acted upon what she believed, despite the cost. May we too be people whose faith is seen, not merely in what we say, but in how we live.

Lord, remind us this week that every act of kindness, every word of encouragement, every opportunity to forgive, every hand extended to help, can become a testimony to the reality of Christ living within us.

Keep us from a faith that is comfortable, but lifeless. Instead, fill us with a faith that is active, compassionate, obedient, and fruitful. A faith that points others to our Saviour.

[39 : 52] Now, as we leave this place, may we go in the assurance of your love, the peace of Christ, the power of the Holy Spirit, and the joy of serving you. May our lives proclaim the Gospel as clearly as our lips.

And we ask all these things in the precious and powerful name of the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.