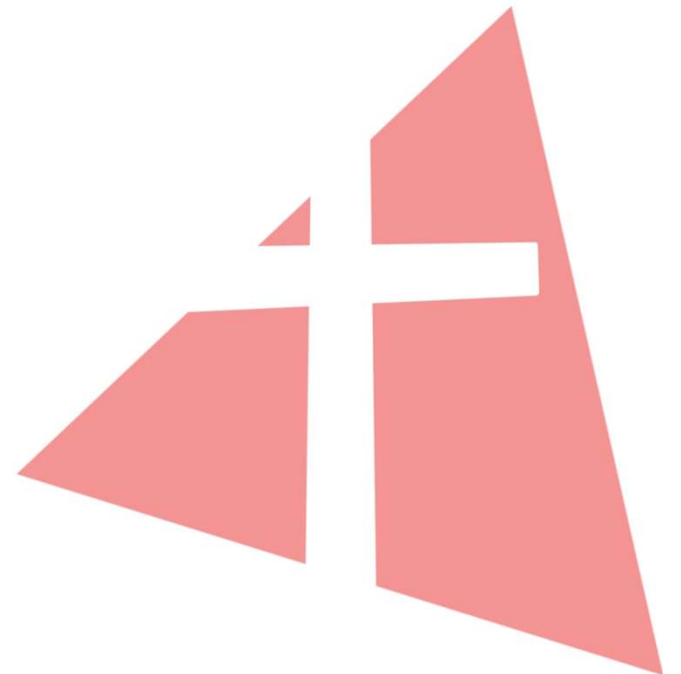


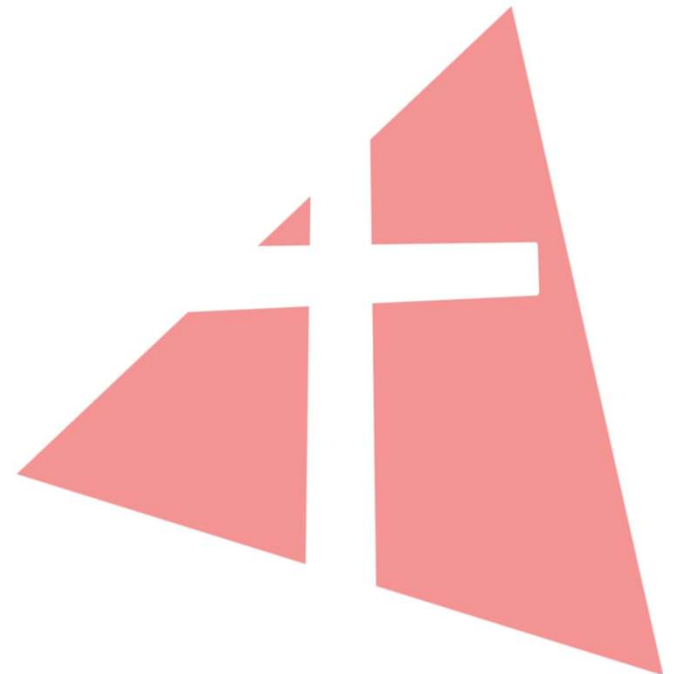
HOW CAN I KNOW I AM SAVED?

