The Book Of James (Part 27) – Are Works Important to Yahweh?

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The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at https://cornerfringe.com/media/3f8sqvk/part-27-are-works-important-to-yahweh

***Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserve the original context, but this document is not verbatim. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document be printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliteration into the English alphabet. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.**

Faith Without Works Is Dead: Are Works Important to Yahweh?

This transcript of a sermon delivered by **Pastor Daniel Joseph** of **Corner Fringe Ministries**, examines the **Epistle of James** and the **Book of Revelation** to argue that **righteous works** are vital evidence of **genuine faith** and **salvation**. Daniel asserts that **Jesus Christ** evaluates believers based on their actions, citing messages to the **seven churches** that demand **repentance** and strict obedience to **God's commandments**. Furthermore, he contrasts this biblical perspective with the teachings of **Martin Luther**, whom he criticizes for dismissing the spiritual significance of the **Book of James**. Ultimately, Daniel emphasizes that **authentic faith** naturally drives believers to reject sin and actively pursue a life of **righteousness**.

[Daniel Joseph]

Well, Shabbat Shalom, everyone. Well, just getting off the feast, getting back into the swing of things. We're going to get back to our series on the Epistle of James, and where we're at right now, if you remember, we're getting further and deeper into chapter 2, which has really taken us into the waters of controversy. I mean controversy within Christendom itself, where all these conversations, debates, and disputes have erupted over what James has brought to the table. So right now, where we're at, we're getting into the throes of that discussion.

We're currently looking at verses 17 and 18, and this is what James says in James 2:17—Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. In other words, if you're not bearing the fruit of the Spirit, if you're not actively working righteousness, if you're not walking in the commandments of God, if you're not loving your neighbor as yourself, if you're not finding a place in your heart to forgive those who have sinned against you, understand something: James is telling you you're living a lie. Your faith is a lie. It's complete delusion.

And I'm going to tell you: in moments like this, what James has brought to the table is laying waste to the lies and deception the enemy sows within the church. He is so crafty and so clever. And the devil's stratagem, from the beginning of the garden through Revelation, is the same. It's to come and convince us as believers that faith without works is alive. You won't reap what you sow—don't worry about it; you surely won't die. What you do in this life doesn't matter. It doesn't matter what decisions you make or

the activities you're practicing. At the end, guess what? You said a prayer—you're good. That is not the truth. What James does here is completely dismantle what comes from the pulpits today across this country, and that's powerful.

Now he goes on and says this in James 2:18—But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, **and I will show you my faith by my works**. (emphasis added). James is saying here that works are legitimate evidence of authentic faith. You know, works testify to the truth of what's actually in your heart. I love this because who you are, what you think in your mind, what you actually believe in your heart, and what you're feeling make no mistake; your actions will betray you. We will know exactly... You can say one thing, but when you do another, then we know what's actually in your heart.

To put this into context, actually, you know, we just got done with the feast, specifically Yom Kippur. I took you into the book of Jonah. I want to take you back there. There's only one verse I want to show you, but man, it's significant for our discussion today. And remember, the backdrop is God sending Jonah into Nineveh. He commissions him to bring the message: "I'm going to destroy all of you." Nineveh has 120,000 people, and God is reckoned to take the whole city out. He's going to crush them.

So Jonah delivers this message, but it isn't just, "Hey, God's bringing judgment; you're as good as dead." The message is "repent." Repent. He's blowing the trumpet; turn from your lawless ways. Turn from lawlessness, and turn to the LORD. Do what is right. Do what is good in His sight. Do what is pleasing. The amazing thing is, they listened. They actually repented.



Now look at what the text says in Jonah 3:10—**Then God saw their works**, that they turned from their *hara'ah* (הָרָעָה), evil way; ... (Emphasis added). Again, that's *ra* (רַע), and biblically, the only way you define *ra* is as breaching His law. It violates God's holy law; it's lawlessness. They turned from lawlessness to righteousness, and it's so critical. God saw it. What is God witnessing? Works. He's witnessed our actions.

