

IT IS SETTLED!

"Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13b)

By Howell Lasseter

Justification: Works

For 2 weeks, we have been discussing "justification," looking at 6 essential components. No one of the 6 can be omitted. To say, "One is justified by 'faith only,' or by 'grace only,' or by 'Jesus' blood only,'" is not teaching correctly. The use of the word "only" excludes all other components necessary for justification.

Let's focus today on "faith only," which is taught by many man-made denominations. There is no doubt that "faith" is a biblical subject. A brief look at Abraham will show the true meaning of biblical faith. The 4th chapter of Romans discusses in detail Abraham's faith. Verse 3: "*For what saith the scriptures? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.*" Note that Abraham did not simply believe in God; he believed God. Because he believed God, he obeyed. Romans 4:2 points out that Abraham was not justified by "works," and we remember that works of man cannot justify. Hebrews 11:8-10, 17-19 sheds more light on Abraham's faith. Look at the actions (works) Abraham undertook because he believed God: "*...when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, ...by faith he sojourned...by faith Abraham offered up Isaac..." (Heb. 11:8,9,17). Biblical faith obeys God's commands because it believes God. The man-made doctrine of "faith only" may believe in God, but does not believe God enough to obey. Considering that biblical faith demands the obeying of God's commands, it may surprise some readers to know "faith only" is a biblical phrase. There is actually one verse in which the phrase appears: "*Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only*" (James 2:24). To come to the full understanding of this verse, read verses 14-26. Just in this brief article, the biblical distinction between man's works (Romans 4:2) and the works commanded by God (Romans 4, Hebrews 11, James 2) is seen. Justification cannot be obtained without biblical faith, which will include God-commanded works.*

"Thou believest there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith apart from works is dead?" (James 2:19,20); "And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God" (Mark 3:11); "Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John 12:42,43). Who will say that the devils do not believe? That the unclean spirits did not believe? That the chief rulers did not believe? No Bible student will say such. These are prime examples that faith only will not save. Readers, listen carefully to the radio speakers, the televangelists, the preachers who fill the pulpits. You will soon hear these declare that "faith only" is all that is necessary. It may be that some of them are like the chief rulers of John 12: they love the praise of men. God's Word has not changed. He still says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15; "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John

15:14); *“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven”* (Matthew 7:21-27). Do you have the faith that Abraham had? You will, if you learn God’s will and do it!