October 15th 2017



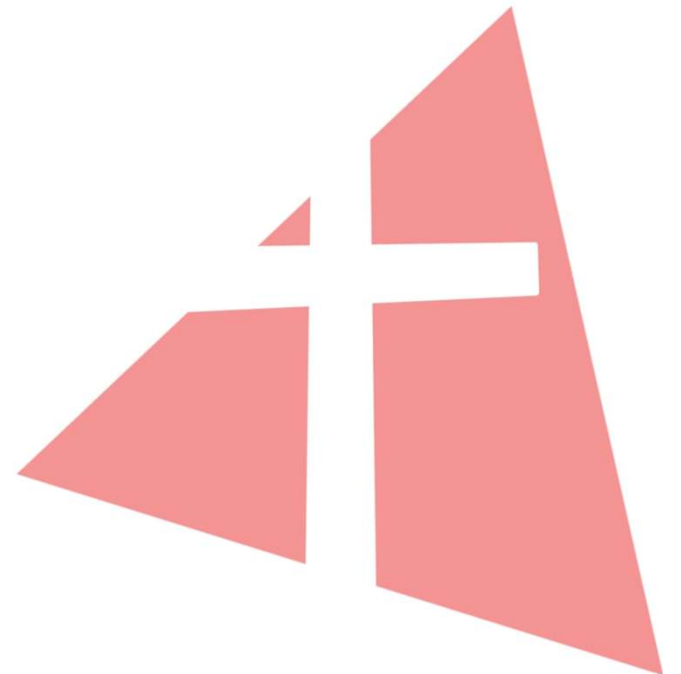
2 WEEKS FROM TODAY

- **Reformation weekend**
- **Topic: “Freedom in Christ”**



A COMMON QUESTION

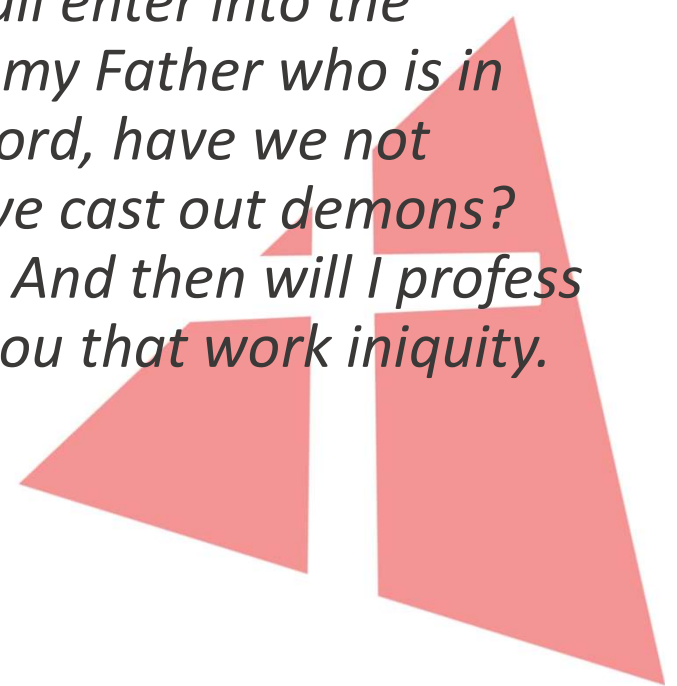
- How do I know whether I am saved?



REALITY CHECK

- **Many people who think they are saved actually are not**

Not every one that says unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name? and in your name have cast out demons? and in your name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, you that work iniquity. (Matthew 7:21-23)



A CONTRADICTION?

○ Salvation by Faith alone

For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. (Galatians 2:16)

A CONTRADICTION?

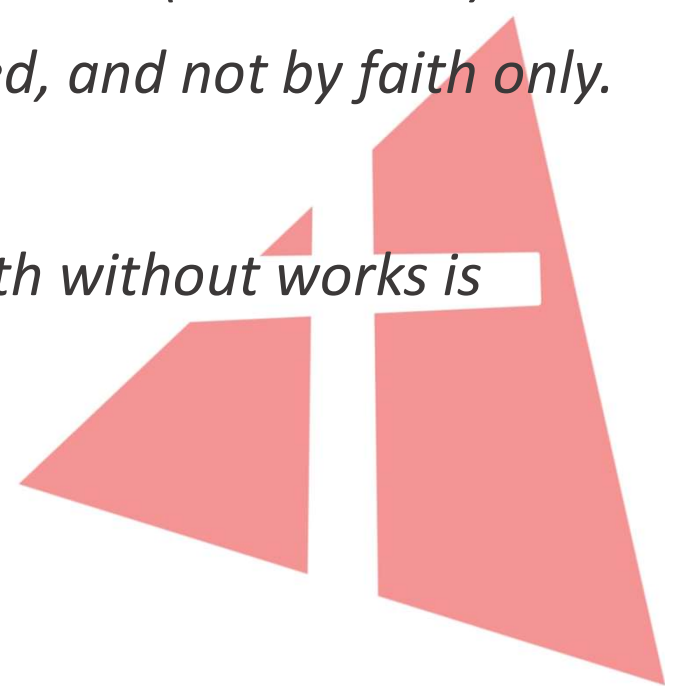
- Faith without works is dead

Even so faith, if it has not works, is dead, being alone. (James 2:17)

