

PAUL - JAMES: TENSION EXPLAINED

PAUL DOES NOT DENY SALVATION WILL HAVE SUBSEQUENT WORKS

- “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (Ep.2:10). (see also Ep.4:1; Cl.1:10; 2Th.2:17; 2Tm.3:17; Ti.2:7,14; 3:8; He.10:24).

JAMES DOES NOT TEACH SALVATION BY WORKS

- (1) He has already said it was a gracious gift of God (Ja.1:17-18).
- (2) At **James 2:23** he quotes **Genesis 15:6** which says God credited righteousness to Abraham solely on his faith.
- (3) The work James said justified Abraham was his offering up of Isaac (**Ge.22:9,12**) which occurred many years after his initial exercise of faith (**Ge.12:7; 15:6**).



PAUL & JAMES HAVE A DIFFERENT FOCUS

- Paul corrects legalism and James corrects antinomianism.
- Both Paul and James quote **Genesis 15:6** (see **Rm.4:3; Ja.2:23**). Paul’s teaching stays there where Abraham was initially saved, but James continues on to the remainder of Abraham’s life.
- Paul’s focus is on Abraham’s initial faith resulting in his salvation experience, and the fact that works had nothing to do with it.
- James refers to **Genesis 22** and connects it BACK to **Genesis 15**, showing works subsequent to salvation.
- Paul has in mind Abraham PRIOR TO, and including his once-for-all-time salvation experience, James refers to his life AFTER his salvation experience.