Then it goes on and says this: ... **and God relented from the disaster** that He had said He would bring upon them, **and He did not do it**. (emphasis added). Why? Why does God relent? Why? He said He would destroy them, but He relented; He didn't do it. Why? He saw their works. That is so significant. Don't let anyone tell you—no matter how big a name they carry—that your works have nothing to do with salvation. They have everything to do with salvation. It's critical. This is what God witnessed, and because He witnessed their repentance, He had mercy.

But I want you to understand something, and we can't miss this: works are symptomatic of an authentic faith. Do we understand how this works? Because, okay, so as you look at Nineveh, Jonah's going through the streets telling them, "You're all going to die. God Himself is bringing judgment against you, so therefore, you need to repent." They have to believe the message. They had to first believe the word that came was the word of the LORD; they had to believe the word of the LORD was true, and that catapulted them into what? Repentance. Into works.

Do you understand that authentic faith, true faith, has an unimaginable power to change us from the inside? When we actually believe God is coming to judge the wicked. We're told the Apostle Paul says to the Corinthian church in 1 Corinthians 6:9, ... the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God … I'm going to tell you right up front, you either believe that or you won't. Well, guess what? I will know if you believe that because I will see what God saw. I will see your works; that's the whole significance of true faith. —James 2:18—... Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. Works have everything to do with salvation.

Now think about what James said back in James 1:25—... **but a doer of the work**, you're doing the work; this one will be blessed in what he does. (emphasis added). Again, we covered this. It's not just talking about, "Oh, you really have some nice experiences here on earth if you do what God says." This is talking about eternal life. That's what this is talking about. A doer of the work. Someone who's actually walking in righteousness. They don't have faith without works. They have faith, and it's being shown authentically through godliness.



Yeshua says this in Matthew 11:19: "... But wisdom is justified by **her children**." (Emphasis added). Now you go to the Greek, and here, at least in the New King James, it's *teknōn* (τέκνων). The earlier manuscripts did not render the metaphor this way. The earlier critical text renders it this way: *tōn ergōn autēs* (τῶν ἔργων αὐτῆς), meaning "her works." Wisdom is justified, known, and legitimized by the very works she produces. That's how we know true wisdom.



And what's amazing is this is built upon the psalmist, what the psalmist proclaimed through the Holy Spirit. Going back to Psalm 111:10, look at this: The fear of the LORD is **the beginning of wisdom**; a good understanding have all those **who do His commandments** ... (Emphasis added).

True biblical faith isn't simply an idea locked away in your mind. It's a powerful force that literally will drive you into righteousness. Every single person here today who calls upon the name of Jesus and says, I believe Jesus is Lord and Savior. If that faith is authentic, you will not tolerate sin in your life. You will not do it. It will drive you to run from the flesh and from temptation. You will not give in to those things. You will not tolerate it in your life. You cannot because your faith is authentic. It's the driving force that leads us into righteousness. No man can truly accomplish faithful righteousness without true faith. It's just not going to happen because we're empowered through the Holy Spirit, and I can't get the Holy Spirit without faith in Christ. All these things are central to this entire discussion.

With that said, I want to take you into the book of Revelation. Specifically, we're going to look at the seven churches. Off the bat, we don't have time to go as deep as I would like. We're not going to look at every church, but we're going to highlight some critical moments, moments that explicitly pertain to this idea of faith without works is dead.

And let me preface. What we're about to read and what we're about to dig into. One thing you're going to see, and I hope you appreciate as much as I do, is that when Yeshua preaches, you better hang on, because Yeshua isn't preaching like so many pulpits are today. Yeshua doesn't water down the truth. He doesn't cleverly devise messages that are sure not to offend you. He doesn't cater to itching ears or craft messages designed to tell you what you want to hear instead of what you need to hear. Yeshua doesn't do that. Yeshua's messages are intense, hard-hitting, radical, unwavering, and uncompromising.

And here's what I can tell you: those filled with the Holy Spirit will speak like their master, Yeshua, their Lord and Savior. I say that because, in the end times we are in right now, as these days have grown so dark, boy, you'd better listen to the shepherd's voice. That is the only voice we can trust right now.