You see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

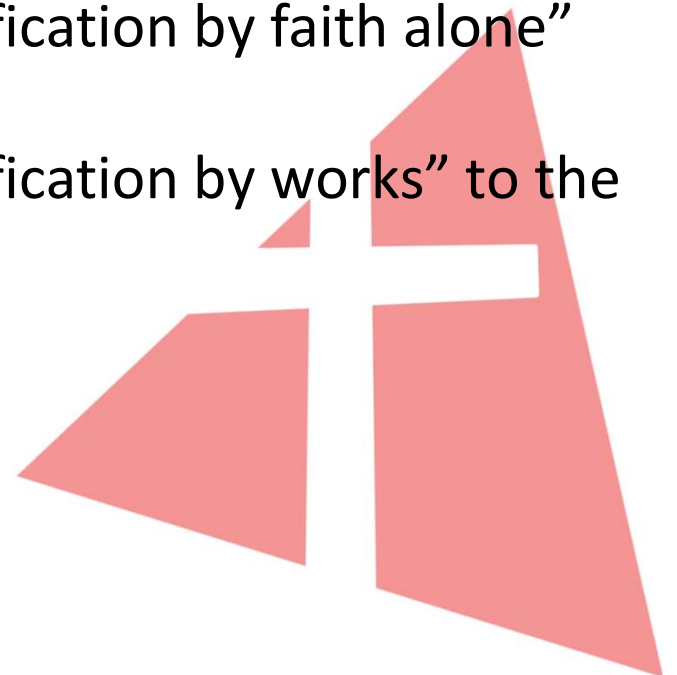
...

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. (James 2:24;26)



A DIFFICULT QUESTION

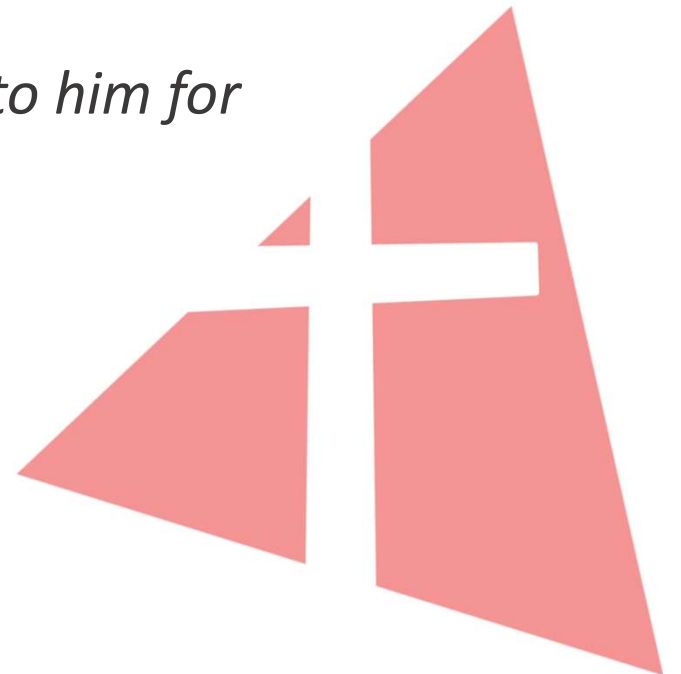
- **The church has been struggling to reconcile these two principles for 2000 years**
 - Some churches take the principle of “justification by faith alone” to the extreme
 - Some churches take the principle of “justification by works” to the extreme
- **Is this a contradiction?**



SALVATION BY FAITH ALONE

- **We are saved by Faith alone**

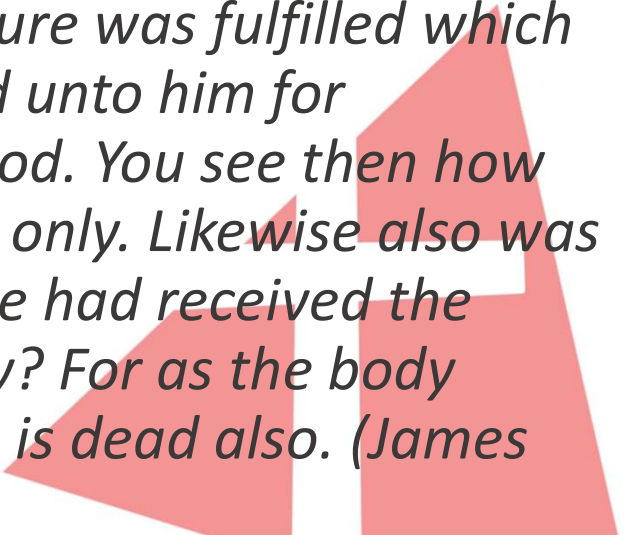
And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness. (Genesis 15:6)



