THE QUESTION

What did the early Christians believe about faith and works?

Asked by a THF member on May 21, 2026 · published November 9, 2026 · 13 numbered quotations · the 54 early Christian passages and 340 Bible verses we kept are listed at the back, each with a link.

Read it online: thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/what-did-the-early-christians-believe-about-faith-and-works

The short answer *Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words*

They taught that God justifies us by faith, as a gift of grace, and not by our own works or merit. But they insisted that real faith obeys God and does good works. Faith with dead works, or faith that does not last, will not save, and God will reward each person by his works.

LIBRARY ONLY	This study was written only from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed at the back, with a link to read it.
HOW IT WAS MADE	Compiled by machine learning from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible only. Every quotation was matched word for word against our stored text. Not yet reviewed by The Historic Faith.
SHARING WITH AN AI?	Every quotation here comes from The Historic Faith's library. If you paste this study into an AI, anything it adds beyond these pages comes from that AI, not from us.

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POINT 1 OF 8

God justifies by faith, not our merit

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Clement of Rome says we are not justified by our own wisdom, godliness or holy works, but by the same faith through which God has always justified people. Methodius also quotes Paul that we are saved by grace, not of works.

1

> “And we, too, being called by His will in Christ Jesus, are not justified by ourselves, nor by our own wisdom, or understanding, or godliness, or works we have accomplished in holiness of heart; but by that faith through which, from the beginning, Almighty God has justified all people; to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Clement of Rome,** *First Epistle to the Corinthians* **Source 52, page 9** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

2

> “Since grace and truth certainly came by Jesus Christ, as John 1:17 says, and since by grace we are saved, according to the apostle's word, "and that not of yourselves, nor of works, lest any man should boast," in Ephesians 2:8-9, by the will of God the Word was made flesh and was found in form as a man, as Philippians 2:7 says.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Methodius,** *Concerning Free Will* 1 (c. 270–311 AD) **Source 48, page 9** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 2 OF 8

Abraham is the pattern of our faith

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Irenaeus calls Abraham the father of believers, because his faith and ours are the same: trusting God's promise. Clement of Alexandria says Abraham was justified by faith, not works, and calls faith a grace.

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3 “For these reasons, the apostle declared that this man was not only the prophet of faith but also the father of those who believe in Jesus Christ among the Gentiles, because his faith and ours are the same: he believed in future things as if they were already accomplished, because of the promise of God; and similarly, we also, because of the promise of God, see through faith that inheritance stored up for us in the future kingdom.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Irenaeus,** *Against Heresies: Book IV* (c. 175–202 AD) **Source 21, page 8** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

4 “But Abraham was not justified by works, but by faith.”

later in the same passage

“For the teaching of godliness is a gift, but faith is grace.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Clement of Alexandria,** *Stromata* 1.7 (c. 190–215 AD) **Source 25, page 8** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 3 OF 8

True faith shows itself in obedience

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Clement of Rome says Abraham was found faithful because he obeyed God. The second letter under Clement's name says we confess Christ by doing what He says, honoring Him with our whole heart and not only our lips.

5 “Abraham, known as "the friend," was found faithful because he obeyed the words of God.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Clement of Rome,** *First Epistle to the Corinthians* **Source 53, page 10** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

6 “By doing what He says, and not breaking His commandments, and by honoring Him not only with our lips, but with all our heart and all our mind.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Clement of Rome,** *Second Epistle* 3 (c. 88–99 AD) **Source 2, page 7** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

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POINT 4 OF 8

Believing in any way is not enough

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Clement of Alexandria warns against reading "Your faith has saved you" as if any kind of belief saves without works following. He says no one can be a believer and live without restraint.

7

“So when we hear, "Your faith has saved you," we should not understand Him to mean, without qualification, that those who have believed in any way at all will be saved, unless works also follow.”

later in the same passage

“Therefore, no one can be a believer and at the same time live without restraint.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Clement of Alexandria,** *Stromata* 6.14 (c. 190–215 AD)
THF's updated English

Source 27, page 8 Read it in the library ›

POINT 5 OF 8

Faith with dead works leaves people wavering

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Hermas pictures believers who have the Lord on their lips but not in their hearts. Their words are alive but their works are dead, so they are neither alive nor dead. He says they can still live if they repent quickly.

8

“Only their words are alive, while their works are dead. Such people are neither alive nor dead.”

later in the same passage

“But these also may still live if they repent quickly.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Hermas,** *Shepherd* (c. 90–150 AD)
THF's updated English

Source 4, page 7 Read it in the library ›

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POINT 6 OF 8

Even wonders do not replace righteous living

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Cyprian says that even prophesying and casting out demons will not bring someone into the kingdom unless he walks in the right and just way. He points to the Lord's warning to those who did wonders in His name.

