

Dr. David Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 23, Segment Survey – James 2:21-26 Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 20, James 2:21-26, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. David Bauer's lecture on Inductive Bible Study examines James 2:21-26, focusing on the relationship between faith and works in salvation. **Bauer contrasts James's perspective** with Paul's interpretation of Abraham's justification, arguing that James emphasizes the necessity of works stemming from genuine faith for true righteousness. **He uses the examples of Abraham and Rahab** to illustrate how faith is demonstrated through actions. **Bauer ultimately contends** that James isn't contradicting Paul but rather addressing a misunderstanding of Paul's emphasis on faith. The lecture concludes by connecting this discussion to broader issues of Christian behavior and the nature of true faith.

2. 11 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 23 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Introduction & Languages → Introductory Series → Inductive Bible Study).



**Bauer_IBS_Session2
3.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 23, James 2:21-26

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from Dr. David Bauer's lecture on James 2:21-26:

Briefing Document: Dr. David Bauer on James 2:21-26

Overview:

Dr. Bauer's lecture focuses on James 2:21-26, a passage often cited in discussions about faith and works. He argues that James is not contradicting Paul but rather addressing a misinterpretation of Paul's teachings on justification by faith. Bauer meticulously examines James' arguments, highlighting the connection between faith and works, using Abraham and Rahab as case studies to illustrate his points. He emphasizes the inseparability of genuine faith and its expression in righteous action. The lecture concludes with an understanding of James' position on justification that doesn't diminish faith but rather sees it as the wellspring of righteous acts.

Key Themes and Ideas:

1. **Appeal to Scriptural History as God's Authority:** James' use of Old Testament figures (Abraham and Rahab) is an appeal to God's view of salvation history. This is the "crowning argument" James makes, suggesting that God is the ultimate authority behind the concept that faith must be accompanied by works.
 - *"And, of course, James considers God to be, in some sense, the author of scripture and, of course, certainly the prime mover in terms of salvation history that you have recorded in the Old Testament. And so, this appeal to scriptural history is very much an appeal to God."*
1. **Faith Without Works is Barren:** James characterizes faith without works as "barren" (Greek *argos*). This barrenness is not just a lack of fruitfulness but also signifies being outside of a covenant relationship with God. Bauer connects this to the Old Testament concept of barrenness as a sign of not enjoying God's favor, juxtaposing it to the fruitfulness that accompanies covenant relationship.
 - *"The word here is argos [2:20]. Now, clearly, on the surface, this business being barren means that it, of course, does not bear fruit. It is useless."*

- *"So, barrenness really in the Old Testament was a kind of metonymy for no covenant relationship, for being outside of covenant relationship, for not enjoying covenant relationship with God, whereas experiencing fruitfulness was the sign, was the expression of covenant relationship with God."*
1. **Justification by Works (as Understood by James):** James uses the term "justified by works," specifically in relation to Abraham offering Isaac, a point Bauer concedes is different than how Paul uses the term. Unlike Paul who points to Abraham's faith in Genesis 15:6, James points to the act of offering Isaac in Genesis 22 as the act that declared Abraham righteous, suggesting it is the culmination of faith shown by obedience.
 - *"Contra Paul, over against Paul, Abraham's justification is not found at the point of Abraham's belief in the promise of God, which found physical expression in circumcision...For James, though, Abraham was not justified, that is, declared to be righteous in Genesis 15, but in Genesis 22..."*
 1. **James's View on the Relationship Between Faith and Works:**
 - **Accompaniment:** Faith and works are not separate but work together ("sunerge"). Faith is active alongside works, implying that works are an expression of faith.
 - *"You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works."*
 - **Completion/Perfection:** Works complete or perfect faith (Greek *teleo*), meaning they bring faith to its intended purpose. Works demonstrate the truth of faith and its power, leading to a declaration of righteousness before God.
 - *"In other words, Abraham's works would have been impossible without faith. On the other hand, works complete—notice again the word teleao, bring to perfection— works complete or perfect faith."*
 - Bauer raises the question about an improper division between imputed and imparted righteousness here, suggesting that James' argument indicates the two should not be divorced – justification (declaration of righteousness) must be accompanied by actual righteousness.
 1. **Fulfillment:** James argues that Genesis 22 (Abraham offering Isaac) fulfills Genesis 15:6 (Abraham's faith being credited as righteousness). The act in Genesis 22

confirms that Abraham's faith was genuine and not merely an intellectual assent. The judgment of faith's validity is confirmed by works.