WORKS ARE EVIDENCE OF FAITH

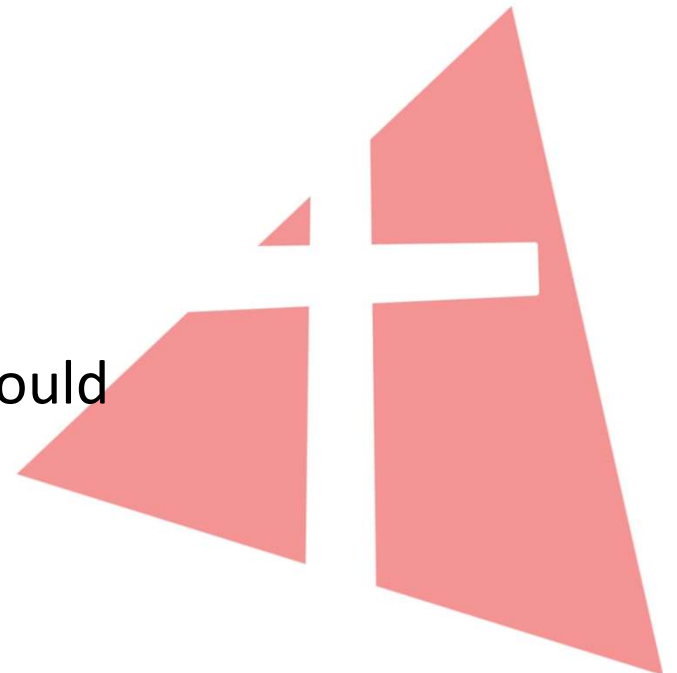
- **If we truly believe, we will live differently**

Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? See how faith worked with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which says, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. You see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. (James 2:21-26)



ANALOGY OF CHILDREN

- **I love my children, that's why I discipline them**
 - I cannot discipline another child to become his/her father
- **My actions towards my children are**
 - A confirmation of my identity as a father
 - Evidence of my love for them
- **A lack of discipline is evidence that**
 - I don't love or care for them as a father should



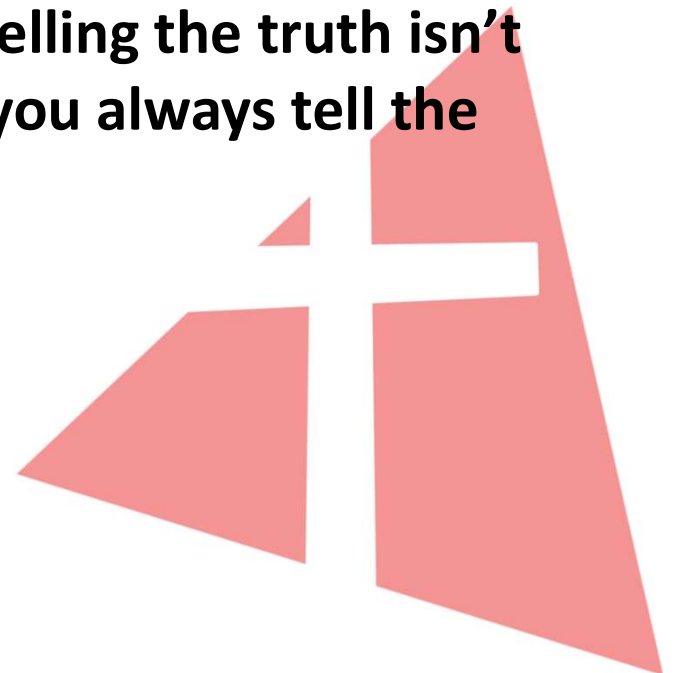
TRUE FAITH IS CONFIRMED BY WORKS

- A confession with words alone is worthless
- Paul and James looked at the same topic from different angles
 - Paul's message: "Once you have genuine Faith, you are saved"
 - James' message: "If you say you believe, but you don't act like it, then you need to ask yourself whether what you say is really true."