Well, let's dig into this, and you're going to see how awesome and radical this voice is. This is to the first church in Revelation 2:1—"To the angel, the '*angelos*' (ἄγγελος), and this is actually referring to the pastor, the watchman of this church. To the watchman of the church of Ephesus write, 'These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand,…'"

I love this because the seven stars represent the seven watchmen of the seven churches, the seven pastors of the seven churches. The fact that Yeshua holds them in His right hand shows they are His and under His protection. And isn't it interesting that when you go to John 10:27-28, Yeshua says, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. [28] ... neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand." When we're in the hand of Yeshua, then Yeshua goes on in John 10:29 and says, "... and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand." That is powerful.

So, we get this powerful imagery of these watchmen, these pastors; they're in the right hand of our Lord. Then Revelation 2:1 goes on and says, "'… who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands:" That means Yeshua is in our camp. He walks amongst the Christians. He walks amongst the Christian churches, and this has been His desire. He is a relational God. He wants to be in a relationship and in close proximity. He wants that intimacy with His people. That's why (Exodus 25:8) "*Ve'asu li mikdash veshachanti betocham* (וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם)." "And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them." Or actually, "*tavekh*" (תָּוֶךְ) is "within." This is the heart of God.

Keep in mind, this is spoken to the Christian church. The seven churches represent the body of Christ. This is the Christian church. And this is the message: listen to me; this is the message today for the Christian church. What is it? It is this in Revelation 2:2: "***Oida ta erga sou***" (Οἶδά τὰ ἔργα σου) (emphasis added).

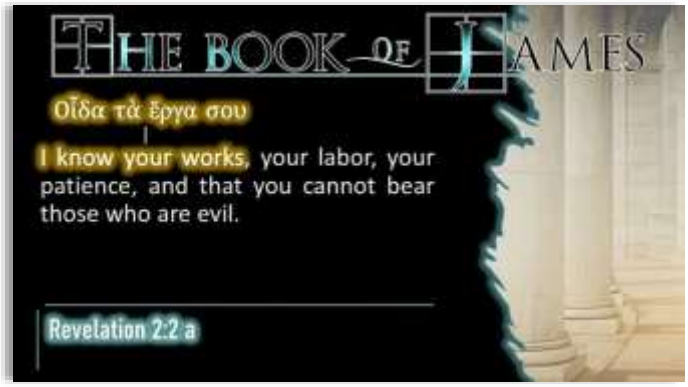
I want to stop here because the one thing I want you to understand about the letters to the seven churches is that these epistles follow a literary structure that is cut and pasted for each church. Cut and paste, meaning the structure is the same. Yeshua addresses the person, the specific church; they're the addressee, and then He introduces Himself, the addressor. So He talks about the people He's writing to

and from, who it's coming from. And He goes through this great expression of who He is. He uses different imagery with every church. The structure is identical.



And every one of these epistles, every single one without fail, begins with these four words, "***Oida ta erga sou***" (Οἶδα τὰ ἔργα σου) (emphasis added). And what is that? It stands at the head of the document—"I know your works." If works have nothing to do with salvation, the response is, "Who cares?" Yeshua says this to every single church. "I know your works."

Then He goes on and says I know "your labor". Now for me, I'm just going to tell you how, like when you read this in the Greek, the word for labor is "*kopos*" (κόπος). It's so much deeper than just this little word "labor" that you think, okay, you know what? I go about my work, and I do my labor; that's not what this is talking about. This word, "*kopos*," means you have labored for the kingdom of God to the point of exhaustion, and you no longer feel you can continue. Do you understand that? What He sees—I know your works. What is that word, "*kopos*"? It is "You are laboring for My kingdom to the point of exhaustion, and you can't go on."



Now, I have to tell you: there are days you have no idea how much this speaks to me, how I can relate to it. And the Lord sees your labors. He sees what you sacrifice and what you do for the kingdom. He knows your works.

He knows your labor, and He knows your *hypomonē* (ὑπομονή). You already know this; we have covered this term in detail. He knows your endurance, translated here as "patience". He knows you've endured one struggle, one trial after another. He sees that this is happening.

