



Key References:

Matthew 22:37–40 (ESV)

³⁷ And he said to him, “**You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.** ³⁸ **This is the great and first commandment.** ³⁹ **And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.** ⁴⁰ **On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”**

James 2:14–18 (ESV)

¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? ¹⁷ So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. ¹⁸ But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.

Ephesians 2:8–9 (ESV)

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

1 Corinthians 3:13–15 (ESV)

¹³ each one’s work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. ¹⁴ If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone’s work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

1 – Two commandments

Read Matthew 22:34-40. **How literal do you think Jesus was being about verse 39? In what way does this verse challenge us?**

Is it possible to love your neighbor without physical action? Why?

2 – Faith without works

Read James 2:14-18. **How do the answers to the previous question line up with this passage?**

James 2 has not been without it’s controversies. **What do people find hard to understand in James?**

Read James 2:20-24. **Why does James use the words “active” and “completed” in verse 22 (ESV)?**

3 – Grace works

How can we understand James 2:14, James 2:24 and Ephesians 2:8-9 together?

How does the illustration given by James in 2:26 help us explain and understand this?

4 – Works tested

Read 1 Corinthians 3:10-15. This passage compares the works that we do to building with “*gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, [and] straw*”. **How do you understand each of these materials in the context of the type, quality and amount work we do in the name of God’s Kingdom?**

How can you connect the warnings in 1 Corinthians 3:15 and James 2:17 together?

5 – Echo’s from Isaiah

Last week we studied Isaiah 58:1-12. **Looking back on this scripture how does it shine more light onto what we have talked about today?**

God used their religiousness in fasting to call Israel out. **In our context what do you have to be careful about becoming empty religious activity?**

6 – Encouraged

Read 1 Timothy 6:17-19. **How can we be encouraged & spurred on by verse 19 where it says; “they may take hold of that which is truly life”?**