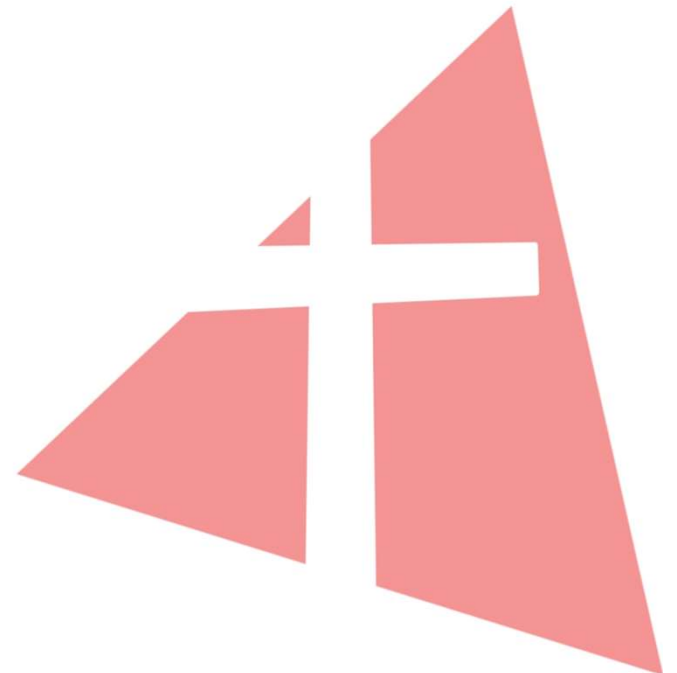
IF SOMEONE TOLD YOU

- I love you. And I want the best for you. Not telling the truth isn't good for you. So I'll give you 10 Mio. Euro if you always tell the truth for the next 12 months.



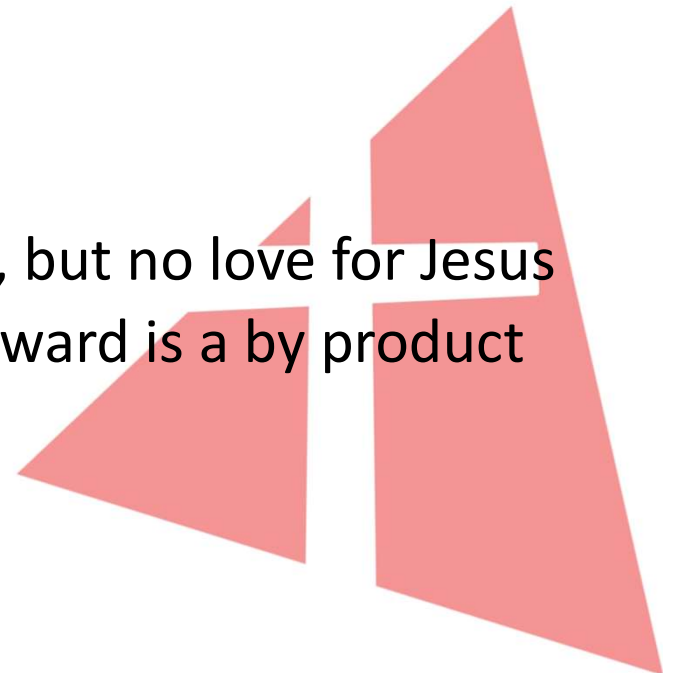
HOW CAN WE RESPOND?

- **We could choose to not believe the person**
 - You won't give me the money
- **We could choose to just aim for the reward**
 - Obedience out of duty
 - Finding loopholes
- **We could choose to obey out of trust**
 - Dishonesty isn't good for me
 - The reward is a by-product