Revelation 2:2—"... and that you cannot bear those who are evil ..." If I didn't know better, this letter was addressed to us. It's addressed to me. I'm so tired of reading about the sickness, the disease, the sin that is covering the entire globe, and how we long for Yeshua to return. Man, this is powerful. It's like a personal letter.

And get this: Revelation 2:2—"... And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars." Let me tell you something about this church at Ephesus. From the outside, you look at this ministry and think, "This is a powerhouse ministry." They are laboring to the point of exhaustion. They are enduring all the trials and tribulations, and they are armed to the teeth. They are equipped with the Word of God. If you wanted to learn, if you go back to the first century, you're like, "Man, I'm so hungry for the Word." Where are they teaching the Word? I'm going there. They would tell you, "The Church of Ephesus." These people are grounded in the Holy Word of God. They're testing.

How do you test apostles to know whether they're liars? There's no other way but the Word. The church at Ephesus knows their Word. This is amazing.

And then it goes on and says this in Revelation 2:4—"**Nevertheless**, I have this against you." Yeshua just said, "I saw your works." And He goes through all of these descriptions where we would be in awe of this ministry today. How awesome they are, how they're enduring, and how faithful they are to the Word. And then Yeshua says, He has something against them, and what is it? "**You have left your first love**." (emphasis added).

For me, this is the hardest moment in the entire book of Revelation. Anything—believe me when I say this: Yeshua says a lot of alarming things, a lot of very hard things, and troubling things to the seven churches, but this right here, after what He just got done saying, we have a ministry that is a powerhouse. They're teaching the Word of God with unwavering faith. They're not ashamed of the gospel. They're enduring. They're hanging by a thread. They're going through the trials. And then Yeshua says, "You have left your first love."

What do we know about the first love? Well, I can tell you this: When a certain man came up to Yeshua and asked Him (Matthew 22:36-37), "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" What was the response? "You're to love the Lord your God with some of your heart." Yeah, you know that is a misquote. You are to love the Lord your God with all of your heart. [37] Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'"

Now this is a Christian church. These are Christians rooted and grounded in faith in Christ. They're immersed in the word of God, and now He tells them, But you have left your first love—that love that you once had for Me.

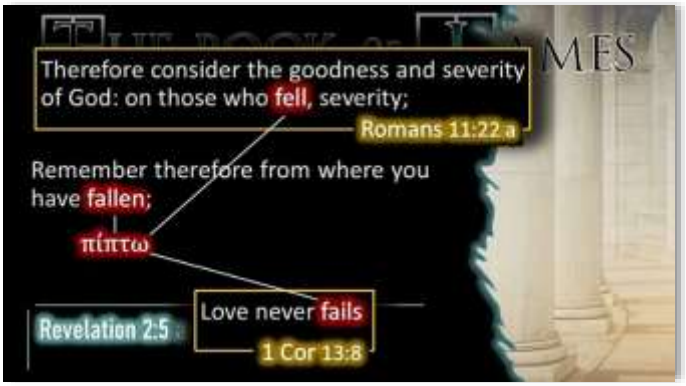
That love—do you remember when you went back? I want everyone to think about that time when you came into the saving knowledge of Jesus, and you called upon Jesus, and how much joy you had that you thought was indescribable. You were in a place where thoughts of Jesus consumed you from morning till the sun went down. You were excited to worship Him. You were excited just to go back and pray to Him. You were excited to dig into His Word and do these things. You saw power in God's Word.

There's something so precious about that first love. Everything came from a pure heart. Your obedience, everything you did, helping your neighbor, loving your neighbor as yourself, and giving to the LORD because you knew He was worthy. That was your first love. You didn't have to try because you're in love. You know, when a man is in love with his wife and a wife loves her husband, it's just natural; whatever the wife needs, I'm doing it, and it comes naturally. You don't have to try because you love your spouse.

The Church of Ephesus is entering into a place of complacency, even a fragment of their heart. It doesn't say their whole heart because it doesn't even need to be that to define it. We just need to give 5% to the world. 2% to the cares of the world, where we are no longer loving Him with all our hearts. We are failing.