- *"And the scripture was fulfilled, which says, Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness."*
- *"God's reckoning of Abraham's faith as righteousness in Genesis 15:6 was based upon God's recognition that Abraham's faith was true faith, the kind of faith that was issued in works..."*

1. **Abraham Called a Friend of God:** The ultimate result of Abraham's faith manifested in works is his being called a "friend of God", highlighting that genuine faith is about relational reconciliation with God and requires actual righteousness.

- *"The ultimate function of faith, which issues in works, is personal reconciliation to God."*
- *"The demands of personal relationship require actual righteousness."*

1. **General Conclusion on Justification:** Bauer highlights James' conclusion is that "a man is justified by works and not by faith alone." He emphasizes that James is not contradicting Paul, but addressing those who misunderstood Paul's teaching.

- *"You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone."*
- *"But in my mind, it actually contradicts a misunderstood Paul."*

1. **Works in James and Paul:**

- Bauer differentiates James' understanding of "works" from Paul's understanding of "works of the law." For James, works are the necessary expression of faith stemming from an active, obedient heart. For Paul, "works of the law" are often associated with an attempt at self-justification that does not recognize the need for God's grace.
- Bauer argues that Paul's use of "works" as it relates to the attempt to justify oneself is attitudinal rather than about the actions themselves.
- Bauer points to passages where Paul also uses "works" positively as the necessary expression of true faith (Ephesians 2:10; Galatians 5:6) and states that Paul never uses the phrase "faith alone" in his writings.

- *"The works that James talks about are not the works of the law that Paul talks about...When Paul uses works negatively, Paul is talking not so much about actions as attitude."*
- 1. **Rahab as an Example:** James brings up Rahab, a Gentile prostitute, to show that the principle of faith and works applies to all, not just to Abraham or an ideal type. Her actions in protecting the spies stem from her faith, and show that her actions demonstrate and make her faith viable.
- *"And in the same way, was not also Rahab the harlot justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way?"*
- 1. **Faith and Works as a Living Body:** Bauer describes the relationship between faith and works as analogous to that between the body and spirit. Separating faith from works results in a dead faith and works that have no life. Just as a body without a spirit is dead, faith without works is lifeless.
- *"For as a body apart from the spirit is dead, so faith apart from works is dead."*
- 1. **Synthesis of 2:1-13** Bauer briefly reviews the section prior to the one on Abraham and Rahab, highlighting that the partiality that James is critiquing is a symptom of deeper problems regarding faith, discernment, perspective, desires, fear, presumption, piety, and approval.

Conclusion:

Dr. Bauer argues that James is not contradicting Paul but clarifying the nature of genuine faith. True faith is not passive intellectual assent but rather a transformative power that issues in good works and obedience, ultimately resulting in a relationship with God and a declaration of righteousness. It's faith that leads to a lived obedience to the law of love, which does not negate the necessity of grace, but demonstrates the transformational power of it.

This document captures the essence of Dr. Bauer's insightful interpretation of James 2:21-26, providing a solid understanding of the passage's main points and theological implications.

4. Study Guide: Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 23, James 2:21-26

Study Guide: James 2:21-26

Quiz

Instructions: Answer each question in 2-3 sentences, referencing the source material.

1. How does James characterize the person who separates faith and works in verse 20?
2. What is the significance of "barrenness" as used by James in the context of the Abraham story?
3. According to the lecture, what is the difference between how Paul and James view Abraham's justification?
4. What is the meaning of the term *teleo*, as used in verse 22, and what does this imply about the relationship between faith and works?
5. How does James argue against the potential misunderstanding that he downplays the role of faith, and how does he use the term *sunerge* to clarify his view?
6. What is the difference between "imputed righteousness" and "imparted righteousness," and what does the lecturer suggest about their relationship?
7. How does James use Genesis 15:6 and 22 to explain the meaning of faith for Abraham?
8. What does the title "friend of God" imply about Abraham's relationship with God?
9. According to the lecture, what is the main issue with interpreting Paul's view on justification as being "by faith alone"?
10. How does Rahab's story support James' argument that faith without works is dead?

