

## JUSTIFIED BY WORKS?

*James 2:24 // October 12, 2025 PM*

*The doctrine of salvation in James and Paul are not at odds.*

**I. The apostles *combat* two very different *errors* with the same words.**

**II. The apostles *convey* two very different *senses* with the same words.**

- A. James refers to demonstrative justification, not declarative justification.
- B. James refers to superficial faith, not sincere faith.
- C. James refers to believing works, not legalistic works.

### QUESTIONS FOR FAMILY WORSHIP

1. Why did the Reformers and Roman Catholics agree in the 16<sup>th</sup> century agree that the doctrine of justification was worth fighting over? How was that conviction overthrown by the modern ecumenical movement? Which do you think is right, and why?
2. How is understanding the historical context of a book necessary to understand the original meaning of the author and its application today?
3. What was the error Paul combatted in Galatians? What was the error James combatted in his letter? Given their contexts, what would we expect each of them to emphasize?
4. Can you think of an example today where a word can have multiple meanings, some of which are very different? How do we determine the way in which a work is being used?
5. Pastor Nick argued that the three main words in James 2:24 and Galatians 2:16—justified, faith, and works—are all used differently by James and Paul. How so exactly?
6. What is the relationship between our justification before God and our good works? And what does James 2 contribute to our understanding of this?

### QUESTIONS FOR PRIVATE REFLECTION

1. J. Gresham Machen wrote, “Upon closer examination...the contradiction [in James and Paul] is seen to be one of form and not of substance.” What did he mean? Do I agree?
2. Why are legalism and antinomianism both such serious errors? In what way am I prone to them, and how do the words of James and Paul keep me from both?
3. Should we be linking arms with Roman Catholics in mission despite our very different conceptions of salvation? Why, or why not?