And I have to tell you, you want to talk about a sobering moment. He's talking to his Christian church that is doing all the things. They're checking all these boxes. They're legitimately doing wonderful things. From the outside, that's a powerhouse ministry. From the inside, God sees what's going on, and you're leaving Him. They're abandoning. They've left their first love. God have mercy. This is terrifying.

So Yeshua goes on and says in Revelation 2:5, "Remember therefore from where you have **fallen**;…" *Piptō* (πίπτω) (Emphasis added). I want to be clear: when Yeshua uses this term, He's not just talking about you having fallen. You know what? You're no longer, in a certain way, on fire as an on-fire Christian as you once were, but you just kind of trimmed it down. But you're still good; you're still saved, not lost; you said the prayer. That is not what's being conveyed here.



In fact, you'll notice Paul uses this term for Israel falling in the wilderness when they rejected the LORD when their faith was tested, and they didn't endure. Paul says in Romans 11:22—Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, same Greek, severity... He uses this term, and it's amazing: Paul goes on to the Corinthians and says (1 Corinthians 13:8), Love never *piptó* (πίπτω); it never falls. We translate it as fails. This is a good translation, but I want you to think about this. When we are in love with Yeshua the Messiah, we do not fall. We do not fall away, yet this is the term for the church of Ephesus. They have fallen away.

What's the answer in this situation? What does one do? —Revelation 2:5—"... **repent** and **do the first works**,…" (Emphasis added). Do you understand? Do the first works. When you were in love and all you cared about was Yeshua the Messiah, there was a time when you actually believed the kingdom of God was near. And there was an urgency to "Jesus is coming soon." I can remember that as a child, I had that. I had it in my early 20s. I really believed with all my heart that Jesus was coming soon, and it affected everything I did.

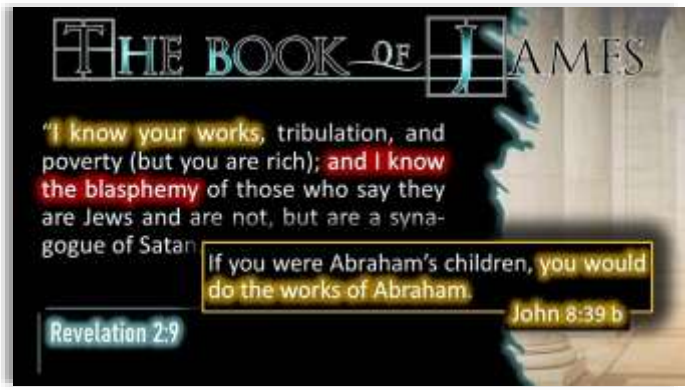
What happens? The thorns grow up, and they choke out the Word. And it begins to choke out our devotion, our desire for Yeshua alone. It is messed up. This is in the church. We're not talking about the world. You better repent and do the first works, and you can't say works have nothing to do with salvation. This would be wasted breath.

Do the first works—Revelation 2:5—"... or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent." You will not survive. Yeshua is speaking to us today—you will not survive if you don't return to your first love, where not even a fragment of your heart is dedicated to the world and its things. Nothing can unseat Yeshua on the throne of our hearts—nothing.

Moving ahead to Revelation 2:8-9—"And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, 'These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life: What's the first thing spoken to the church at Smyrna? [9] **I know your works**, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); **and I know the blasphemy** of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.'" (emphasis added).

You have to stop. These are words that stop you in your tracks. He knows the blasphemy of those who say they're Jews. What does it mean to be a Jew? It means you're the child of Abraham, a child of covenant, and the promises are given to you. You have an inheritance. It has everything to do with salvation, to be a son of Abraham. It's identity.

And some here in Smyrna are claiming their identity. We're saying we're children of Abraham, and the LORD is coming out. No, actually, you're the synagogue of Satan. Revelation mentions two churches. You have the Church of Christ, and then you have the Church of Satan. The most disturbing thing here is that these people who are embedded in the Church of Christ are actually part of a different church. They're part of the synagogue of Satan.