Answer Key

1. James calls the person who separates faith and works a "shallow man," suggesting that their theological position stems from a moral problem and a lack of depth of character. He is saying that the person's heart is empty and corrupt.

2. "Barrenness" is used as a metonymy for being outside of a covenant relationship with God; it symbolizes the lack of fruitfulness, which is a sign of a proper covenant relationship and contrasts with the fruitfulness that results from genuine faith.
3. Paul sees Abraham's justification occurring in Genesis 15:6 when he believed God, while James views it as occurring in Genesis 22, when Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice. This is a difference in timing based on actions and obedience.
4. *Teleo* means "completed" or "perfected," indicating that faith is brought to its intended purpose by works and is made perfect by works. James is stating that works are necessary for faith to accomplish its intended purpose of bringing one into a right relationship with God.
5. James clarifies that faith "was active along with his works" using the term *sunerge* (worked together with) to show that faith assists works, indicating that faith and works are both necessary. He indicates that his position is not downplaying the need for faith, but that works demonstrate that faith is true.
6. Imputed righteousness is the declaration by God that a sinner is forgiven, whereas imparted righteousness is the moral transformation that enables a person to live obediently. The lecturer suggests they are not separable because the declaration of righteousness is always accompanied by real moral empowerment.
7. James argues that God's reckoning of Abraham's faith as righteousness in Genesis 15:6 was based on the recognition that his faith was genuine, and was confirmed by Abraham's actions in Genesis 22. The later act of offering Isaac was not an addition to faith, but its confirmation that his faith was of a certain character.
8. The title "friend of God" implies a personal reconciliation with God and requires actual righteousness, suggesting a relationship of intimacy that is achieved through actions that are in line with God's will, thereby illustrating that faith is a relationship to God.
9. The main issue is that James suggests the phrase 'by faith alone' does not appear in Paul's writings, that James views Paul's meaning differently, and is arguing against a misconstrued understanding of Paul by others in his circle. The works Paul speaks about are a matter of attitude, not action.
10. Rahab's story supports the argument that faith without works is dead by showing that her faith was not mere belief but a demonstration of her belief which saved

the Israelite spies. She risked her life to protect them based on her faith. Her actions of hospitality and obedience stemmed from her belief.

Essay Questions

Instructions: These questions should prompt detailed essays using specific points from the source material.

1. Analyze the relationship between faith and works in James 2:21-26, and discuss how James uses Abraham's example to support his argument. How does this relate to the idea of imputed and imparted righteousness?
2. Compare and contrast James' and Paul's views on justification, as presented in the lecture, considering the different contexts and purposes of their writings. How do you think a modern interpreter might harmonize the two perspectives?
3. Discuss the significance of James' use of the Old Testament figures of Abraham and Rahab in chapter two. What does this suggest about who can please God?
4. Explain the implications of the phrase "faith apart from works is dead" within the framework of the entire passage. How does James define 'dead' in this context?
5. Explore the concept of true religion or piety as seen in the lecture. How does James connect outward actions and behaviors with internal faith, and what does this mean for contemporary Christian practice?

Glossary of Key Terms

Justification: The act of being declared righteous by God; a state of being in right standing with God.

Works: Actions, deeds, or behaviors that express one's faith.

Faith: Belief in God and His promises, which is expressed through action.

Barren: In the lecture context, refers to being unproductive or unfruitful, lacking the results that come from a relationship with God; used in contrast to a fruitful and covenant relationship with God.

Teleo: The Greek word meaning "completed," "perfected," or "brought to its end"

Sunerge: The Greek word meaning "worked together with," highlighting the cooperation of faith and works.

Imputed Righteousness: The legal declaration by God that a sinner is forgiven and righteous in His sight, even though the person remains a sinner.

Imparted Righteousness: The moral transformation and empowerment by God to live a life that is pleasing to Him.

