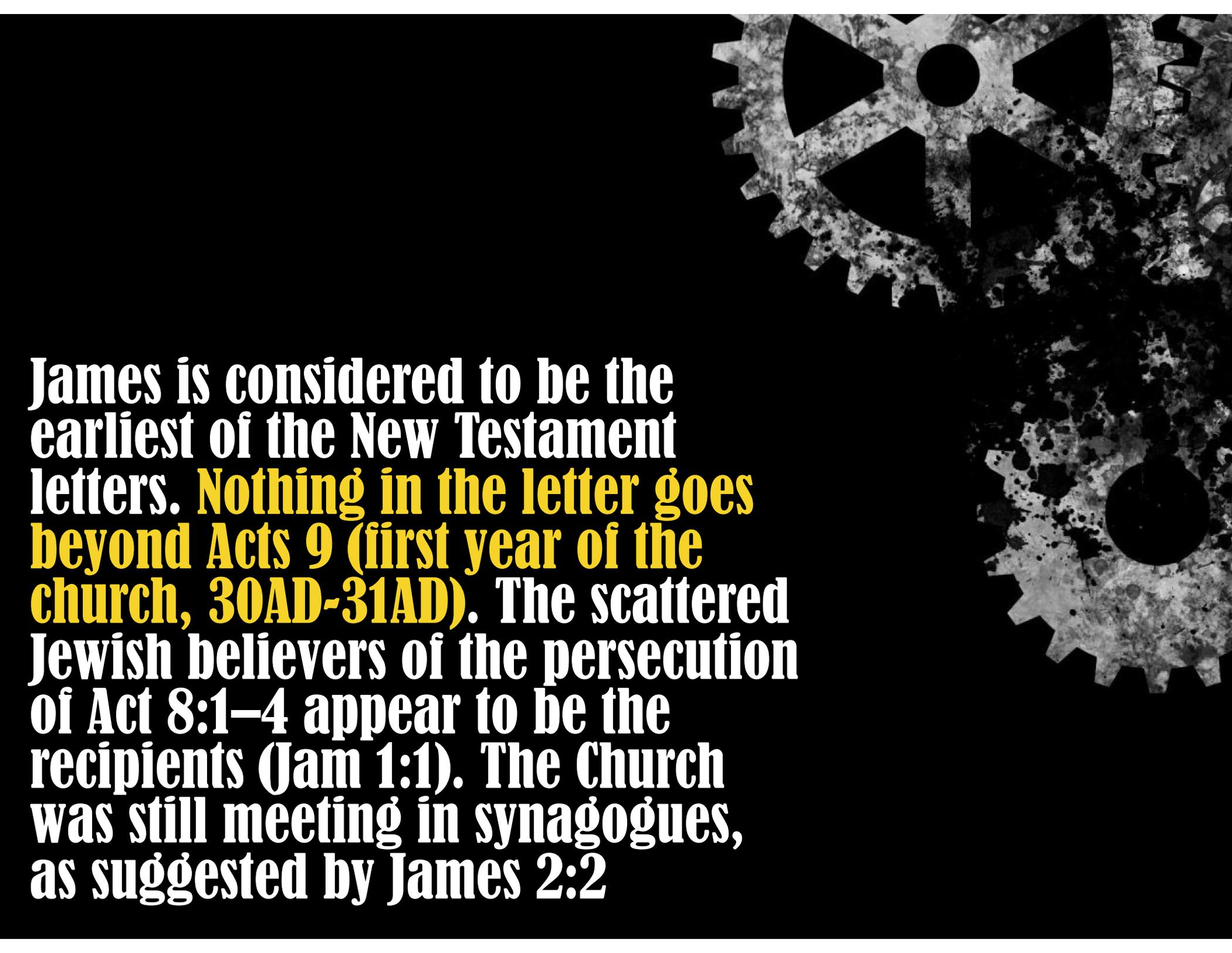
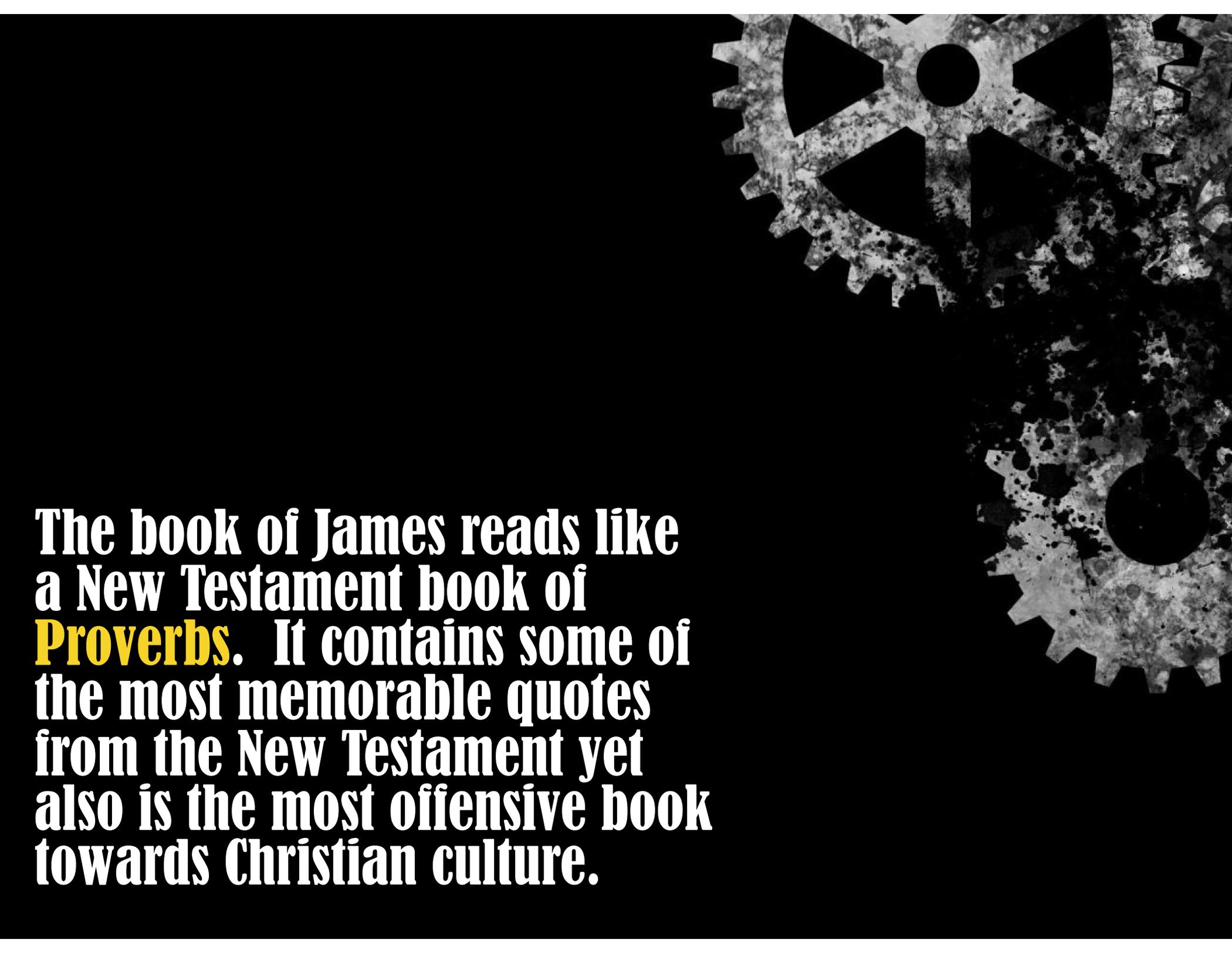


“St. James’s epistle is really an **epistle of straw**, compared to these others, for it has nothing of the nature of the gospel about it” **Martin Luther**



James is considered to be the earliest of the New Testament letters. **Nothing in the letter goes beyond Acts 9 (first year of the church, 30AD-31AD).** The scattered Jewish believers of the persecution of Act 8:1–4 appear to be the recipients (Jam 1:1). The Church was still meeting in synagogues, as suggested by James 2:2



The book of James reads like a New Testament book of **Proverbs**. It contains some of the most memorable quotes from the New Testament yet also is the most offensive book towards Christian culture.