This reflects the conversation Yeshua had in the Gospel of John 8:39. Certain Jews came to Him and professed their identity. "Abraham is our father," to which Yeshua responds, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham." He goes on to tell them in John 8:44—"You are of your father the devil …"

How many Christians are going to be sitting there on the day of judgment crying out, "LORD, LORD, we know You? We built Your kingdom." And the response is, "I don't know you. Get away from Me." Why? You practiced lawlessness. You didn't have the works. You were not obeying Me. You were not walking faithfully. No one can say... I mean, these are the words of Jesus. Don't let anyone deceive you that works have no impact on your salvation. Yeshua would tell us otherwise and is telling us otherwise.

Revelation 2:12-13—"And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write, 'These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword:" He's not baking cookies, right? I mean, you look at this situation; He's ready for war. He's ready for judgment. He has a sharp two-edged sword. [13] "**I know your works**, ... This statement sits in the most prominent place in every one of these epistles. And where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. **And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith** even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells." (emphasis added). They're dying for the name of Jesus. He sees this. It's not all He sees.

Revelation 2:14—"**But I have a few things against you**, because you have there those who hold **the doctrine of Balaam**, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, … (Emphasis added). Something has crept into the church. This is the Church of Yeshua the Messiah; something has crept into the church. We have the tares growing up among the wheat. And in this expression, it's the doctrine of Balaam; what is that? To eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality." They're eating things sacrificed to idols. Food and meat are sacrificed to idols, and they're committing sexual immorality. It's interesting the very next church here, Thyatira, has the same sin creeping in. This is a real problem.

Well, here's what I can tell you. When you go to whatever social media platform you go to, whether it's Twitter or TikTok or whatever else is out there, and you're watching pastors from behind a pulpit teach pro-LGBTQ ideology. Understand that sexual immorality is creeping into the church. Now, as Yeshua just mentioned, good things may be happening in the church. But He has this against them. They're holding to the doctrine of Balaam, which is absolute wickedness.

And guess what? Both of these things—where are they prohibited? In the Torah. These are prohibitions in God's holy law. They're forbidden. This is an abomination. Can they survive this? Can they just

continue to go ahead and let sexual immorality and the divorce rate skyrocket within the church? You have pastors having relations with women in the communities. You have youth pastors getting involved in this nonsense. The whole church is given over to lawlessness and disgusting immorality. Will the church survive?

Well, we continue. This is what He says to Thyatira—Revelation 2:21—"And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, …" This is what I love about our Lord. He's not up there looking to take you out with a lightning bolt when you stumble. He gives time to repent because His heart is merciful and gracious. Isaiah 55:6 says, Seek the LORD while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. You want to do that. The LORD is there. He wants you to turn.

But here's the problem. When you get into the spirit of Jezebel, when you get into the doctrine of Balaam, the spirit of Antichrist, this is what happens—Revelation 2:21—"... **and she did not repent**." (emphasis added). What happens when the word of the LORD comes forth and tells you these things are sinful? The law states it, and the response is, "No, God loves these things." The law is done away with. You don't have to worry about anything anymore—you're under grace."

Well, this is the response—Revelation 2:22—"Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, **unless they repent of their** works. It's *ergon* (ἔργον), **deeds**." (emphasis added). Unless you repent of your works—Don't tell me works have nothing to do with salvation. We were just told by Yeshua, If you don't get this in order, you don't make it. It has everything to do with salvation.

Yeshua says in Revelation 2:23, "I will kill her children with death, … All of this filth that is going on in the church, judgment is coming. It is coming. Mark Yeshua's words well. "… And all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. **And I will give to each one of you according to your works**." (emphasis added). Yeshua seems pretty obsessed with this topic. It's interesting how it's been completely, entirely dismantled. A theological nightmare is unfolding right before our eyes in this generation.

Revelation 3:1—"And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, 'These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: "**I know your works**, that you have a name that you are alive, oh, **but you are dead**." (emphasis added). You can't even make this up. What did James say in James 2:26? Faith without works is dead. Yeshua is looking at this church, and they're dead because they don't have the works, which means they don't have authentic faith.

Revelation 3:2—"Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, **for I have not found your works perfect before God**." (emphasis added). If works have nothing to do with salvation, who cares? Who cares if your works are perfect before God?



