

Week 4: Why Do My Choices Matter if I'm Saved by Grace?

Message Overview: We are saved by grace through faith—not by our own works, but by the finished work of Christ. True faith, however, is never passive. It produces fruit, visible evidence of the transformation God has done in our lives. Our choices matter because they reflect if our faith is genuine and alive.

Key Scripture: James 2:14-17; supporting Scripture: Ephesians 2:8-10, Matthew 7:16-20, Galatians 5:22-23, Titus 2:11-14, Philippians 2:12-13

Key points:

Introduction:

- Imagine you sign up for a marathon. You tell everyone you're going to run, buy the best running shoes, and post about it on Instagram. But when race day comes, you don't even show up. Would anyone believe you were serious about running?
- Faith works in the same way. Saying we believe in Jesus but never actually living it out is like signing up for the marathon but never running the race. The way we live proves whether our faith is real. While we are saved by grace through faith, true faith produces action – it changes how we live, how we treat people, and what we prioritize.

Salvation is by grace, not by works

- We are saved through Christ's finished work, not our own efforts. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

Active faith produces good works

- Works don't save us, but they prove our faith is alive. A faith without works is lifeless. (Matthew 7:16-20, James 2:14)
- We can say it this way: ***works are the fruit, not the root, of salvation.***
- Illus: you get a gym membership but never actually work out. Would you expect to get stronger? Faith without action is like an unused gym membership.
 - Saying we have faith but not living it out is like claiming to be a musician but never playing an instrument.

The fruit of the Spirit reflects transformation

- Genuine faith changes our character and actions. (Galatians 5:22-23, James 2:14-17)
- If someone looks at your life, what fruit do they see?

Grace calls us to live godly lives

- A transformed heart leads to a transformed lifestyle. If our faith doesn't change how we live, it's not real faith. (Titus 2:11-14, James 2:14-17)
- Living by grace means reflecting Jesus in how we live.
 - The world sees Christ in how we live.

God works in us for His purpose

- We don't produce fruit on our own—God empowers us to live according to His will. (Philippians 2:12-13, James 2:14-17)
- God saves us for a purpose. He calls us to be part of His plan.
- Our daily choices should align with His greater plan.

Obedience is evidence of true faith

- Real faith leads to real obedience. If we claim faith but live unchanged, our faith is empty. (1 John 2:3-6, James 2:14-17)

Application

- Check your daily actions – do they reflect Christ's love and character?

- Assess your relationships – are you bringing peace and joy? Or conflict?
- Look for spiritual fruit – are you growing in patience, kindness, self-control?
- Examine how you serve – are you using your time and resources to help others?
- Evaluate your priorities – does your schedule reflect God’s values or just your own?
- Check your motives – are you obeying God out of love, or just to look good?
- Think about the race you’re running – are you just saying you have faith, or actually living it out?
- **Gospel Proclamation:** We are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, whose finished work on the cross not only grants us salvation as a free gift but also transforms our lives, empowering us to live out good works as the fruit of a heart made new in Him, reflecting God’s character and purpose.

Key question/application: *Do your actions reflect the depth of your faith? Are you living in a way that demonstrates your love for God and desire to obey Him?*

Community Group Questions:

- What kind of choices have you made recently? How do you feel like they reflected your faith in God?
- How has God’s grace changed the way you live?
- How can we help each other grow in both faith and action?