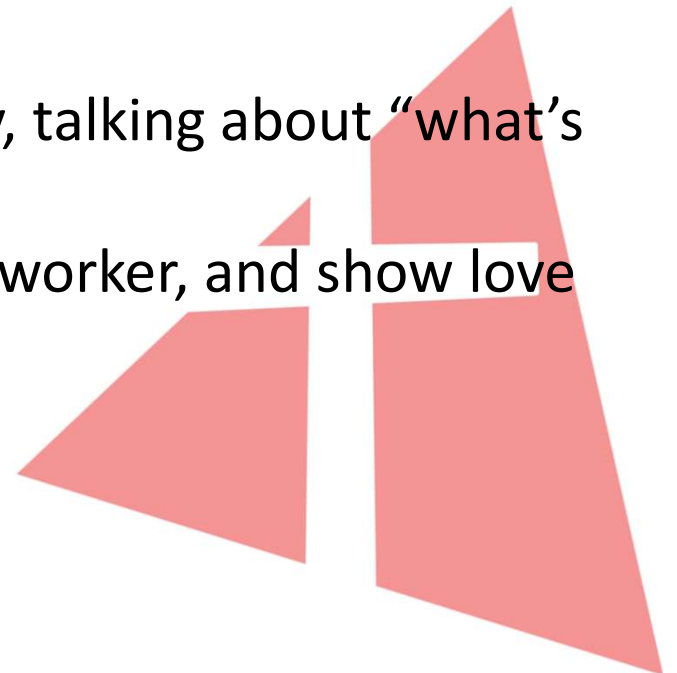
WHAT DID GOD OFFER US?

- God did tell us that “dishonesty isn’t good for us”
- God offered us way more than 10 Mio. Euro
- Our action reveals our heart
 - Disobedience = not believing
 - Obedience out of duty = focus on rewards, but no love for Jesus
 - Obedience out of trust = Love for Jesus, reward is a by product



WHAT IF SOMEONE SAID

- **I know what is best for you. And I want you to fully enjoy your life. I'll give you 10 Mio. Euro if you**
 - keep yourself 100% sexually pure for your (future) husband/wife
 - give 10% of all your income to the church
 - have a 15min phone call with me each day, talking about “what’s going on in your life”
 - stop complaining about your annoying co-worker, and show love to him instead
 - ...



OUR RESPONSE?

- **If we would say “yes” to any of these offers, but no to God, then it shows a lack of Faith**
 - Either we don't trust God's promises
 - Or we don't care about God, just want to get the reward
- **If we live like this**
 - It shows that we trust God and trust that what He tells us is best for us



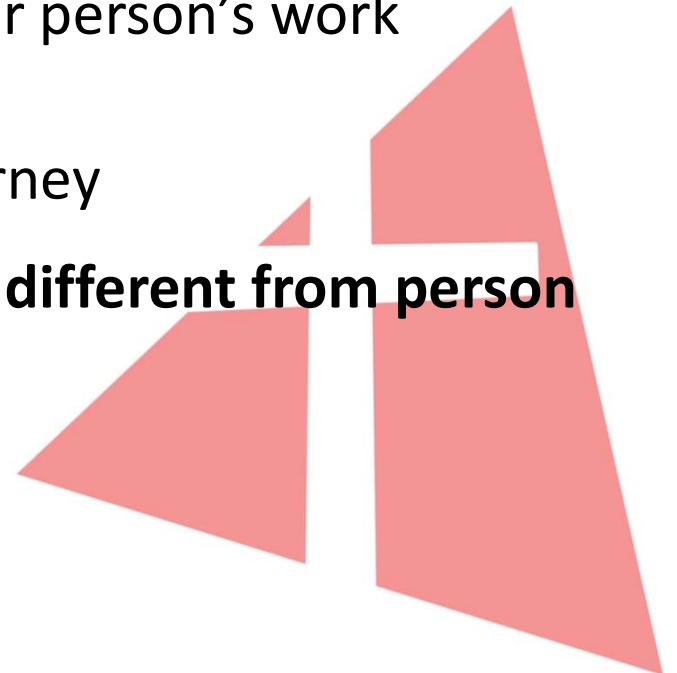
NEVER FORGET

- **Identity comes first**
- **Actions follow**
- **Actions flow out of our identity, but actions cannot give us identity**