Two Problems to Reconcile

James hatred of his brother Jesus

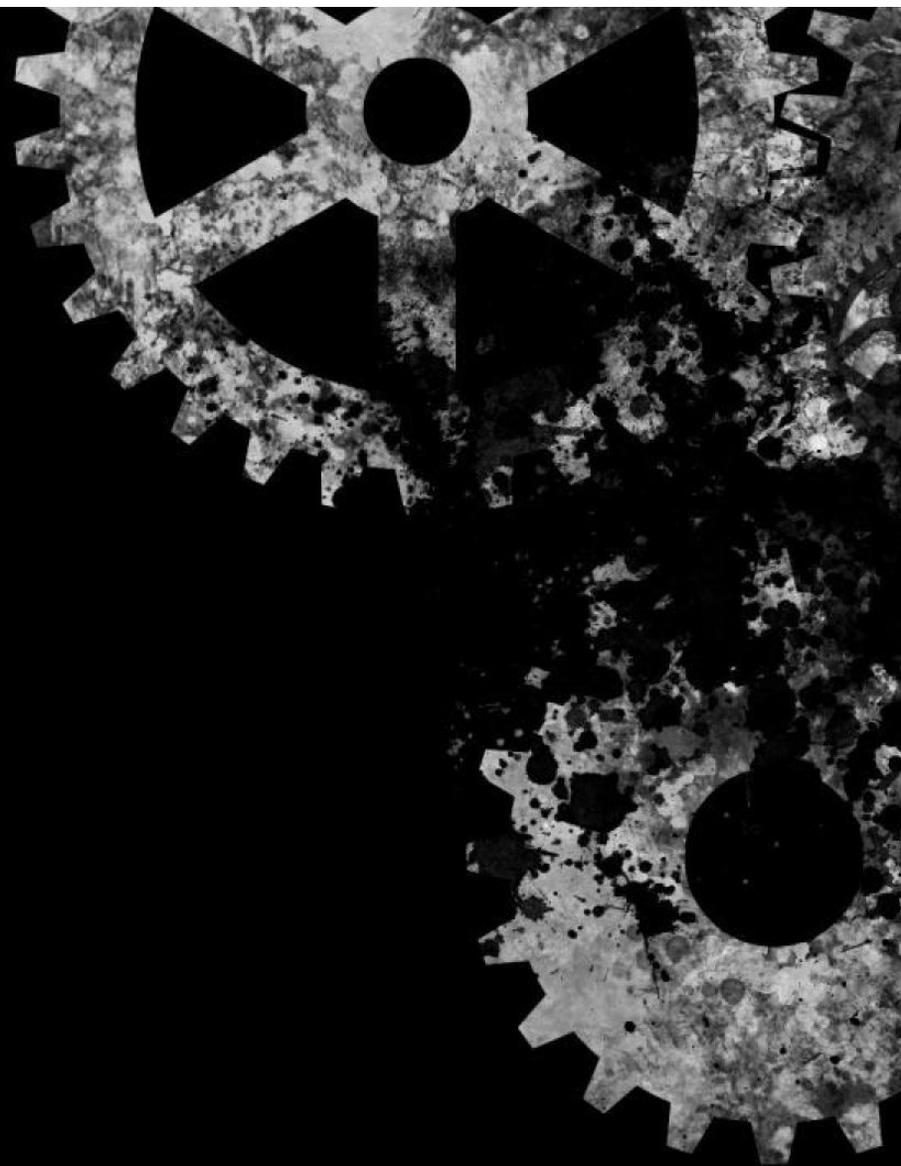
James conflict with Paul



Jesus and James

“Remarkably, James didn’t believe in his brother during Jesus’ earthly ministry, an embarrassing detail the Gospel writers wouldn’t have made up.” Chris Price

“For it to be remembered over many decades, James’ unbelief was probably rather staunch” Gary R. Habermas



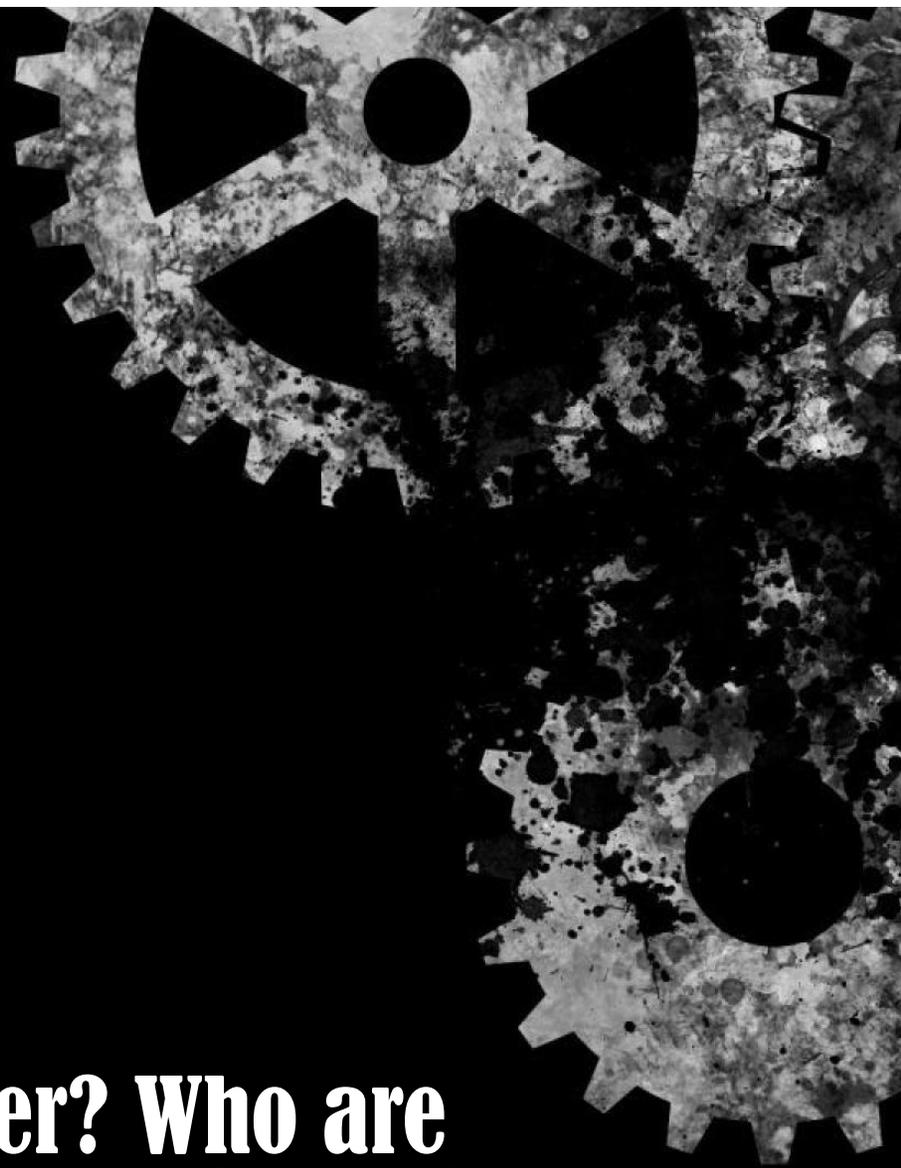
Jesus and James

As Jesus was speaking to the crowd, **his mother and brothers stood outside, asking to speak to him.**

