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WHY IS SALVATION BY FAITH?

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INTRODUCTION: With God's blessing we may make this a profitable study. The Bible not only tells us that salvation is by faith but also tells us why it is by faith.

Do I need to establish with you the truth that salvation is by faith? Then you may consider some Scriptures:

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God," Ephesians 2:8.

"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law," Romans 3:28.

"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness," Romans 4:5.

"And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses," Acts 13:39.

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," Romans 5:1.

What is faith? Belief and trust. *"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God,"* Romans 10:17. It is believing what God says and acting upon it.

1. Salvation is by faith on the part of the sinner that it might be by the grace of God. *"Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace,"* Romans 4:16. Grace is the source and faith is the way of salvation. Suppose works were the way to be saved, then salvation would not be by grace, but by debt. If salvation were a reward for works, then the reward would not be a matter of grace, but of debt. Salvation by works would be God paying off, God meeting an obligation, and could not be a matter of grace. The worker does not believe his paycheck is a matter of grace on the part of the company, but a matter of debt. He

considers the company is in debt to him for his work, and the paycheck is the company meeting its obligation. Salvation by faith means salvation by grace; salvation by works would be salvation by debt.

Now the Bible consistently teaches that salvation is by grace. And the source of it is grace only. *"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace,"* Ephesians 1:7. *"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,"* Romans 3:24. *"That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life,"* Titus 3:7. *"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,"* Titus 2:11.

2. Salvation is by faith so that the motive of service to God might be love. *"For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love,"* Galatians 5:6. Faith does not strip a man of works, saving faith is a faith that works, but it works by love. Suppose salvation is by works. Suppose salvation is something you work for and earn. Would the paycheck demand any love on your part. Why, we hardly say thank you when we get paid for what we do. But a gift calls for thanks, and a big gift calls for a lot of love. God's love is a gracious love; it is love for the unworthy, love for sinners, a stooping and pitying love. God's love is a costly love, *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life,"* John 3:16. This love calls for our love. *"We love him, because he first loved us,"* I John 4:19. If salvation were by works, something we earned, it would not be an expression of love on the part of God, and apart from his love for us

there would be nothing to cause us to love him.

3. Salvation is by faith that Jesus Christ might be the Saviour. Salvation by works would be self-salvation; every man would be his own Saviour. He would save himself by what he does and Jesus Christ would not be in the picture as Saviour. He might be an example, but he would not be a Saviour. A Saviour is one who saves, and if a man is saved by his own works he would be his own Saviour.

The Scriptures uniformly teach that Jesus Christ is the Saviour. They tell us what Christ did to save sinners. *"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed,"* I Peter 1:24. *"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree,"* Galatians 3:13. *"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him,"* II Corinthians 5:21

The Scriptures uniformly point the sinner to Christ for salvation. *"And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life,"* John 5:40. *"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. *"And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house,"* Acts 16:31

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GOD'S WORD TO THE LOST:

ALL IN SIN

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"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one," Romans 3:10-12.

1. By nature - born in sin. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me," Psalms 51:5. "Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others," Ephesians 2:3.

2. By choice. "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil," John 3:19. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all," Isaiah 53:6.

3. By practice. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," Romans 3:23.

CONSEQUENCES SURE:

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord," Romans 6:23.

1. Condemned already. "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God," John 3:18. "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them," Galatians 3:10.

2. Under wrath. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him," John 3:36. "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,"

Romans 2:5.

3. Death. "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched," Mark 9:48. "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death," James 1:15. "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power," II Thessalonians 1:9.

CANNOT SAVE SELF:

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned," Mark 16:16.

1. Not by works. "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," Ephesians 2:8-9.

2. Not by baptism. "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission," Hebrews 9:22.

3. Not by conduct. "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified," Galatians 2:16. "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain," Galatians 2:21. "And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses," Acts 13:39.

SALVATION FOR ALL:

"To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins," Acts 10:43.