9 “But a person does not attain the kingdom of heaven, even if he is found in all these things, unless he walks in keeping the right and just way.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Cyprian,** *Treatises* (c. 248–258 AD) **Source 39, page 9** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 7 OF 8

God rewards each person by his works

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Second Clement says God is faithful to reward each one by his works. Cyprian looks ahead to rewards for good works done in love, yet he credits Christ's blood with renewing us. Grace comes first, and works follow.

10 “For He is faithful who promised that He will give each one a reward according to his works.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Clement of Rome,** *Second Epistle* 11 (c. 88–99 AD) **Source 1, page 7** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

11 “He will bestow on us immortality and eternity, to which He has renewed us by the life-giving power of His blood.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Cyprian,** *Treatises* (c. 248–258 AD) **Source 38, page 9** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

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POINT 8 OF 8

Faith and its works belong together

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Ignatius says faith cannot do the works of unbelief, so a believer's life matches his faith. He adds that the promised work counts only if a person is found in the power of faith to the end.

12 "Those who are carnal cannot do things that are spiritual, nor can those who are spiritual do things that are carnal, just as faith cannot do the works of unbelief, nor unbelief the works of faith."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Ignatius of Antioch,** *Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians* (c. 98–117 AD) **Source 11, page 7** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

13 "The work is not of promise unless a person is found in the power of faith, even to the end."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Ignatius of Antioch,** *Epistle to the Ephesians* 14 (c. 98–117 AD) **Source 12, page 7** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

THE LIMITS

What these passages don't tell us

- These passages do not give one formula for how faith and works fit together.
- They do not comment directly on James 2.
- A word-for-word match shows that a quotation really is in our text. It does not show that our reading of it is right, or who wrote each work.

WHERE EVERY QUOTE CAME FROM

The Sources

The 54 early Christian passages and 340 Bible verses we kept for this question (repeats and weak or off-topic search hits were left out): early Christian passages first (sources 1–54, grouped by writer, earliest first), then Bible verses in The Faith Once Delivered Bible (sources 55–185, in Bible order), then 209 more verses THF links to these passages, by reference. **Quote 1, page 2** beside a source shows where the study quotes it. Passages are in THF's updated English unless marked "1885 English" (the Roberts–Donaldson translation, public domain). "… [continues online]" marks a passage the library gave only in part. **On paper?** At **thehistoricfaith.com**, Bible verses are in the **Audio Bible** and early Christian writings in the **Library** (search for the title).

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EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS *54 passages from 18 writers*

Clement of Rome, *c. 88–99 AD · sources 1–2*

1 *Second Epistle* 11 (1885 English) **Quote 10, page 5** “He is faithful who has promised that He will bestow on every one a reward according to his works… [continues online] **read ›**

2 *Second Epistle* 3 (1885 English) **Quote 6, page 3** “doing what He says, and not transgressing His commandments, and by honouring Him not with our lips only, but with all our heart and all our mind… [continues online] **read ›**

Hermas, *c. 90–150 AD · sources 3–10*

3 *Shepherd* (1885 English; on point 3) “a care, then, you who serve the Lord, and have Him in your heart, that you work the works of God, remembering His commandments and promises which He promised, and… [continues online] **read ›**

4 *Shepherd* (1885 English) **Quote 8, page 4** “their words alone live, while their works are dead… [continues online] **read ›**

5 *Shepherd* (on point 3) is with you. These are the deeds of the angel of righteousness. Trust him, then, and his works. “Now look at the works of the angel of iniquity. First, he… [continues online] **read ›**

6 *Shepherd* (on point 3) the commandments that I gave you? They are excellent. Do not doubt them at all. Instead, put on faith in the Lord, and you will walk in them, for I… [continues online] **read ›**

7 *Shepherd* (on point 3) “12:5, and keep His commandments, and you will live to God… [continues online] **read ›**

8 *Shepherd* (1885 English; on point 3) “commandment exhibits the deeds of faith, that you may trust the works of the angel of righteousness, and doing them you may live to God… [continues online] **read ›**

9 *Shepherd* (1885 English; on point 3) “the commandments of the Lord, and you will be approved, and inscribed among the number of those who observe His commands.] And if you do any good beyond what is… [continues online] **read ›**

10 *Shepherd* (on point 3) finished the twelve commandments and said to me, "You now have these commandments. Live by them, and urge your hearers to do the same, so that their repentance may be… [continues online] **read ›**

Ignatius of Antioch, *c. 98–117 AD · sources 11–13*

11 *Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians* **Quote 12, page 6** “as faith cannot do the works of unbelief, nor unbelief the works of faith… [continues online] **read ›**