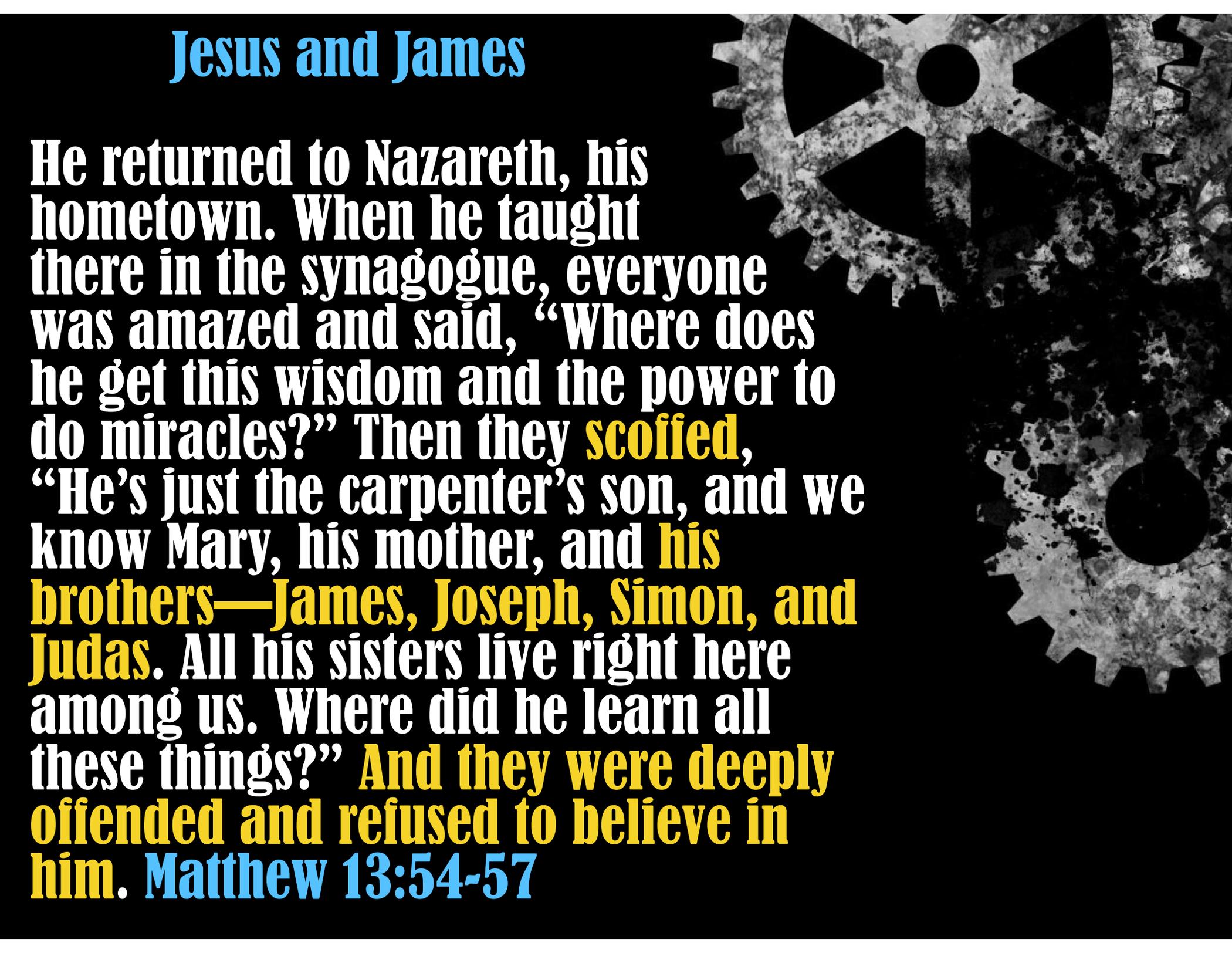
Someone told Jesus, “Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, and they want to speak to you.”

Matthew 12:46-47

Jesus asked, “Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?” Then he pointed to his disciples and said, “**Look, these are my mother and brothers.** Anyone who does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother!” **vs 48-50**



Jesus and James



He returned to Nazareth, his hometown. When he taught there in the synagogues, everyone was amazed and said, “Where does he get this wisdom and the power to do miracles?” Then they **scoffed**, “He’s just the carpenter’s son, and we know Mary, his mother, and **his brothers—James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas**. All his sisters live right here among us. Where did he learn all these things?” **And they were deeply offended and refused to believe in him.** **Matthew 13:54-57**

Jesus and James

When his family heard what was happening, they tried to take him away.

“He’s out of his mind,”
they said. Mark 3:21

and Jesus’ **brothers** said to him,
“Leave here and go to Judea,
where your followers can see
your miracles! You can’t become
famous if you hide like this! If
you can do such wonderful things,
show yourself to the world!”

For even his brothers didn’t
believe in him. John 7:3-5



Jesus and James

Standing near the cross
were **Jesus' mother,**
and his mother's sister,
Mary (the wife of
Clopas), and Mary
Magdalene. **John 19:25**



Jesus and James

He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve. After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. **Then he was seen by James** and later by all the apostles.