Interestingly, Yeshua uses the term "*pléroó*" (Πληρόω). It means to fulfill, to complete. Yeshua uses this term explicitly and in association with the Torah when He says in Matthew 5:17, "Do not think that I came to

destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to *pléroó*, fulfill." Isn't it interesting that Paul builds on that for the church and says in Galatians 5:14—For all the Torah, the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." All the Torah is fulfilled, *pléroó*, in one word. You're to love your neighbor as yourself.

When you really consider the potency of the messages Yeshua is giving to these seven churches, you begin to see how serious a conversation James is bringing to the table. That faith without works is dead.

Now he goes on in Revelation 3:3—"Remember therefore how you have received and heard; **hold fast and repent**. …" (Emphasis added). Over and over and over again, what is the message from Christ? Not to the world, to the church. Repent. Do the first works, or you're going to have your lampstand removed, and that is a message for every single person here today.

Revelation 3:14—"And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God.'" Now I want to be clear: this isn't my point, but the Arians love to use this to show that, well, Yeshua must be created because it says "the beginning of the creation of God." "Beginning" is *hē archē* (ἡ ἀρχὴ). It actually means He is the author, the originator of the creation of God. —John 1:3—All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. It's a very different context than how some try to spin that.

Now, we get to the point here in Revelation 3:15-16—"**I know your works**, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. [16] So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth." (Emphasis added).

Yeshua is doing something very clever here. The city of Laodicea was incredibly wealthy and, technologically speaking, at the top of the food chain. They had an aqueduct system of cold and hot running water. He is playing off of something they would have understood clearly when He wrote it. If you, as a Laodicean, would go and if you were going to the hot spigot, you would expect hot water. It's useful whether you're making your tea or coffee or using it for medicinal purposes, or if you're going to the cold; you want something cold and refreshing.

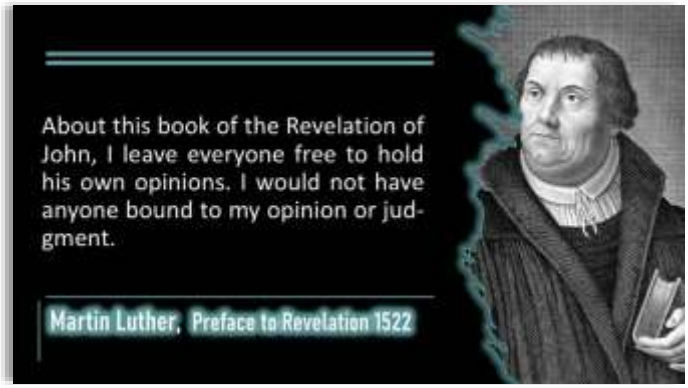
But if you go to the hot and you get lukewarm, that's of no value. If I go to the cold and I get lukewarm, that's of no value. This is the idea that Yeshua is communicating. They become useless. And do you understand that when we're not walking in righteousness, we are not building the kingdom? That's what we're called to do.

Yeshua says in Revelation 3:19, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. **Therefore be zealous and repent**." (Emphasis added). And that term "zealous" actually means that you better be coveting, earnestly desiring what? Righteousness—Matthew 6:33—"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, …" We have to be zealous for the LORD, and we have to repent.

So this whole idea that works doesn't matter; that's not based upon biblical reality. That's based upon satanic lies, infiltrating the church and making everyone feel comfortable as they wallow in their sin. It is demonic, the days we're living in.

And I want to show you in part why we're even dealing with this nonsense. You know, it's no secret. One thing we covered at the beginning of this series was Martin Luther and what he really thought of the book of James. He had a deep disdain for this book, for the very reasons we're addressing today. He

found it anathema to think that works had any place, role, or impact on salvation at all. That thought was repugnant to him.



I want to show you what he thought of the book of Revelation, where we just read the teachings of Jesus. This is his commentary. — Martin Luther, Preface to Revelation 1522— About this book of the Revelation of John, I leave everyone free to hold his own opinions. I would not have anyone bound to my opinion or judgment. I say what I feel. I miss more than one thing in this book, and it makes me consider it to be **neither apostolic nor prophetic** (emphasis added). This is his viewpoint on the book of Revelation.

