

Salvation

(Part 1)

Last week we talked about why we need to have a bible study. We discussed Jesus's message to mankind and His command for us to take it to all the world. Last week we focused on His command to us that we carry His message. This week we are going to focus on the message. Following is one of the points from last week's lesson:

Jesus came to bring us the message of salvation that we might have eternal life.

What is "Salvation" and how do we get it?

This week we are going to look at several verses that explain our need for salvation and how to obtain it.

Why do we need salvation?

Romans 3:10-18 (NIV)

As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit." "The poison of vipers is on their lips." "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." "Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and misery mark their ways, and the way of peace they do not know." "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

Romans 3:23 (KJV)

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

Romans 6:23 (NIV)

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Isaiah 64:6 (KJV)

But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

We need salvation because even at our best we fall short of God's perfect standard.

How do we get salvation?

Romans 5:8 (NIV)

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 10:9 (NIV)

If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

John 3:16 (KJV)

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.

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NASB)

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Hebrews 11:6 (NIV)

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

These verses show us that salvation comes through a faith in Jesus. The theme is the same all through the Bible. Since the fall in the Garden of Eden man has been in a sinful state. There was nothing we could do to fix that. In the Old Testament there were sacrifices for the sins of the people. But these sacrifices could not make things right between man and God. John 3:16 sums up God's solution to the problem. God loved us so much that He sent His son to be a sacrifice for our sins. In other words Jesus when He died on the cross paid the price for every person who had ever been born or who would ever be born.

Jesus paid in full the penalty for our sins when He died on the cross.

To get the gift of salvation we must believe in him and accept the gift that he offers.

What else do we have to do to be saved?

James 2:26 (NIV)

As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

Matthew 18:3

and he said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

James 2:18-23 (NASB)

You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS," and he was called the friend of God.

Matthew 7:21-23 (KJV)

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Luke 14:27-30 (NASB)

"Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. "For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? "Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him, saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.'

We look at these verses and we *seem* to see an entirely different gospel. This gospel says that our faith without works is dead. It says unless we become as little children we will never enter the kingdom of heaven. It says even the demons believe. Then we read a verse that seems to show people who followed Jesus and did His works being cast out. Then finally Jesus himself tells us to count the cost of following him otherwise we will be made fun of. The truth of the matter is this is still the same Gospel. One way to look at it is to think of it as a coin. There are two sides to a coin. There is a "head" side and a "tail" side. You don't have a different coin if you turn it over, you just have the rest of it.

Works are a key part of salvation but not the requirement for it.

How do we put the two sides of the coin together?

1 John 2:1-6 (NASB)

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world. By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.

In these verses John tells us why he is writing this. He is writing this that we might not sin against God. If you read the rest of 1 John he warns of many things to be on the lookout for and stay away from. But then he says if we do sin we have an Advocate with the Father, that advocate is Jesus. Here we have the faith side of it that we looked at earlier in Romans. But in the very next sentence he flips the coin over so to speak. He tells us how we can know that we have come to know him ... if we keep his commands. Then he goes even further and says if we say we know him and don't keep his commands we are a liar and the truth is not in us. Now we are looking at the faith without works is dead. The bottom line is this. If the faith (or belief) in Jesus that we claim to have has no effect on our life then it is not a saving faith. John says if we know Jesus we will "keep his commandments" and "walk in the same manner as He walked". These are the works.

That pretty much addresses all the verses except for one. That being Matthew 7:21:23. Here we see people who apparently thought they were followers of Jesus and seemed to be doing His work. We would think that their lives had been changed. But in reality this verse has been taken out of context. If you look in your bible this passage begins in Matthew 7:15. This is actually a warning to stay away from false prophets and teachers. This passage if anything illustrates that works such as casting out demons or whatever else will not earn you salvation.

Works are a part of keeping his commandments.

Works show our gratitude for salvation, they do not offer payment for it.