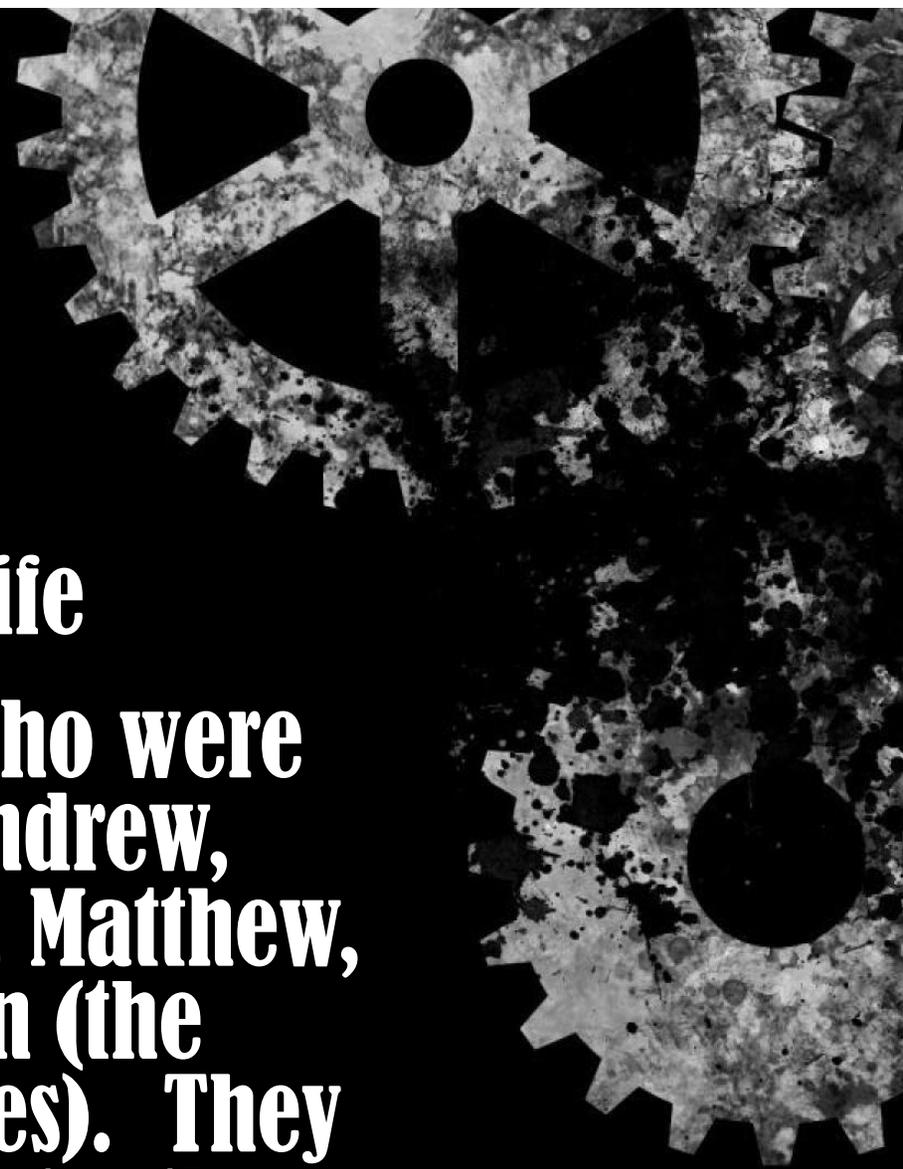
1 Corinthians 15:5-7



Jesus and James

We forget about the magnitude of the **resurrection**. This appearance to James changed the trajectory of his life

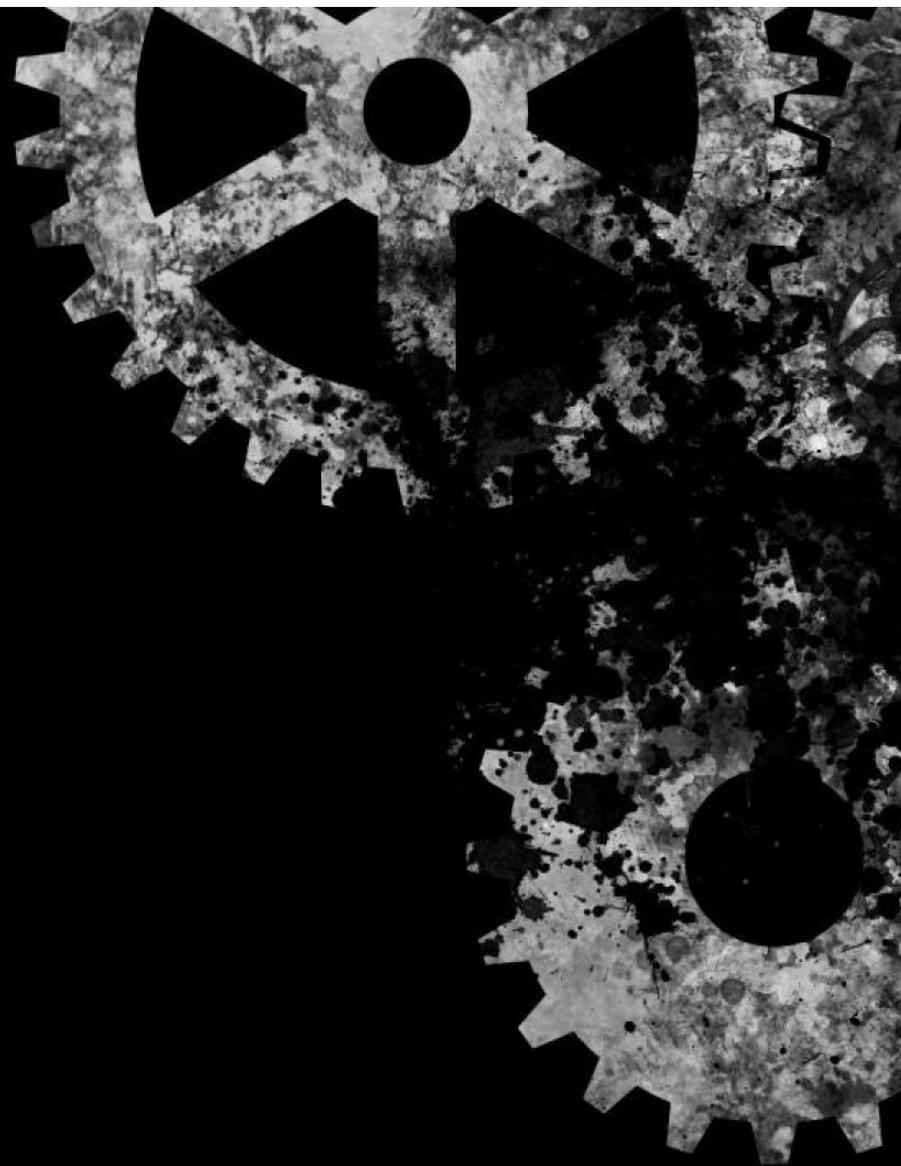
Here are the names of those who were present: Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James (son of Alphaeus), Simon (the zealot), and Judas (son of James). They all met together and were constantly united in prayer, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, several other women, **and the brothers of Jesus.** Acts 1:13b-14