12 *Epistle to the Ephesians* 14 (1885 English) **Quote 13, page 6** “work is not of promise, unless a man be found in the power of faith, even to the end… [continues online] **read ›**

13 *Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians* (on point 8) “as faith cannot do the works of unbelief, nor unbelief the works of faith… [continues online] **read ›**

Polycarp, *c. 100–155 AD · sources 14–15*

14 *Epistle to the Philippians* (1885 English; on point 1) which joy many desire to enter, knowing that “by grace ye are saved, not of works… [continues online] **read ›**

15 *Epistle to the Philippians* (1885 English) you can do good, defer it not… [continues online] **read ›**

Tatian, *c. 150–180 AD · source 16*

16 *Diatessaron* 23 (1885 English; on point 7) “then shall he reward each man according to his works… [continues online] **read ›**

Irenaeus, *c. 175–202 AD · sources 17–23*

17 *Against Heresies: Book III* (on point 1) “We believe that through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, we… [continues online] **read ›**

18 *Against Heresies: Book II* (1885 English; on point 7) “That, then, was called the day of retribution on which the Lord will render to every one according to his works—that is, the judgment… [continues online] **read ›**

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19 *Against Heresies: Book III* (on point 1) but not a different god, because truly there is but "one God, who justifies the circumcision by faith and the uncircumcision through faith." Zacharias, prophesying, exclaimed, "Blessed be the Lord… [continues online] **read ›**

20 *Against Heresies: Book IV* (on point 2) God raised from the stones, and placed beside him who was made the leader and forerunner of our faith. This man received the covenant of circumcision after being justified by… [continues online] **read ›**

21 *Against Heresies: Book IV* **Quote 3, page 3** taught when he says in the Epistle to the Galatians: “So, the one who gives you the Spirit and works miracles among you, does he do it by the works… [continues online] **read ›**

22 *Against Heresies: Book IV* (1885 English; on point 7) “those who do it not shall receive the just judgment of God, because they did not work good when they had it in their power so to do… [continues online] **read ›**

23 *Against Heresies: Book IV* (on point 3) gained the knowledge of good and evil. It is good to obey God, to believe in Him, and to keep His commandments, and this is the true life for humans… [continues online] **read ›**

Clement of Alexandria, *c. 190–215 AD · sources 24–28*

24 *Instructor* 1.6 (on point 1) bound is well loosed by knowledge. Those bonds are quickly slackened by human faith and divine grace, our transgressions being taken away by one Paeonian medicine, the baptism of the… [continues online] **read ›**

25 *Stromata* 1.7 **Quote 4, page 3** “Abraham was not justified by works, but by faith… [continues online] **read ›**

26 *Stromata* 2.6 (on point 3) this husband, who is the Word, formerly desolate of the bridegroom. Now "the just shall live by faith," which is according to the covenant and the commandments, since these, which… [continues online] **read ›**

27 *Stromata* 6.14 (1885 English) **Quote 7, page 4** “that when we hear, Your faith has saved you, we do not understand Him to say absolutely that those who have believed in any way whatever shall be saved, unless… [continues online] **read ›**

28 *Stromata* 2.11 (on point 3) “then, is also obedience to the commandments, which is faith in God… [continues online] **read ›**

Tertullian, *c. 196–220 AD · sources 29–32*

29 *Against Marcion* 40 (on point 1) “together against the Lord and against His Christ. It was so that from then on man might be justified by the liberty of faith, not by servitude to the law… [continues online] **read ›**

30 *Against Marcion* 18 (on point 1) “Hosea 6:6. But even if the impulse of her repentance came from her faith, she heard her justification by faith through her repentance declared in the words, "Your faith… [continues online] **read ›**

31 *Against Marcion* 8 (1885 English; on point 7) “this view it is that he informs us how we must all appear before the judgement-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body… [continues online] **read ›**

32 *Against Marcion* 40 (1885 English; on point 1) “the rest, the apostle must (be permitted to) go on with his own statement, wherein he says that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but… [continues online] **read ›**

Hippolytus, *c. 200–236 AD · source 33*

33 *Against Plato* 1 (on point 7) “and the unrighteous alike, will be brought before God the Word. For the Father has committed all judgment to Him. And in fulfillment of the Father's counsel, He comes… [continues online] **read ›**

Origen, *c. 215–254 AD · sources 34–36*

34 *Commentary on John* 6 (on point 2) and if all believers are sons of Abraham, Romans 4:11, since all the Gentiles are blessed with faithful Abraham, who is appointed by God to be a father of… [continues online] **read ›**