It gets worse. I can in no way detect that the Holy Spirit produced it. If I were just to read those words without a face today, and I were to put this out on the web, you know how many people would call me a heretic? It's an abomination going against the plain teachings of Jesus. Everything that we just covered came straight from Yeshua.

He goes on, Moreover he seems to me to be going much too far when he commends his own book so highly indeed, more than any of the other sacred books do, though they are much more important. In other words, this is Luther calling John a blowhard windbag, that he is so arrogant that he would say, and what he's referring to is at the end of Revelation, where John says (Revelation 22:18-19), "Whoever adds to this book, adds to the words of this book; the LORD's going to add vengeance and judgment to him. And if you want to subtract anything from this book, you're going to be subtracted from the book of life." That was anathema to Luther. He couldn't stand it, but there's a reason.

Finally, let everyone think of it as his own spirit leads him. My spirit cannot accommodate itself to this book. For me this is reason enough not to think highly of it: Christ is neither taught nor known in it. He literally said those words.

What is Luther's issue? His issue is with my message today. That isn't my message. I'm telling you, I showed you what Yeshua Himself has spoken. I know your works—I know your works—I know your works. Luther can't have it. He couldn't handle it. That's why he has a two-tier canon. Revelation and James, coincidentally, just didn't make the cut.

I don't know how anyone can take this guy seriously, but I'm not allowed to say that today because he's respected in Christendom. He was one of the most radically anti-Semitic men alive. This guy went completely off the deep end. When you're challenging the words of Christ Himself, you've got a problem. This is insane. You have to take this in. This becomes one of the biggest names in Christianity. Whose voice are we going to listen to? Will we hear the shepherd's voice, or will we listen to men?

I will close with this: Ecclesiastes 12:13-14—Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: **fear God** and **keep His commandments**, for this is man's all. (emphasis added). It's the meaning of life. We're called to fear God and keep the commandments. Those works should be in order. Why? [14] For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.

And today, you have a challenge. You can either believe these words and let them change your life, or you can choose not to. Or you can continue living in complacency and compromise. But know this: judgment is coming sooner than we all believe. Amen?

[Closing prayer]

Abba Father, we give You praise and glory, and LORD, I thank You for the words of Your Son. Just as You Yourself have spoken, Yeshua (John 6:63), "it is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." And when You asked Peter (John 6:67-68), "Do you also want to go away?" Simon Peter asked, "Where do we go? For You have the words of eternal life." Yeshua, we go to no other. We trust no one but You—the Messiah (John 4:25–26), the KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS (Revelation 19:16), the Great I AM (Exodus 3:14; John 8:58), the One who is and who was and who is to come (Revelation 1:8), and the One who was dead and is alive forevermore (Revelation 1:18). For the LORD lives! Blessed be my Rock! (Psalm 18:46).

LORD, in these dark times, we pray for an anointing of conviction, like we have never known, to transform our hearts and our minds. (Psalm 51:10) Create in us a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within us. May we be changed from the inside, and may our works be the fruit of Your Holy Spirit and not the flesh.

We thank You for waiting and giving us time to repent. You have given us all this time; we know because we have breath in our lungs. Thank You for giving us this moment right here. And LORD, for those who need to get right, I pray they do not leave today before they get right with You, and that they know everything they do and say will be weighed. So LORD, I pray that You intervene with Your Spirit, change our hearts, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within us. We pray this in Yeshua's mighty name. Amen.

The Biblical Imperative: Why Works Matter to Yahweh

Works as Evidence of Authentic Faith

Actions reveal genuine heart convictions.



Actions betray true heart beliefs, proving whether faith is authentic or delusional.

Nineveh's works prompted divine mercy.



God relented from destruction after witnessing Nineveh turn from lawlessness to righteousness.

True faith drives active obedience.

Authentic faith acts as an internal driving force toward active righteousness.



Christ's Message to the Churches

Jesus explicitly evaluates church deeds.



Every letter to the seven churches begins with 'I know your works.'

Faith lacking works leads to judgment.



Churches lacking righteous works face loss of lampstands, rejection, or spiritual death.

Final judgment evaluates every action.



Ecclesiastes affirms that God will eventually judge every good or evil action.