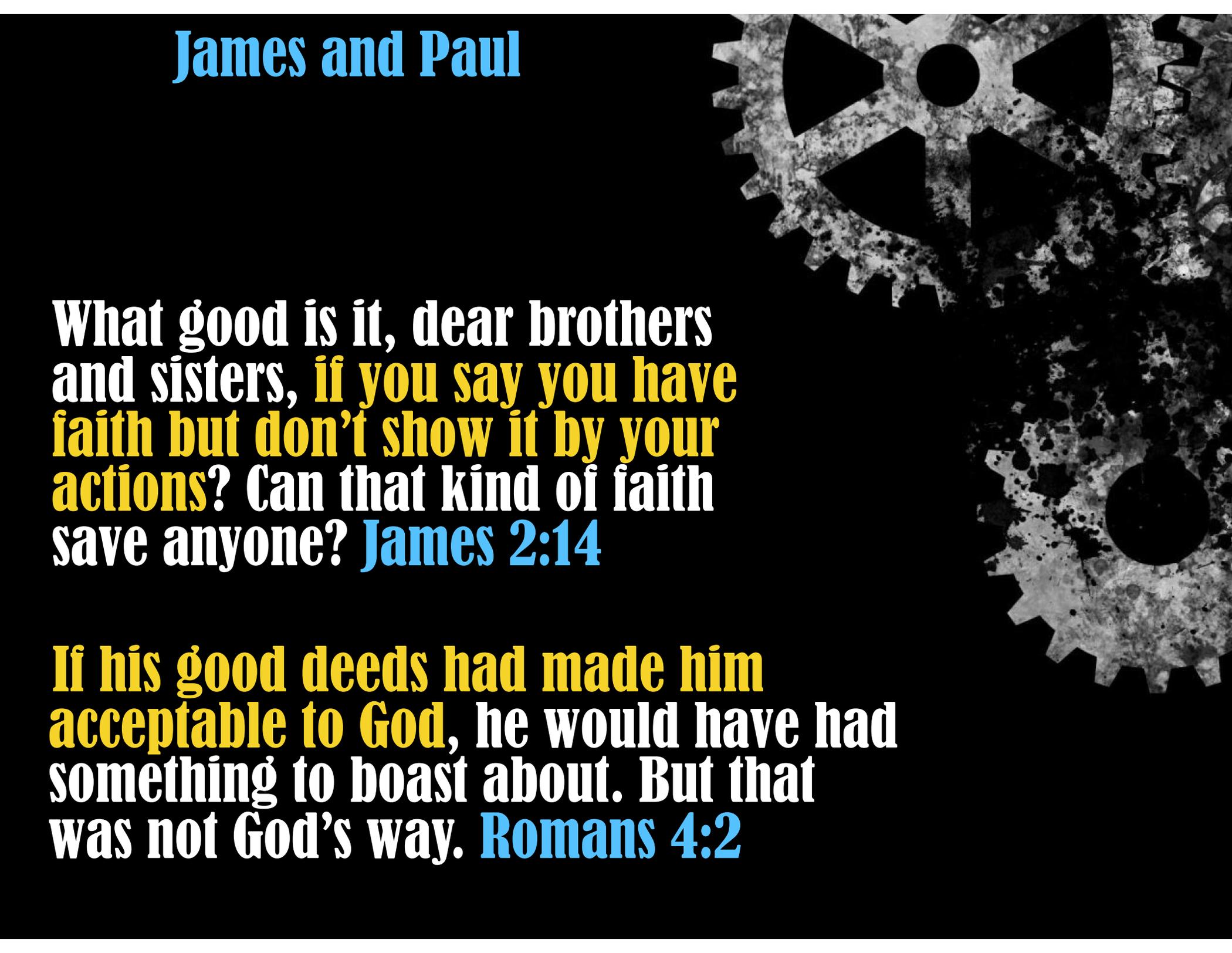
James and Paul

One of the thorniest textual problems any Christian can face is **the apparent contradiction between Paul and James**. Is justification by faith, as Paul claims, or by works, as James seems to say?

Greg Koukl



James and Paul



What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, **if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions?** Can that kind of faith save anyone? **James 2:14**

If his good deeds had made him acceptable to God, he would have had something to boast about. But that was not God's way. **Romans 4:2**

James and Paul

Then three years later I went to Jerusalem to get to know Peter, and I stayed with him for fifteen days. **The only other apostle I met at that time was James, the Lord's brother.** Galatians 1:18-19

In fact, **James**, Peter, and John, who were known as **pillars of the church**, recognized the gift God had given me, and they accepted Barnabas and me as their co-workers. They encouraged us to keep preaching to the Gentiles, while they continued their work with the Jews. Galatians 2:9

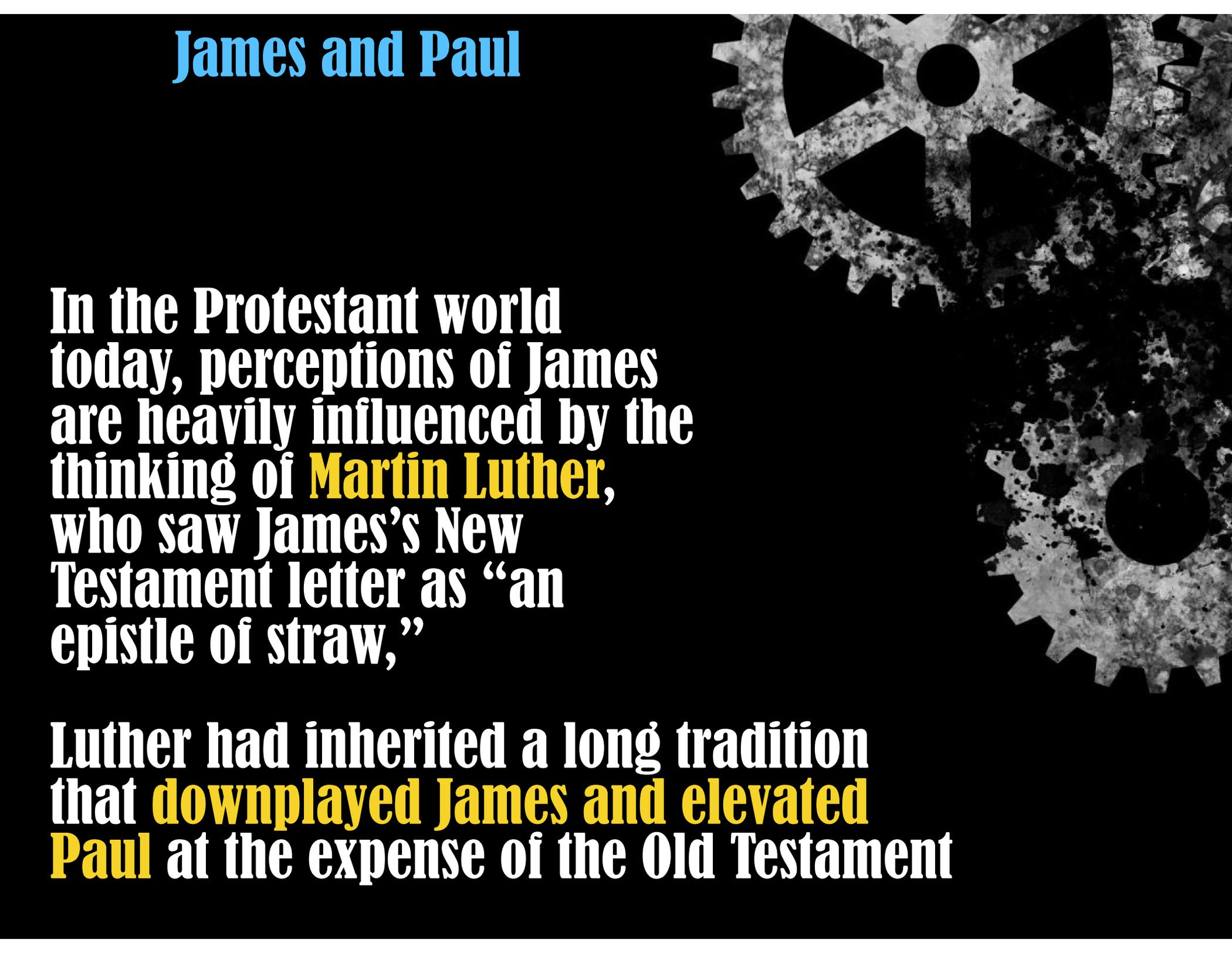


James and Paul

More recent careful study of James shows that his understanding of the relationship between faith and works is not in opposition to Paul's, but **simply focuses on a different aspect of the believer's life**. Both men's approaches, in fact, are firmly grounded in examples drawn from the Hebrew Scriptures. **Peter Nathan**