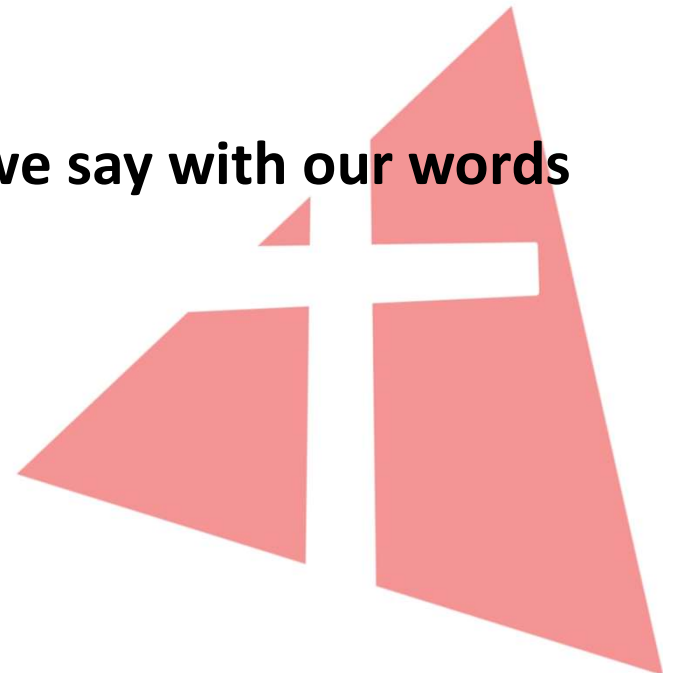
THE CHALLENGE

- **We cannot compare our works with others and make conclusions about our Faith by them**
 - We don't know the full picture of the other person's work
 - We have been given different gifts
 - We are at different stages of our Faith journey
- **The works that are evidence of our Faith are different from person to person**



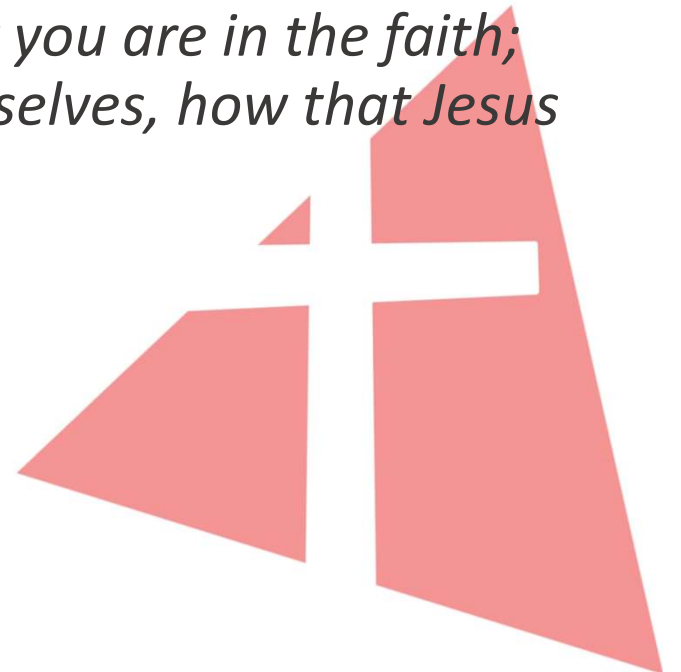
SUMMARY

- **Works don't make us right with God**
- **But our works do confirm or disprove what we say with our words**



WHAT CAN WE DO?

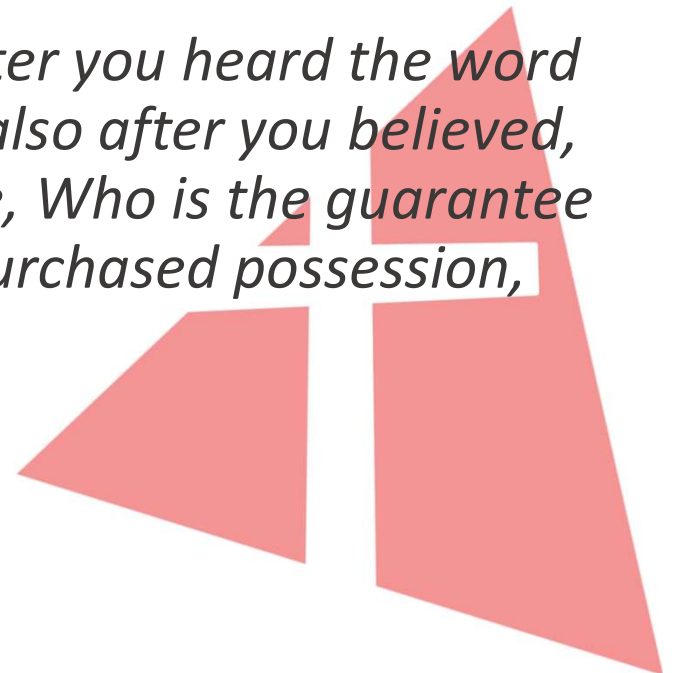
2 Corinthians 13:5 Examine yourselves, whether you are in the faith; prove your own selves. Know you not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, unless you are counterfeits?