35 *Commentary on John* 2 image of truly pleasing God. The passage that declares that before God no living being shall be justified shows that, compared with God and the righteousness that is in Him… [continues online] **read ›**

36 *Commentary on Matthew* 13 (on point 7) that one of these little ones should perish.” Matthew 18:14 For if we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive the… [continues online] **read ›**

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Gregory Thaumaturgus, *c. 240–270 AD · source 37*

37 *Metaphrase of Ecclesiastes* 12 (1885 English; on point 7) “that you believe that all shall be judged severally in the future, and that every man shall receive the just recompense for his deeds, whether they be good or whether… [continues online] **read ›**

Cyprian, *c. 248–258 AD · sources 38–42*

38 *Treatises* (1885 English) **Quote 11, page 5** “this palm of works of salvation let us gladly and readily strive… [continues online] **read ›**

39 *Treatises* (1885 English) **Quote 9, page 5** “7:22-23 There is need of righteousness, that one may deserve well of God the Judge… [continues online] **read ›**

40 *Treatises* (1885 English; on point 7) “after your hardness and impenitent heart you store up unto yourself wrath in the day of wrath and of revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who shall render to… [continues online] **read ›**

41 *Treatises* (on point 3) “everywhere in Holy Scripture, and the whole foundation of religion and faith comes from obedience and fear, what is more fitting for us to earnestly desire? What should we want… [continues online] **read ›**

42 *Treatises* (1885 English; on point 3) “in deeds; mercifulness in works; discipline in morals… [continues online] **read ›**

Apostolic Constitutions, *c. 250–380 AD · sources 43–44*

43 *Apostolic Constitutions* (on point 7) with righteousness, then as He punishes the ungodly, so also He does good to and saves the faithful. And those saints who have been killed by men for His sake… [continues online] **read ›**

44 *Apostolic Constitutions* (on point 3) “care, you children of God, to do all things in obedience to God… [continues online] **read ›**

Commodianus, *c. 250–300 AD · source 45*

45 *Writings* (on point 7) “He will award punishments according to your deeds… [continues online] **read ›**

Archelaus, *c. 270–300 AD · sources 46–47*

46 *Disputation with Manes* 1 (on point 1) was prepared and given through Moses for the salvation of very many. For if we hold that a man is justified without the works of the law, and if Abraham… [continues online] **read ›**

47 *Disputation with Manes* 1 (on point 3) one of them might still pass by the law of judgment. And certainly, whoever wills may keep the commandments. And whoever despises them, and turns aside to what is contrary… [continues online] **read ›**

Methodius, *c. 270–311 AD · sources 48–49*

48 *Concerning Free Will* 1 (1885 English) **Quote 2, page 2** “certainly grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, John 1:17 whence also by grace we are saved, according to that word of the apostle, and that not of yourselves… [continues online] **read ›**

49 *Fragments* 1 (1885 English; on point 1) “certainly grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, John 1:17 whence also by grace we are saved, according to that word of the apostle, and that not of yourselves… [continues online] **read ›**

Lactantius, *c. 290–320 AD · sources 50–51*

50 *Divine Institutes* 1 (1885 English; on point 7) “this remains, that we should treat of the judgment of God, which will then be established when our Lord shall return to the earth to render to every one either… [continues online] **read ›**

51 *Divine Institutes* 20 (1885 English; on point 7) “they who have known God shall be judged, and their deeds, that is, their evil works, shall be compared and weighed against their good ones: so that if those which… [continues online] **read ›**

Clement of Rome · *sources 52–54*

52 *First Epistle to the Corinthians* **Quote 1, page 2** “by that faith through which, from the beginning, Almighty… [continues online] **read ›**

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53 *First Epistle to the Corinthians* **Quote 5, page 3** known as "the friend," was found faithful because he obeyed the words of God. In his act of obedience, he left his own country, his relatives, and his father's… [continues online] **read ›**

54 *First Epistle to the Corinthians* (1885 English; on point 8) shall we do, then, brethren? Shall we become slothful in well-doing, and cease from the practice of… [continues online] **read ›**

THE BIBLE *131 verses, The Faith Once Delivered Bible (Old Testament from the Septuagint), in Bible order*

55 **Genesis 6:8** But Noah found grace before the Lord God. **read ›**

56 **Genesis 15:6** Abram believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. **read ›**

57 **Genesis 49:18** waiting for the salvation of the Lord. **read ›**

58 **Exodus 22:8** But if the thief is not found, the master of the house shall come before God and swear that he has truly done no wrong in any part of his neighbor's deposit, (Septuagint Exodus 22:7 (Exodus 22:8 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