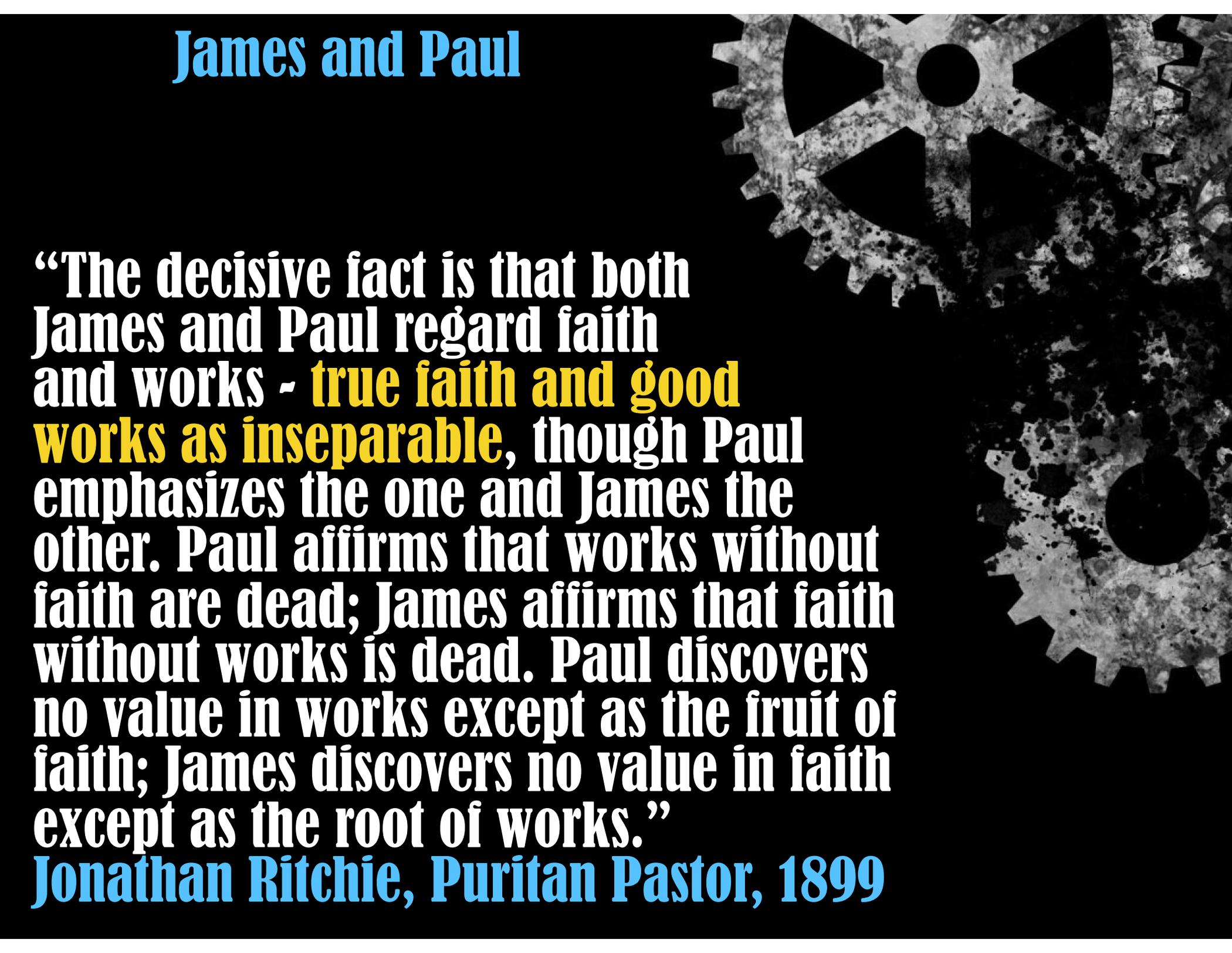
James and Paul



In the Protestant world today, perceptions of James are heavily influenced by the thinking of **Martin Luther**, who saw James's New Testament letter as "an epistle of straw,"

Luther had inherited a long tradition that **downplayed James and elevated Paul** at the expense of the Old Testament

