



**PRACTICAL GUIDELINES FOR AN EFFECTIVE CHRISTIAN LIFE**  
**Lesson Six: Faith That Passes the Test**  
**James 2:21-26**

1. What is the greatest step of faith you have ever seen someone take?

---

---

2. Do you think some Christians have a greater capacity for faith than others? If so, why?

---

---

3. When in your life have you taken a great risk and followed what you believed to be God's will, even though some friends and family felt your decision to be foolish? How did you feel in the mist of that time?

---

---

### **Justification by Faith**

The Greek verb *dikaioo* ("justified") has two general meanings. The first pertains to acquittal, that is, to declaring and treating a person as righteous; that is the meaning in relationship to salvation and is the sense in which Paul almost always uses the term.

The second meaning of *dikaioo* pertains to vindication, or proof of righteousness; it is used in that sense a number of times in the New Testament, in relation to God as well as men. It is this second meaning that is in view in this passage. James says that Abraham, whose very faith was a gift of God (Eph. 2:8), was nevertheless justified by works.

That seeming contradiction, which has frustrated and confused believers throughout the history of the church, is clarified by understanding that justification by faith pertains to a persons standing before God, whereas the justification by works that James speaks of pertains to a persons standing before other men.



## Scripture Text

21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?

22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?

23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. And he was called the friend of God.

24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

25 Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way?

26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

James 2:21

Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?  
(*Gen. 22:9-14, Hebrews 11:17-19*)

---

---

James 2:22

Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? (*John 8:39-41*)

---

---

James 2:23

And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. And he was called the friend of God.  
(*Gen. 15:1-6, Romans 4:3-4, 2 Chronicles 20:7*)

---

---

James 2:24

You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

---

---



James 2:25

Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way? (*Joshua 2*)

---

---

James 2:26

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

---

---

Application Questions:

- In the overall pattern of your life, do your actions vindicate that you do, in fact, possess saving faith?
- 
- 

- Why should Rahab's inclusion in this passage be a great encouragement to modern-day Christians?
- 
- 

- What are simple but concrete "faith steps" you could take today to force yourself out of your comfort zone and into a position where you have no choice but to rely on God?
- 
-