59 **Exodus 23:13** Keep all that I have said to you; and you shall make no mention of the name of other gods, nor ever let it be heard out of your mouth. **read ›**

60 **Leviticus 22:31** You shall keep my commandments and do them. **read ›**

61 **Leviticus 26:15** but disobey them, and if your soul loathes my judgments, so that you do not do all my commandments, so as to break my covenant, **read ›**

62 **Deuteronomy 6:17** You shall surely keep the commandments of the Lord your God, the testimonies and the ordinances that he commanded you. **read ›**

63 **Deuteronomy 6:25** And it shall be an act of mercy for us, if we take care to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he commanded us." **read ›**

64 **Deuteronomy 8:6** And you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God, to walk in his ways and to fear him. **read ›**

65 **Deuteronomy 10:13** to keep the commandments of the Lord your God and his ordinances that I command you today, that it may be well with you? **read ›**

66 **Deuteronomy 11:1** And you shall love the Lord your God and keep his charges, his ordinances, his commandments, and his judgments all your days. **read ›**

67 **Deuteronomy 11:27** the blessing, if you hear the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you today; **read ›**

68 **Deuteronomy 12:28** Take care and listen, and you shall do all the words that I command you, so that it may go well with you and with your sons forever, if you do what is pleasing and good before the Lord your God. **read ›**

69 **Deuteronomy 13:4** You shall walk after the Lord your God and fear him, and you shall listen to his voice and cling to him. (Septuagint Deuteronomy 13:5 (Deuteronomy 13:4 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

70 **Deuteronomy 13:18** if you listen to the voice of the Lord your God, to keep his commandments, all that I command you today, to do what is good and pleasing before the Lord your God. (Septuagint Deuteronomy 13:19 (Deuteronomy 13:18 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

71 **Deuteronomy 27:10** and you shall obey the voice of the Lord your God, and do all his commandments and his ordinances, which I command you today. **read ›**

72 **Deuteronomy 28:1** And it shall be, if you will hear with hearing the voice of the Lord your God, to keep and do all these commandments that I command you today, that the Lord your God shall set you high above all the nations of the earth; **read ›**

73 **Deuteronomy 30:8** And you shall return and obey the voice of the Lord your God, and do his commandments, which I command you today. **read ›**

74 **Deuteronomy 30:16** If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you today, to love the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his ordinances and his judgments, then you shall live and be many, and the Lord your God shall bless you in all the land that you are entering to inherit. **read ›**

75 **Deuteronomy 30:20** to love the Lord your God, to obey his voice, and to hold fast to him; for this is your life and the length of your days, to dwell on the land that the Lord swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them. **read ›**

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76 **Deuteronomy 32:4** God—true are his works, and all his ways are judgment; God is faithful, and there is no unrighteousness; righteous and holy is the Lord. **read ›**

77 **Joshua 22:5** Only take great care to do the commandments and the law that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded us to do: to love the Lord our God, to walk in all his ways, to keep his commandments, to hold fast to him, and to serve him with all your mind and with all your soul." **read ›**

78 **1 Kings 2:3** and keep the charge of the Lord your God, to walk in his ways, to keep his commandments and ordinances and judgments that are written in the law of Moses, so that you may understand what you do in all that I command you, **read ›**

79 **2 Chronicles 6:23** then you shall hear from heaven, and act, and judge your slaves, repaying the lawless by bringing his ways on his own head, and justifying the righteous by repaying him according to his righteousness. **read ›**

80 **Psalms 12:8** The ungodly walk all around; according to your loftiness you have greatly cared for the sons of men. (Septuagint Psalm 11:9 (Psalm 12:8 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

81 **Ecclesiastes 1:2** "Vanity of vanities," said the Preacher, "vanity of vanities; all is vanity." **read ›**

82 **Ecclesiastes 3:17** I said in my heart, "God will judge the righteous and the ungodly," for there is a time there for every matter and for every work. **read ›**

83 **Ecclesiastes 12:14** For God will bring every work into judgment, with everything overlooked, whether it is good or whether it is evil. **read ›**

84 **Song of Solomon 3:5** I have charged you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the powers and by the strengths of the field, that you not stir up or awaken love until it pleases. **read ›**

85 **Isaiah 7:19** and they shall all come into the valleys of the land, and into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves, and into every crevice. **read ›**

86 **Isaiah 15:3** Wrap yourselves in sackcloth in her squares, and lament on her rooftops and in her lanes; all of you, wail with weeping. **read ›**

87 **Isaiah 15:8** For the cry has reached the border of the land of Moab, of Eglaim, and her wailing as far as the well of Elim. **read ›**

88 **Isaiah 18:1** Woe to the land, the wings of ships, beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, **read ›**