James and Paul

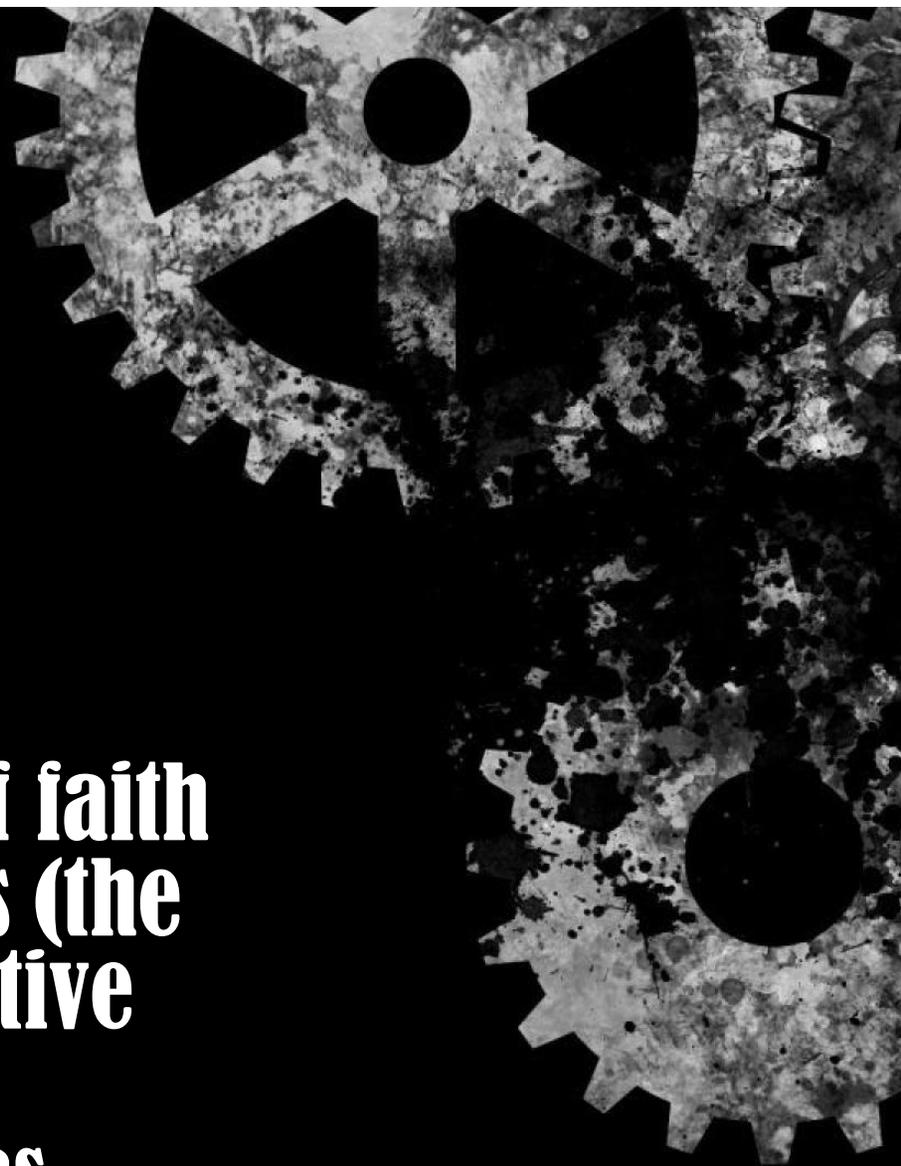


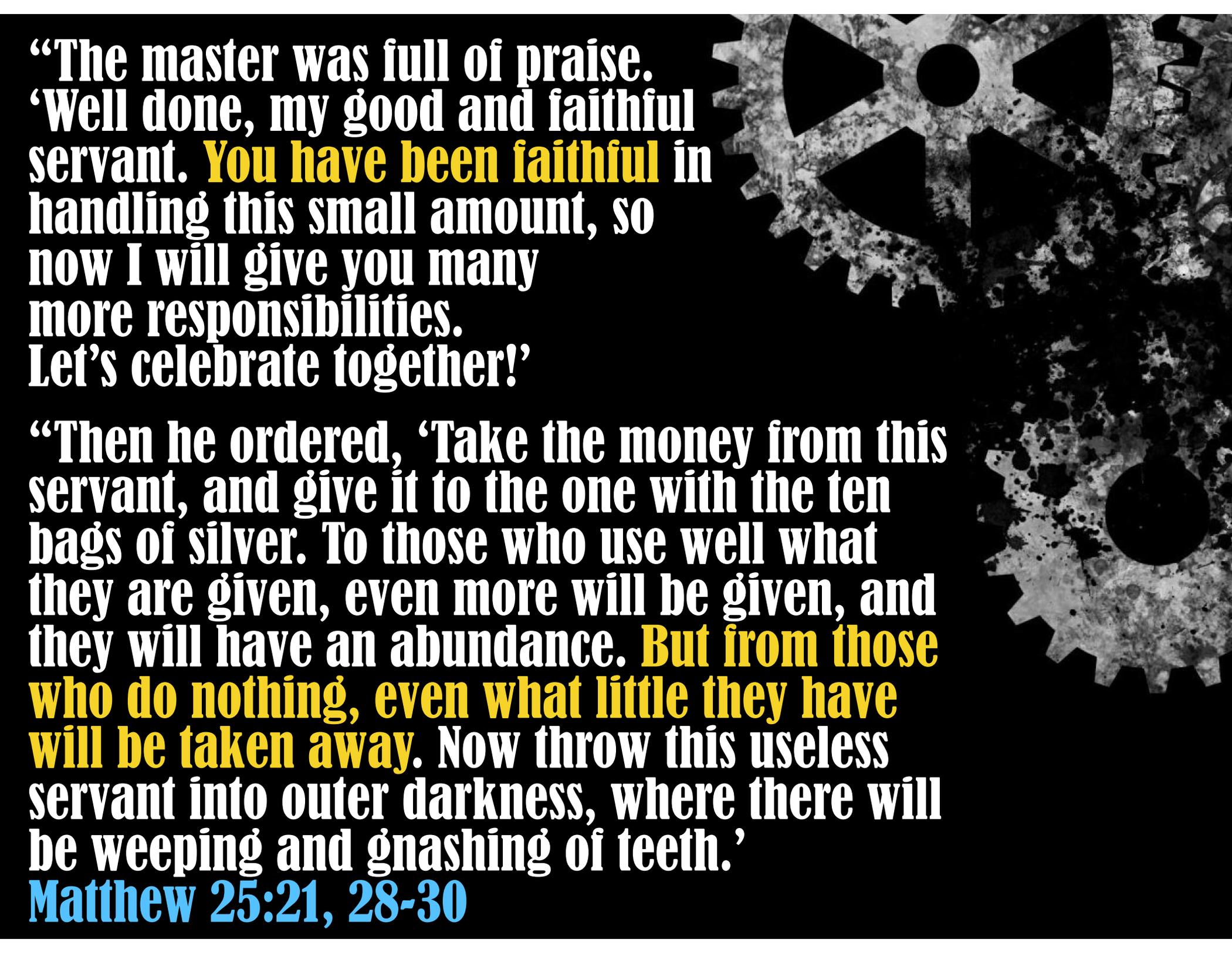
“The decisive fact is that both James and Paul regard faith and works - **true faith and good works as inseparable**, though Paul emphasizes the one and James the other. Paul affirms that works without faith are dead; James affirms that faith without works is dead. Paul discovers no value in works except as the fruit of faith; James discovers no value in faith except as the root of works.”

Jonathan Ritchie, Puritan Pastor, 1899

James and Paul

The perceived contradiction of faith and works stems from Luther's (the reformations) doctrinal corrective on salvation through grace (Romans vs James). Luther was quite correct about where salvation comes from, but not complete in where salvation goes from there.





“The master was full of praise.
‘Well done, my good and faithful
servant. **You have been faithful** in
handling this small amount, so
now I will give you many
more responsibilities.
Let’s celebrate together!’

“Then he ordered, ‘Take the money from this
servant, and give it to the one with the ten
bags of silver. To those who use well what
they are given, even more will be given, and
they will have an abundance. **But from those
who do nothing, even what little they have
will be taken away.** Now throw this useless
servant into outer darkness, where there will
be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’
Matthew 25:21, 28-30

James and Paul

Faith WORKS

Paul (like Luther) is overjoyed at the gift of salvation given to him through Jesus

James is also overjoyed with salvation but he also sees a responsibility with that gift

Both men see salvation through two aspects that don't contradict, Paul sees the beginning and James sees the journey



The Ephesians Solution



God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. **2:8**

Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. **vs 9**

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, **so we can do the good things** he planned for us long ago. **vs 10**

Faith and Behaviour

It was by faith that Abel **brought** a more acceptable offering **Hebrews 11:4**