Akedah: The binding of Isaac in Genesis 22, which serves as the primary example of the expression of Abraham's faith through action according to James.

Friend of God: A title given to Abraham, indicating a personal relationship with God.

Forensic Justification: A legal declaration of righteousness, specifically seen by James as insufficient without the inclusion of actual righteousness.

Septuagint: The Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible.

5. FAQs on Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 23, James 2:21-26, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ on James 2:21-26 and the Relationship Between Faith and Works

1. **Why does James use Abraham as an example in his argument about faith and works?** James uses the example of Abraham to show that true faith is not passive, but actively works together with actions. He highlights Abraham's offering of Isaac in Genesis 22 as the moment Abraham's faith was "completed" or "perfected," demonstrating that his belief was not merely an intellectual assent but a life-transforming commitment. James argues this fulfillment is linked to Genesis 15:6, showcasing that God's initial reckoning of Abraham's faith as righteousness was proven genuine by Abraham's later action of obedience.
2. **How does James's view of justification differ from Paul's, especially regarding Abraham?** Paul identifies Abraham's justification in Genesis 15:6, where Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. Paul emphasizes justification by faith *prior* to any acts like circumcision. James, however, emphasizes Genesis 22 and the offering of Isaac as the critical moment of justification, where Abraham's faith was manifested in a significant act of obedience. While Paul sees justification primarily as a declaration based on belief, James sees it as a declaration of a person who *is* righteous because of their active faith and obedience. James argues against a misunderstanding of Paul.
3. **What does James mean when he says, "faith apart from works is barren?"** James uses the term "barren" to highlight that faith, without accompanying action, is unproductive and useless. This concept is directly linked to the Old Testament stories of barrenness as a sign of broken covenant relationship with God and fruitfulness as a sign of an active relationship. Faith that does not express itself in works is empty and cannot produce the intended outcome of right standing with God.

4. **How does the example of Rahab illustrate James's point about faith and works?**
James uses the example of Rahab to show that his concept of active faith is not unique to Abraham, but a universally necessary principle. Rahab, a non-Israelite prostitute, was justified by protecting the Israelite spies. Her actions, which demonstrated her belief in the God of Israel, were an active response to her faith. She put her belief in God into action. This example highlights that works stemming from faith are essential for genuine righteousness for all people, regardless of their social standing or history.
5. **What does James mean by "faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by works?"** James uses this statement to demonstrate that faith and works are not independent but are interconnected. Faith is not meant to exist in isolation; it inherently produces good works. The "works" here are a result of the active force of faith and in turn make faith fully realized. Faith assists works, and works complete or perfect faith, showing a reciprocal relationship where each is needed for the other to achieve its purpose.
6. **What does the phrase "friend of God" reveal about the relationship between faith, works, and relationship with God?** The idea that Abraham is called the "friend of God" signifies the ultimate goal of faith and works, which is reconciliation and intimate relationship with God. This is based on the idea that real friendship requires mutual intimacy and shared values, as well as actions. Therefore, a person living contrary to God's will would not have this intimate friendship, highlighting that true faith should be expressed in a life of obedience that aligns with God's will.
7. **How does James connect the idea of "being justified by works" to the concept of "imparted" versus "imputed righteousness?"** James seems to be suggesting that justification involves both imputed and imparted righteousness. "Imputed righteousness" is God's declaration of forgiveness and acquittal, while "imparted righteousness" is the actual moral transformation and empowering to live a life pleasing to God. James connects these to show that one cannot have divine declaration of righteousness (justification) without the actual righteous actions of the person. The two are linked, and a true faith demonstrates that through a life of obedience.

8. **How does James's argument about faith and works refute the idea that there is a "forensic justification for sinners?"** James refutes the idea of a forensic justification as a mere "divine fiction" where God only *sees* one as righteous while they remain in their sin. James does acknowledge that God forgives sin. However, he argues that true justification requires real righteousness, which comes through a faith that is expressed through actions and obedience. This view suggests that God justifies those who are actively striving to please Him, rather than those who merely claim faith without an attempt to live righteously. He rejects the idea that one can be declared righteous without being, in practice, righteous.