89 **Jeremiah 9:17** Thus says the Lord: Call the mourning women, and let them come; and send to the wise women, and let them lift their voice; (Septuagint Jeremiah 9:16 (Jeremiah 9:17 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

90 **Jeremiah 27:4** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

91 **Jeremiah 32:4** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

92 **Lamentations 1:14** Nun. Watch has been kept over my ungodly deeds; they are twined together in my hands; they have come up upon my neck; my strength has failed; for the Lord has put pains in my hands; I shall not be able to stand. **read ›**

93 **Ezekiel 22:3** and you shall say: Thus says the Lord God: O city that sheds blood in her midst, so that her time may come, and that makes inventions against herself, to defile herself! **read ›**

94 **Daniel 11:18** And he shall turn his face to the islands and capture many, and he shall make rulers cease from their taunts; but his own taunts shall return upon him. **read ›**

95 **Daniel 11:31** And seeds from him shall arise, and they shall profane the sanctuary of might, and remove the continual offering, and set up an abomination made desolate. **read ›**

96 **Hosea 8:2** They will cry out to me, "O God, we have known you." **read ›**

97 **Hosea 12:14** Ephraim provoked wrath and provoked anger, and his blood shall be poured out upon him, and the Lord will repay him for his taunts. (Septuagint Hosea 12:15 (Hosea 12:14 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

98 **Amos 3:9** Proclaim it to the regions among the Assyrians, and to the regions of Egypt, and say, "Gather yourselves on the mountain of Samaria, and see the many marvels in her midst, and the oppression that is in her." **read ›**

99 **Amos 3:14** For in the day when I avenge the ungodly deeds of Israel upon him, I will also take vengeance on the altars of Bethel; and the horns of the altar shall be broken off, and they shall fall to the ground. **read ›**

100 **Amos 5:14** Seek good and not evil, that you may live; and so the Lord God Almighty shall be with you, as you have said: **read ›**

101 **Habakkuk 3:5** Before his face a word will go, and it will go out into the plains; **read ›**

102 **Malachi 2:4** And you will know that I have sent this commandment to you, that my covenant might be with the Levites, says the Lord Almighty. **read ›**

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103 **1 Esdras 1:23** And the works of Josiah were upright before his Lord, with a heart full of godliness. **read ›**

104 **1 Esdras 8:94** as has been decided by you and by all who obey the law of the Lord. **read ›**

105 **Tobit 12:8** Prayer is good with fasting and alms and righteousness. A little with righteousness is better than much with unrighteousness. It is better to give alms than to lay up gold. **read ›**

106 **Wisdom of Solomon 2:22** and they did not know the mysteries of God, nor did they hope for the wages of holiness, nor discern the prize for blameless souls. **read ›**

107 **Wisdom of Solomon 3:9** Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will stay with him in love, for grace and mercy are for his chosen ones. **read ›**

108 **Wisdom of Solomon 3:14** And blessed is the eunuch who has done no lawless deed with his hand, nor devised evil things against the Lord; for to him will be given the choice grace of faith, and a more delightful lot in the temple of the Lord. **read ›**

109 **Wisdom of Solomon 4:16** The righteous man who has died will condemn the ungodly who are living, and youth quickly made perfect will condemn the many years of the unrighteous man's old age. **read ›**

110 **Wisdom of Solomon 5:14** For the hope of the ungodly is like dust carried by the wind, like fine frost driven away by a whirlwind; it is scattered like smoke before the wind, and passes away like the remembrance of a guest who stays a single day. **read ›**

111 **Wisdom of Solomon 15:17** But being mortal, he makes a dead thing with lawless hands; for he is better than the objects he worships, since he lived, but they never did. **read ›**

112 **Wisdom of Sirach 2:8** You who fear the Lord, trust in him, and your reward will by no means fail. **read ›**

113 **Wisdom of Sirach 2:13** Woe to the slack heart, for it does not trust; therefore it will not be sheltered. **read ›**

114 **Wisdom of Sirach 15:15** If you are willing, you will keep the commandments, and to act faithfully is of your own good will. **read ›**

115 **Wisdom of Sirach 16:12** As great as his mercy, so great also is his rebuke; he judges a man according to his works. **read ›**

116 **Wisdom of Sirach 16:14** He will make room for every act of mercy; each one will find according to his works. **read ›**

117 **Wisdom of Sirach 16:26** In the judgment of the Lord his works were from the beginning, and from their making he assigned them their portions. **read ›**

118 **Wisdom of Sirach 18:2** The Lord alone will be justified. **read ›**

119 **Wisdom of Sirach 18:20** Before judgment, examine yourself, and in the hour of visitation you will find atonement. **read ›**