It was by faith that Noah **built** a large boat **vs 7**

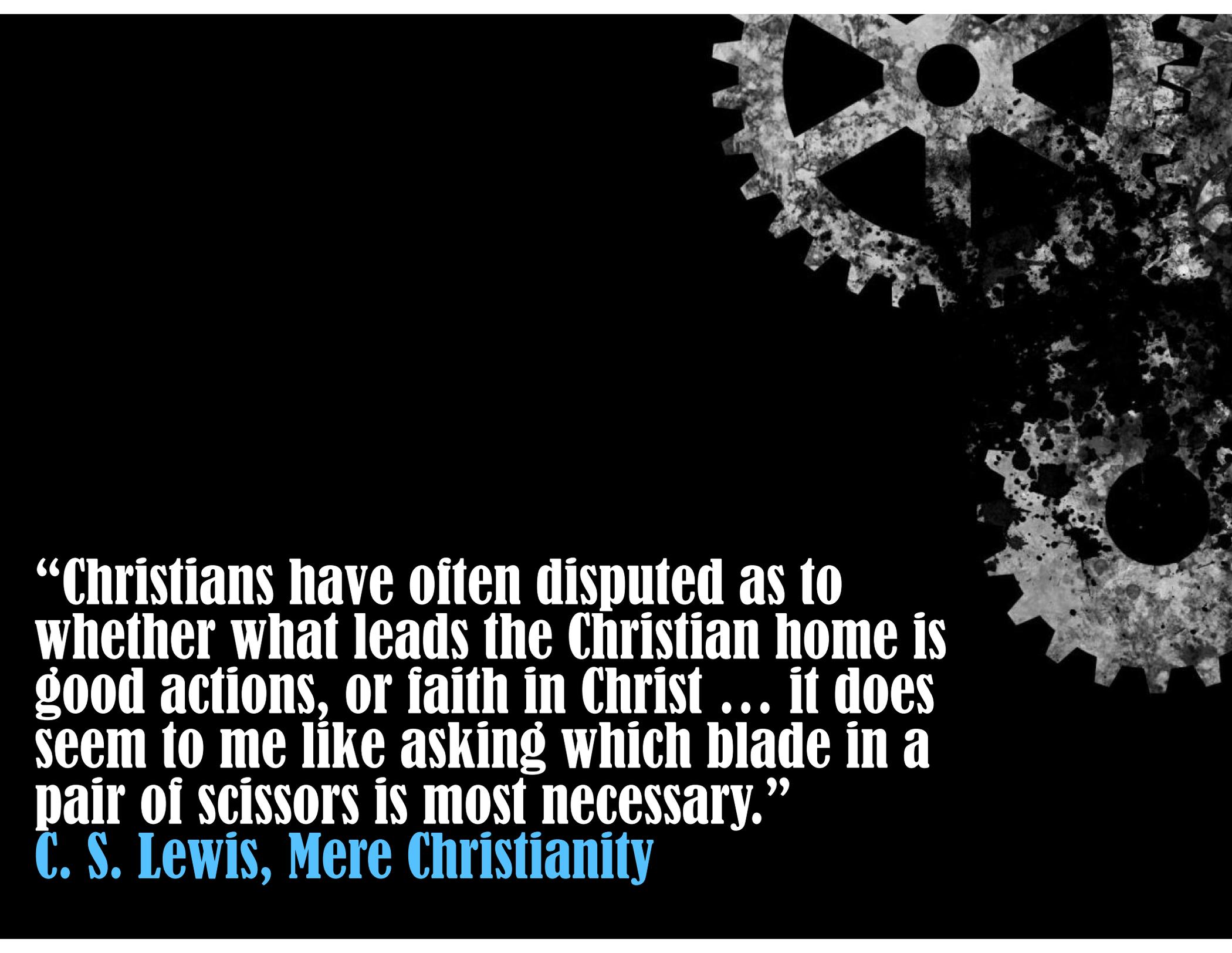
It was by faith that Abraham obeyed when God called him to **leave** home and go to another land **vs 8**

It was by faith that Abraham **offered** Isaac as a sacrifice **vs 17**

It was by faith that the people of Israel **marched** around Jericho **vs 30**

faith fuels action





“Christians have often disputed as to whether what leads the Christian home is good actions, or faith in Christ ... it does seem to me like asking which blade in a pair of scissors is most necessary.”

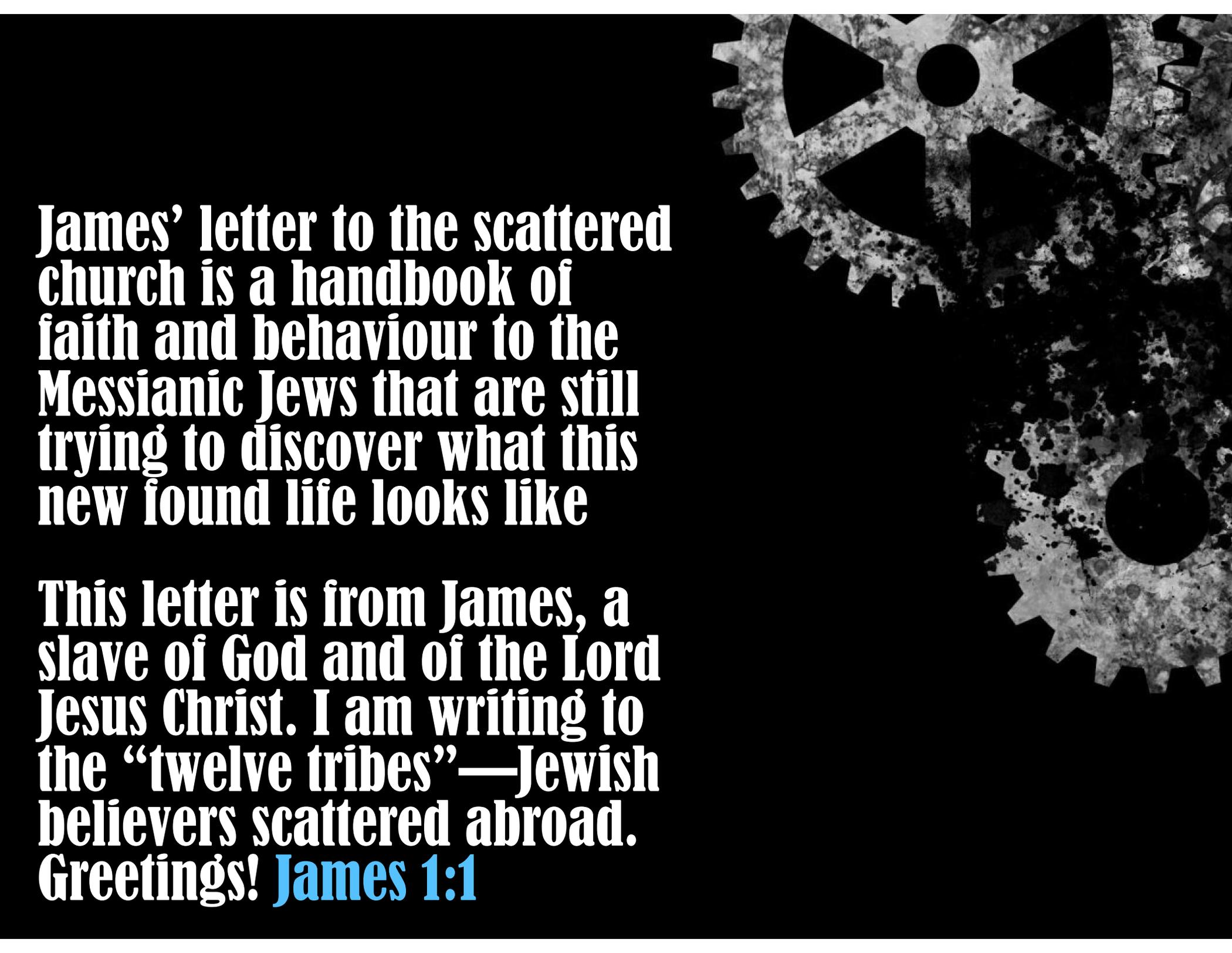
C. S. Lewis, Mere Christianity

Two Problems, Two Lessons



James lived with Jesus, but never understood who He was. **It is never too late to discover Jesus**

Paul and James were concerned with the different parts of the faith journey. Paul with the beginning and James after the subsequent decision. **Both are necessary for a balanced faith**



James' letter to the scattered church is a handbook of faith and behaviour to the Messianic Jews that are still trying to discover what this new found life looks like

**This letter is from James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. I am writing to the “twelve tribes”—Jewish believers scattered abroad.
Greetings! **James 1:1****