



**SERIES: FEBRUARY – MARCH FAITH IN REAL LIFE**

**SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD**

**Wednesday, 03/02/2022**

**Scripture: James 2:22**

**TITLE: The Purpose of Salvation**

In 2020 our family moved to our current home. We love our home. It fits our family perfectly except for a few small deficiencies. One of those deficiencies is a place to put a vegetable garden. I love this kind of gardening. But in 2021, I bought one of those garden boxes as a solution. I had moderate success with it. But one pepper plant frustrated me. It kept growing but never produced any peppers. It was useless and required me to pull it out.

You see, that plant was designed to produce but didn't. This is a lot like faith.

How so? Listen to what James says about the purpose of saving faith. James said this in James 2:22 (CSB).

*You see that faith was active together with his works, and by works, faith was made complete.*

Yesterday we unpacked James' words on Abraham being justified by his works. What we discovered was that it wasn't that Abraham's actions of offering Isaac on the alter saved him. Rather, it was the outward expression of an inward reality. His faith was on display, and that gave evidence of his salvation.

Today James is continuing the thought and his teaching that faith without works is dead. Today he said that Abraham's faith was active together with his works. This outward expression made his faith complete. Other versions say "perfect."

This is the purpose of faith. Yes, it is to save our souls, but it is to transform our lives. I didn't plant that plant in my garden box to look good. It was to produce peppers. You see, bearing fruit is not a function added to a plant but is part of its design and purpose.

The same is true for saving faith. It has a tangible purpose. Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:10 that we are God's handiwork created in Christ Jesus for good works so that we might walk in them.

Jesus said in Matthew 7:19-20, "Every tree that doesn't produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So you'll recognize them by their fruit." Time and our lives reveal the true condition of our heart. Saving faith works. Saving faith has a heavenly and physical purpose.

Just like the fruit tree is meant to produce fruit or a vegetable plant to produce vegetables, so faith has not reached its end until it proves itself in a changed, righteous life.

So here's my challenge for you today: make sure you're being fed so you can produce. We know there is great purpose in our salvation. It's more than just a ticket to heaven. It's a life of intentional, righteous living. But this is difficult when you're not getting fed and watered.

Are you spending time filling your life with God's Word? Are you being refreshed by time with God in prayer and confession? Are you being pruned and encouraged for production by spending time with the body of Christ? All of these habits lend themselves to healthy fruit.

So today, spend time getting fed and refreshed so you can produce good fruits each and every day.