120 **Wisdom of Sirach 32:5** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

121 **Wisdom of Sirach 32:19** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

122 **Wisdom of Sirach 35:16** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

123 **Wisdom of Sirach 35:23** In every work trust your own soul, for this too is the keeping of the commandments. **read ›**

124 **Wisdom of Sirach 35:24** He who believes the law pays attention to the commandments, and he who trusts in the Lord will not suffer loss. **read ›**

125 **Wisdom of Sirach 37:21** for grace was not given him from the Lord, because he was deprived of all wisdom. **read ›**

126 **Wisdom of Sirach 42:2** of the law of the Most High and of the covenant, and of judgment, to justify the ungodly; **read ›**

127 **Baruch 2:17** Open your eyes and see; for it is not the dead in Hades, whose spirit has been taken from their inward parts, who will give glory and justice to the Lord; **read ›**

128 **1 Maccabees 2:52** Was not Abraham found faithful in trial, and it was counted to him for righteousness? **read ›**

129 **2 Maccabees 1:2** May God do good to you, and may he remember his covenant with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, his faithful slaves. **read ›**

130 **2 Maccabees 9:20** If you and your children are well and your own affairs are as you wish, I give the greatest thanks to God, having my hope in heaven. **read ›**

131 **2 Maccabees 12:44** For if he had not expected that those who had fallen would rise again, it would have been needless and foolish to pray for the dead. **read ›**

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132 **3 Maccabees 3:5** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
133 **4 Maccabees 7:19** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
134 **4 Maccabees 15:3** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
135 **4 Maccabees 15:8** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
136 **4 Maccabees 16:22** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
137 **4 Maccabees 18:1** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
138 **1 Enoch 1:14** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
139 **1 Enoch 27:3** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
140 **1 Enoch 27:4** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
141 **1 Enoch 38:1** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
142 **1 Enoch 39:6** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
143 **1 Enoch 41:2** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
144 **1 Enoch 51:2** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
145 **1 Enoch 61:4** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
146 **1 Enoch 63:8** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
147 **1 Enoch 67:10** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
148 **1 Enoch 69:11** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
149 **1 Enoch 91:14** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
150 **1 Enoch 98:15** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
151 **1 Enoch 99:15** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
152 **1 Enoch 104:6** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**
153 **Matthew 16:27** For the Son of Man will come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and then he will give to everyone according to his deeds. **read ›**
154 **Luke 4:7** If you therefore will worship before me, it will all be yours.” **read ›**
155 **John 5:29** and will come out; those who have done good, to the resurrection of life; and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment. **read ›**
156 **John 14:15** If you love me, keep my commandments. **read ›**
157 **John 15:10** If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, even as I have kept my Father’s commandments and remain in his love. **read ›**
158 **Acts 3:11** As the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch that is called Solomon’s, greatly wondering. **read ›**
159 **Acts 5:23** “We found the prison shut and locked, and the guards standing before the doors, but when we opened them, we found no one inside!” **read ›**
160 **Acts 15:11** But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they are.” **read ›**
161 **Romans 2:6** who will repay each one according to his works: **read ›**
162 **Romans 3:11** there is none who understands; there is none who seeks God. **read ›**
163 **Romans 3:24** being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, **read ›**
164 **Romans 3:28** We maintain therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law. **read ›**
165 **Romans 4:2** For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not toward God. **read ›**
166 **Romans 4:5** But to him who does not work, but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness. **read ›**
167 **Romans 11:6** And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work. **read ›**
168 **2 Corinthians 5:10** For we must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive what is due for the things done through the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. **read ›**
169 **Galatians 2:16** yet knowing that a man is not justified by works of the law but through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, even we believed in Christ Jesus, so that we might be justified by the faithfulness of Christ and not by works of the law, because no flesh will be justified by works of the law. **read ›**

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170 **Ephesians 2:8** for by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, **read ›**

171 **Ephesians 2:9** not of works, that no one would boast. **read ›**

172 **Titus 2:11** For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, **read ›**

173 **Titus 3:5** not by works of righteousness which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy, he saved us through the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, **read ›**

174 **James 2:13** For judgment is without mercy to him who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment. **read ›**

175 **James 2:14** What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but has no works? Can that faith save him? **read ›**

176 **James 2:17** Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead in itself. **read ›**

177 **James 2:18** But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith by your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. **read ›**

178 **James 2:20** But do you want to know, O empty man, that faith apart from works is dead? **read ›**

179 **James 2:22** Do you see that faithfulness was working with his works, and by works faithfulness was made perfect? **read ›**

180 **James 2:24** You see then that by works a man is justified, and not only by faith. **read ›**

181 **James 2:26** For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, even so faith apart from works is dead. **read ›**

182 **1 John 3:23** This is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another, even as he commanded. **read ›**

183 **Jude 1:15** to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly among them concerning all the works of their ungodliness in which they have acted ungodly, and concerning all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” **read ›**

184 **Revelation 20:12** I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged according to their works from what was written in the books. **read ›**

185 **Revelation 20:13** The sea gave up the dead who were in it. Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them. They were judged, each one according to his works. **read ›**

ALSO LINKED BY THF TO THESE PASSAGES *209 verses, by reference*

Partly machine-linked: related to the passages, not always quoted in them. Each reference links to the verse in our audio Bible.

Genesis 9:18

Exodus 16:36 · 32:34

Leviticus 25:23

Deuteronomy 32:10 · 32:23

Joshua 12:1

1 Chronicles 29:15

Psalms 18:26

Ecclesiastes 12:5 · 12:6 · 12:7

Jeremiah 5:8

Ezekiel 1:28 · 37:1

Joel 2:12

Matthew 4:9 · 4:10 · 5:3 · 5:8 · 5:16 · 5:19 · 5:28 · 5:40 · 6:19 · 6:20 · 7:1 · 7:2 · 9:2 · 9:29 · 10:28 · 10:32 · 13:17 · 13:35 · 14:17 · 15:11 · 17:20 · 17:24 · 18:15 · 18:17 · 19:12 · 19:17 · 19:21 · 22:29 · 22:38 · 25:19 · 25:25 · 26:3 · 26:63 · 28:19

Mark 2:8 · 5:34 · 12:20 · 13:25

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Luke 1:52 · 3:4 · 7:1 · 7:11 · 7:16 · 7:20 · 7:21 · 7:25 · 7:26 · 7:28 · 7:36 · 7:37 · 10:18 · 10:19 · 10:21 · 12:5 · 14:11 · 17:7 · 18:27 · 19:15

John 1:3 · 1:5 · 1:12 · 1:17 · 1:18 · 2:3 · 3:36 · 4:22 · 4:24 · 5:16 · 5:28 · 6:40 · 6:63 · 7:17 · 8:39 · 8:44 · 9:1 · 10:16 · 10:27 · 11:42 · 13:17 · 13:19 · 13:24 · 14:19 · 19:34

Acts 1:3 · 1:9 · 2:24 · 16:3 · 17:3 · 21:23 · 24:15

Romans 1:3 · 1:17 · 2:14 · 2:15 · 3:20 · 4:3 · 4:11 · 8:5 · 9:5 · 12:10 · 13:12

1 Corinthians 2:9 · 3:12 · 4:5 · 4:13 · 5:11 · 7:25 · 7:35 · 8:1 · 9:20 · 9:22 · 12:11 · 12:12 · 12:13 · 13:8 · 13:11 · 14:20 · 14:32 · 15:50 · 15:52 · 15:53 · 15:56 · 15:58

2 Corinthians 3:6 · 3:7 · 5:1 · 5:2 · 5:4 · 5:5 · 5:6 · 5:8 · 5:17 · 6:5 · 7:1 · 10:5 · 11:2 · 11:13 · 11:14 · 11:27 · 12:4 · 12:7 · 12:9 · 13:1 · 13:2 · 13:10

Galatians 1:1 · 1:6 · 2:1 · 2:2 · 2:3 · 2:4 · 2:9 · 2:10 · 2:12 · 2:18 · 3:6 · 3:7 · 3:13 · 3:23 · 3:26 · 3:28 · 4:7 · 5:17 · 6:10

Ephesians 4:8 · 5:8 · 6:14

Philippians 1:4 · 1:5 · 3:20

Colossians 1:10

1 Timothy 1:18 · 3:16 · 4:16

2 Timothy 4:6

Hebrews 9:14 · 11:13 · 11:16 · 11:17 · 13:14

James 1:27 · 2:23

1 Peter 1:2 · 1:8 · 2:11 · 2:12 · 2:17 · 3:18 · 5:5

2 Peter 3:16

1 John 5:16

Jude 1:2 · 1:11

Searched: Ante-Nicene Fathers volumes 1–9 and the Bible, including the Septuagint.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

A THF member asked “What did the early Christians believe about faith and works?” on May 21, 2026. The Historic Faith answered it as a public study on November 9, 2026.

Library only. This study was written only from The Historic Faith’s library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed above, with a link to read it.

How it was made. Compiled by machine learning from The Historic Faith’s library of early-Christian writings and the Bible only. Every quotation was matched word for word against our stored text. Not yet reviewed by The Historic Faith.

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THE END OF THIS STUDY