1. God's desire. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance," II Peter 3:9.

2. God's proof. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved

us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins," I John 4:10. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," Romans 5:8.

3. God's plan. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," Acts 4:12.

COME AS YOU ARE:

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool," Isaiah 1:18.

1. Saves sinners. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief," I Timothy 1:15.

2. Ungodly. "But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick," Matthew 8:12.

3. Uttermost. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them," Hebrews 7:25. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy," Jude 24.

CONDITIONS SIMPLE:

Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," Acts 20:21.

1. Turn from sin. "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish," Luke 13:3.

2. Turn to Jesus. "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.

3. Trust fully. "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: 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," II Timothy 1:12.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life," John 6:47.

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DELAY IS DANGEROUS:

"But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" Luke

1. Today. *"(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation,)"* II Corinthians 6:2.

2. Cut down. *"Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?"* Luke 13:7.

3. No escape. *"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him,"* Hebrews 2:3. *"He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy,"* Proverbs 29:1.

EVIDENCES OF SALVATION:

"If ye love me, keep my commandments," John 14:15.

1. Confess Jesus. *"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven,"* Matthew 10:32. *"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved,"* Romans 10:9.

2. Obey Jesus. *"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you,"* John 15:14. *"He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him,"* I John 2:4.

3. Follow Jesus. *"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me,"* Matthew 16:24. *"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"* Luke 6:46.

not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him," John 3:36.

7. Salvation by faith gives meaning to the ordinances: baptism and the Lord's supper. The ordinances do not save, but they tell us in symbol what does save. And they also teach the way of salvation to be by faith. Both ordinances point to the Lord Jesus Christ in death and resurrection; they give us the gospel in symbol or picture. The Gospel is defined: *"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures,"* I Corinthians 15:3-4. Baptism is not mentioned, neither is the Lord's supper. The Gospel is made up of three facts: the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. Baptism and the Lord's supper bear witness to these three facts. Baptism symbolizes his burial and resurrection and the Lord's supper shows his death.

Now it is by faith we appropriate the benefits of his death, burial and resurrection. We have faith that his death and resurrection saves us. In the ordinances we profess outwardly and symbolically our faith in Him.

By faith we feed upon his flesh and blood, and in the Lord's supper we say symbolically that we are trusting Him. We believe we die to the law by the body of Christ; His death on the cross was our death to the law, and in baptism we are symbolizing our faith in Him. Baptism is a burial and a burial is for dead people, and believing we are dead to the law by his death, we symbolize our death to the law and sin in baptism.

If salvation is not by faith, the ordinances become mere magical formulas in the minds of the people.

4. Salvation is by faith that the law of God might be established. *"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law,"* Romans 3:31. The law of God can never be destroyed, that is, his moral law, which is summed up in two commandments, namely, to love God supremely and our neighbour as ourselves. The law of God calls for perfection, for perfect righteousness. There could be no salvation by works without doing damage to the law. If the law is established, the penalty of violating it must be borne. If the sinner has to bear the penalty, the law is established, but the sinner is not saved. If the law is established, and the sinner is saved, the Saviour will have to bear the penalty. And so faith in Christ who bore our sins establishes the law. People who believe in salvation by works do not believe in establishing the law, or else they believe the sinner keeps the law perfectly.

5. Salvation is by faith so there can be no human boasting. *"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,"* Ephesians 2:8-9. Folks who get to heaven will not boast in themselves; they will glory in nothing but the cross of Christ. If it were possible for a sinner to be saved by works in whole or in part, he would have ground for boasting. He could and would say, "See what I have done; look at this glorious heaven I have earned."

6. Salvation by faith is the only way to have a present tense salvation. If salvation were something you worked for you could not get it until you life's work is over. People who believe in salvation by works are consistent at this point. They say nobody is really saved until after he dies. And this would be true if salvation were by works. But the Scriptures teach a present tense as well as a future tense salvation. *"For by grace are ye saved,"* Ephesians 2:8. Greek: For by grace have ye been saved. *"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall*