

James 2:20-26

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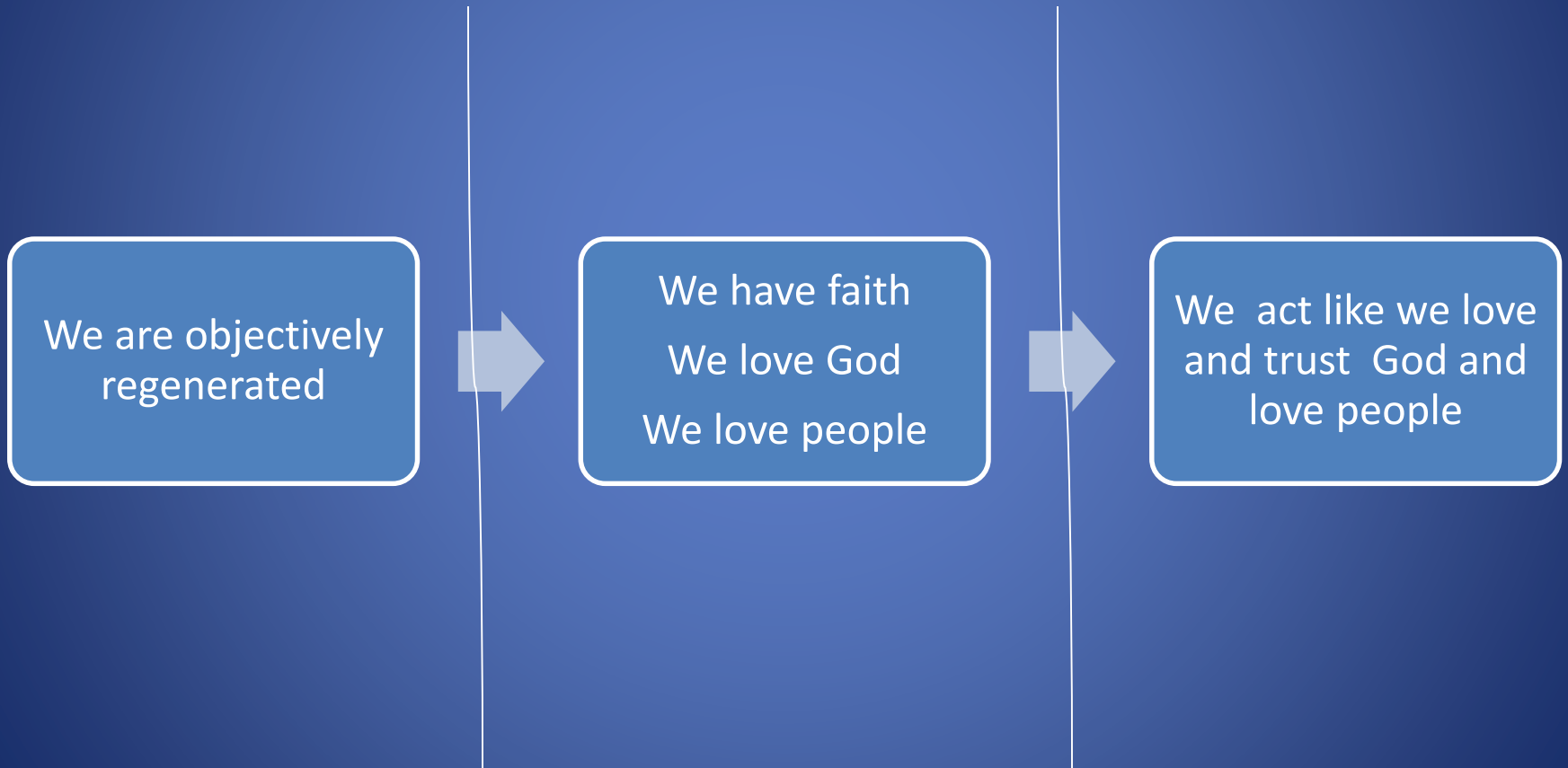
Where we are

- This week: James 2:20-26
- Next week: Paul on James 3:1-12
- James is a wisdom like book written by a pastor to his dispersed flock.

The Big Question

- How would non Christians understand this?
 - If I am ultimately trusting in good works for ...
 - “salvation”
 - “vindication”
- What did Paul say?
 - Gal 2:16
 - Rom 3: 21-28

A Picture



Proposed Solution

- Mounce Complete Expository Dictionary
 - To avouch to be good and true, to vindicate Math 11:19, Luke 7:29 (Justified God)
 - In N.T. to hold guiltless, to accept as righteous, to justify Rom 2:13, 3:4
- Strong's Dictionary
 - To show to be righteous, to declare to be righteous

Thoughts

- We could go on for a long time, but the text is a good place to start
- Am I the real deal
- To the non-Christian
 - One should know that one will never live well enough to deserve God's love
 - It is appropriate to ask if Christians live like changed people
- **Your Thoughts?**

Real Faith

- Hebrews 11: 6
 - We must believe God exists
 - And that he is a rewarder of those who seek him
- Do we really live this way?

The passage

- James 2:20
 - “You foolish one” (c.f. 4:11)
 - Faith without works is dead
 - It shows it is not a real faith
- To go back to last week, If a faith that does not produce works is OK, the demons are justified
 - How do we know the demons aren't justified? By their actions

v. 21,22

- If we use justify in the sense discussed, we know Abraham had real faith (and so was just) by his being willing to sacrifice Issac
 - Heb 11: 17-19 He must have believed like this to obey like that
- Faith is brought to its goal
- As we live by faith (work) our faith grows
 - We always walk by faith and not by sight, but God in his grace lets us see some things

The goal of faith

- 2 Cor 5:14,15
- Rom 1:5
- Rom 6:4
- The Gospel does many things
 - It declares us righteous by faith
 - It makes us righteous as we live out our faith

v. 23, 24

- So how do 22 and 23 connect
 - There was real evidence of real faith
- 24 is a summary statement

v. 25, 26

- Example of Rahab Heb 11:31
 - How was Rahab living by faith?
 - She believed that The LORD was going to give victory to Israel
 - She must have believed that He would reward those who were on His side
 - How did her acts vindicate her faith?
 - She lived as if she believed these things
- V. 26 brings us back to the theme

Comment

- The works that vindicate are not perfect works
 - We trust the finished work of Christ, not our works
 - We boast in the righteousness of Christ, not our righteousness
- We are flawed imperfect Christians living among flawed imperfect Christians
 - Be quick to see how they are living by faith
 - Be gracious when they have flaws (more on this)

So in the end

- How are you living? Are you living like the Real Deal?
- How do you differ because you trust Christ?
- How do you preach Christ to yourself when you are going to have to die to yourself and live for Him? Rom 6:11

Next week

- Next week: Paul on James 3:1-12