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Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

--- Jesus

Saving Faith



By the late C. D. Cole

All is not gold that glitters; all is not silver that shines; every cow that moos does not fill the pail; and every person who professes faith is not saved. When we speak of saving faith the implication is that there is a faith that does not save. We preach salvation by faith without any works of human merit and in that, we are right. "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Rom. 3:28); "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5); "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9).

It is the uniform teaching of the scriptures that a man is saved by faith only. If the sinner does anything beyond faith for salvation, he frustrates the grace of God.

However, we have to reckon with counterfeits and substitutes in religion. Satan is the master counterfeiter. If God has a son, the Lord Jesus Christ, then Satan has a son also who is called the son of perdition. If God has His ministers, then Satan has his ministers who transform themselves into ministers of righteousness. If God has a gospel, then Satan has his gospel which Paul calls another gospel and which is not a gospel. If Christ has His church, then Satan has his synagogue. If there is a faith called the faith of God's elect, then Satan counterfeits this faith. "But we are not

of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul" (Heb. 10:39). Counterfeit money often passes through many hands without being detected and many counterfeit Christians pass as true believers. It appears that Judas was not detected as a false professor by the other disciples. No finger of suspicion was pointed at him when Christ predicted that one of them would betray him. This is a challenge to every professor to make his calling and election sure.

SOME SUBSTITUTES FOR SAVING FAITH

1. There is what might be termed historical or theoretical faith. This is a mere assent of the mind to revealed truth. It is to believe that Jesus is the Christ, just as one might believe that Washington was the first president of the United States of America. This is without the emotional and devotional element. It is lacking in love and trust.
2. There may be a natural and temporary faith. This kind finds illustration in the parable of the sower. The stony ground hearer received the word at once with joy, but not having the root of the matter in him, he endured only for a while and under testing lost interest in what he had professed. Everything was on the surface and, therefore, hasty and unreal. This is nothing more than fleshly emotion. It was not of God, therefore, not abounding. In a conversion experience, the word does not at first

make glad. The Holy Spirit drives the sword of truth through the bowels of self-esteem and the sinner feels bad. It is the Spirit's way to expose the sinner to himself before He reveals to him Christ as Saviour. It is the self-conscious sinner who looks to Christ for salvation.

3. There is what the scriptures call vain faith. Vain faith is to have faith in the wrong object-- in someone or something that cannot save. In arguing the necessity of Christ's resurrection, Paul says, "that if Christ be not raised your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Faith in a dead Christ would be worthless. This makes the object of faith of supreme importance. Strong faith in the wrong object would be vain faith, while weak faith in Christ, the mighty Saviour, is saving faith. In Isaiah 44:20 it says, "He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" The strange conduct of the heathen is explained thus: "A deceived heart has turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" The spiritual insanity of the human race is seen in the things people trust in for salvation. Only those taught of God trust in Jesus Christ. "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:45).
4. Feelings may be substituted for saving faith. Much preaching is calculated to produce feeling rather than faith. The true order in an experience of grace is: (a) fact, (b) faith, (c) feelings. We are not saved by our feelings, but if we truly trust Christ for salvation, we will have a sense of peace in our souls and a feeling of safety as we ponder what the scriptures say about the power of His blood to save.

THE NATURE OF SAVING FAITH OR WHAT SAVING FAITH IS

1. Saving faith is a compound of belief and trust. It is the belief in God's testimony about His Son, and trust in Christ as Saviour. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live" (John 5:24). "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of His Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar: because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to

us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (John 5:9-12).

2. Saving faith is produced by God in the human heart. It is a fruit of the Spirit and evidence of the new birth. "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12,13). "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10).
3. Saving faith will be manifested in good works. We are saved by faith alone but not by a faith that is alone, for faith that has no works is dead.

SOME METAPHORS OF SAVING FAITH

1. Faith is committing the soul to Christ. "For I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." Paul had deposited his soul with Christ for eternal safekeeping with the assurance that it would be safely kept.
2. Saving faith is coming to Christ. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37).
3. Saving faith is receiving Christ. "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name" (John 1:12). Faith is the empty hand receiving Christ as the one mighty to save. Faith is receiving not giving. The sinner has nothing to give for salvation. "All that I had of my very own to contribute to my salvation was my sin from which I needed to be saved." "Just as I am without one plea, but that thy blood was shed for me. Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to thy cross I cling."
4. Faith is feeding on Christ. In His great discourse on the bread of life, Christ used the words believing, coming and eating interchangeably. Believing on Christ is the same as coming to Him and both are the same as eating His flesh and drinking His blood. This eating and drinking is not carnally done, but is a figure of appropriating His death for salvation. We feed upon Christ by trusting Him. There is nothing

that can be put into our stomachs that can save us. We have Christ in our hearts by faith.

5. Faith is calling upon Christ. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. 10:13). Those who will not call upon Christ in this day of salvation will call for the rocks and mountains to fall upon them in the day of judgment.

An illustration: A woman who was interested in the salvation of her doctor was continually urging him to believe on Christ. One day he said to her, "Tell me what you believe and how you believe?" She answered: "I believe God was satisfied with what Christ did for my salvation that is what I believe and I am satisfied with it and that is how I believe."



A DOLLAR I GAVE TO GOD



Three thousand for my brand new car;
Five thousand for a piece of sod.
Ten thousand I paid to begin a house;
A dollar I gave to God.

A tidy sum to entertain my friends in
pointless chatter.
And when the world goes crazy mad,
I ask, Lord, what's the matter?
A dollar I gave to God.

Yet there is one big question,
For the answer I still search:
With things so bad in this old world,
What's holding back my church?

—Unknown

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