

An email exchange about faith and works.

Email received 8/26/10 through MyPreachingPen.com:

You might be interested to know that Jack Cottrell in a piece done for The Christian Standard made a very clear distinction between the **different kinds of works**. It came up in a discussion about whether or not baptism could be excluded from the causes of salvation on the grounds that it is a work. His argument was completely unique to me perhaps you also. He went to **Rom 3:27, 28** He pointed out that by the time we here that works don't save, we are already on notice that there are two bodies of law in view. **The law of faith in v. 27 and the law of works in v. 28**. He goes on to say that every law creates an obligation. The "law of works" he argues flows from God's role as Creator and Sovereign of man. Obligations pursuant to the law of works do not save. But the law of faith [could be called faith, grace, the gospel etc.] are obligations pursuant to God's role as Redeemer. So for example we are obligated to keep our wedding vow because God created man, woman and marriage all at once and it is then a primary design feature of the human race; thus it flows from God's role as Creator. Keeping the law of Moses flows from God's role as Sovereign. But being baptized is done not because God is Creator or Sovereign but because he is Redeemer. Any thing done in obedience to God's work of Redemption is in this category. It is a work but not the kind that doesn't save. If you plug this idea into the examples in James 2 you will see that **Rahab**, for example, **was obedient to the end of Redeeming herself and her family**. It solves all the presumed contradictions. Last of all, he gives examples of passages that show obedience as a kind of dividing line between the lost and saved to show that obedience to the law of faith, grace, the gospel etc. is shown as saving. They are: Acts 6:7; Rom 10:16; 2 Thes 1:8; 1 Pet 4:17. I hope you find this as interesting as I did.

InkMan's response:

Great stuff ... Thanks for sharing! It's helpful to go to Romans 3, because that chapter serves as the context for chapter 4, which [some] use to say a person is saved before baptism [with] the support of Mike Slick ... who has done a piece on YouTube about why baptism is not necessary. He obviously has never understood baptism as obedience to the end of redeeming ourselves. He goes so far as to assert that we are "saved by faith alone," ... I don't know if he's ever even read James....

Yes, "law of faith" suggests requirements and actions, doesn't it?