

Solid Rock Christian Church Manassas, Virginia

Bible Study - June 29, 2023

Prepared & Presented by: Pastor James G. Austin, Jr., Ph.D., D.Min.

Title: Soteriology - The Doctrine of Salvation - Part II

I. Introduction

A. As we continue this series on the doctrine of salvation, for salvation to be a reality in anyone's life, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, His finished work at Calvary, and belief in Him having been raised from the dead, are essential.

B. We will look very closely at what the Scripture has to say to us about faith and my prayer is that for those who are currently not saved, your life will be positively impacted by the truth of the Gospel presented in this lesson. Additionally, for those of you who have already received the wonderful gift of salvation, my prayer is that your faith and walk with the Lord will be strengthened.

II. Definition of Biblical Faith

A. Faith is basically a trust or confidence in someone or something. Scripturally, faith is a childlike trust in God which accepts the record God has given to us of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. 11:1)

1. Faith has a sound basis.

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:17)

- a. The faith of a Christian is not foolish nor a blind faith. Our faith is based on substance, on the evidence, on the eternal Word of God.

Point: A Christian trusts his eternal destiny to **One** he has never seen. Now that is faith!

2. Faith is determined by its object.

- a. Often a new Christian is concerned that perhaps their faith was not strong enough to obtain genuine salvation.
- b. The new Christian may doubt his or her salvation because of an improper understanding of saving faith.

Points:

- 1) It is not the quality of the believer's faith that is important; it is the quality of the object of their faith.
- 2) Faith in a dead leader is weak faith. Faith in an idol's power is weak faith.
- 3) The Lord Jesus Christ says that faith as a grain of mustard seed can move mountains.
 - c. Our faith is great because the **object of our faith is great, the Lord Jesus Christ.**

3. Faith Results in Work

- a. Although faith does not include works, it should result in good works.
- b. A person who is genuinely saved should live differently than they did before salvation. This is the stress of

James 2:21-26. On the surface, this passage seems to conflict with Romans 4:1-4; so, listen carefully.

- c. Paul says Abraham was justified by faith, while James says Abraham was justified by works. In reality, there is no contradiction.
- d. Paul and James are discussing two different aspects of faith. Paul is viewing faith from God's perspective; James is viewing faith from man's perspective.
- e. James uses phrases such as "seeth thou" (James 2:22) and "ye see" (James 2:24) to indicate that true faith will be seen by others only when it results in good works.

An example to illustrate the above truths:

A Christian is sitting in a restaurant to eat his evening meal. Before eating, he bows his head and thanks the Lord for his meal. Does the Lord conclude that this man is a Christian because of his action? Of course not. The Lord knows this man's heart and that as a child this man accepted by faith God's offer of salvation.

But what about the other people in the restaurant who see this man pray? They cannot see his heart. They do not know that as a child this man accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior. They can see only the outward expression of his inward faith. As they see him pray, they might conclude that his "works" indicate that he is a Christian.

Faith before God should result in works before men.

4. Faith for Salvation must be exclusive of works.

"For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." (Rom. 4:2-3)

- a. Works cannot be a part of salvation or else they would nullify grace.
- b. Every false religion and cult in the world teaches that man must do something in order to inherit eternal life.
- c. The Hindu will lay down on a bed of nails, hoping it will aid his chances of heaven.
- d. In Mexico City, a sincere individual will crawl three miles on his knees, pushing a vase of inexpensive flowers before him to better his chances of eternal bliss.
- e. Before Martin Luther was saved, he believed that crawling up a set of steps in Rome would earn him heaven.

Point: The Bible teaches that salvation is by grace (a free gift); and this gift (grace) is obtainable only by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

- f. Other groups may try to add works to salvation after faith. The church in Galatia had this problem. After Paul left, some began teaching that faith was only the first step in the salvation process. Paul wrote his epistle to the Galatians to correct this error.

"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you??

This only would I learn of you. Received ye the Spirit by works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" (Gal. 3:1-3)

- g. The problem within the church at Galatia is commonly called **legalism**. Legalism is adding anything to faith as a means of obtaining grace.

Points:

- 1) Legalism "frustrates" or nullifies, faith.
- 2) Neither "works-salvation" nor "faith-plus-works salvation" is Scriptural.

Salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone!

It is once again interactive time. Please complete the passages that follow by filling in the blank spaces. Each passage has been taken from the King James Version (KJV) of the Holy Bible.

"Therefore we _____ that a man is _____ by _____ without the _____ of the law.

[Romans 3:28]

"For by _____ are ye _____ through _____; and that not of _____: it is the _____ of God: not of _____, least any man should _____."

[Ephesians 2:8-9]

"I _____ that ye are so soon _____ from him that call you into the _____ of Christ unto another _____."

[Galatians 1:6]

"I do not _____ the _____ of God: for if _____ come by the _____, then Christ is _____ in _____."

[Galatians 2:21]

"For unto us was the _____ preached, as well as unto them: but the _____ preached did not _____ them, not being _____ with _____ in them that _____ it."

[Hebrews 4:2]

"But _____ it is _____ to please him: for he that _____ to God must _____ that he is, and that he is a _____ of them that _____ seek him."

[Hebrews 11:6]

May the Lord continue to bless and keep you,

Pastor Austin