THE HOLY SPIRIT

- **Only the Holy Spirit can give us this assurance**

Ephesians 1:13-14 In whom you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after you believed, you were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, Who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.



THE HOLY SPIRIT

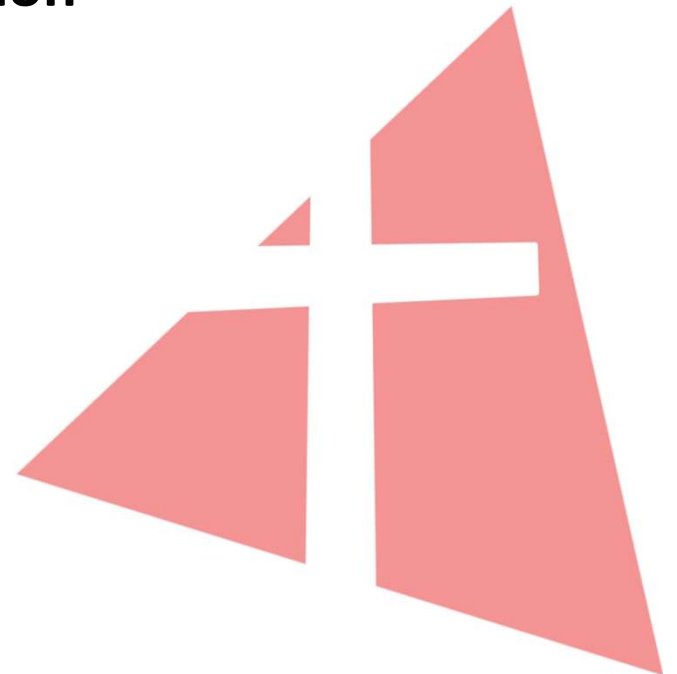
- **Only the Holy Spirit can give us this assurance**

Romans 8:16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:



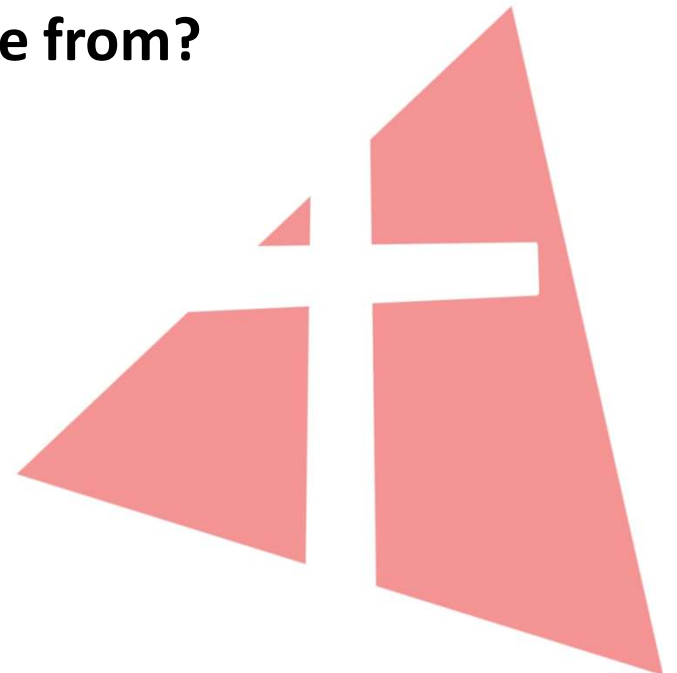
IN CONCLUSION

- **Only God can give us assurance of our salvation**
 - Bible
 - Holy Spirit
 - Community



CLOSING QUESTION

- **Do you think you are saved?**
- **If you say “yes”: Where does that belief come from?**
 - People who tell you about God?
 - Bible?
 - Holy Spirit?



IN CONCLUSION

- **Do you need a fresh revelation from God today?**
 - God will reveal Himself to those who do their part
- **God is waiting for all of us**
- **Are you coming home to Him?**

