

FAITH

Man's part in salvation. There are two things required: *repentance* and *faith*.

Acts 20:21

Paul preached repentance toward God and faith toward Jesus Christ.

The sinner must repent toward God, because it is God that has been offended by our selfwill and disobedience.

The sinner must put his faith in Jesus, because He died for our sins.

Consider three important questions about saving faith:

A. What is saving faith?

It is important to understand that saving faith is not simply believing some historical fact with one's mind. For example, we believe that George Washington was the first president of the United States and that Hitler ruled Germany in World War II. But such beliefs do not change the lives of those who believe.

Likewise, many people believe that Jesus Christ lived long ago and that He did many wonderful things, but this belief does not change their lives. Saving faith is different from this.

1. Saving faith is an undivided faith.

The Bible says that Jesus is the only Lord and Saviour.

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, **I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.;**

Act 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

To be saved I must believe that Jesus Christ ALONE is Lord and Saviour, just as the Bible says.

Some people try to add Jesus to their other gods. They want to believe in Jesus while believing in other lords as well. No one can be saved this way.

2. Saving faith is a trusting faith.

The word "believe" in the Bible means to trust, to depend upon, to commit oneself to.

To be saved a person must fully trust his soul and eternal destiny to the Lord Jesus.

He must rely upon Jesus and Jesus alone to forgive his sin and make him right with God and carry him to heaven.

Trusting Jesus is like trusting a boat to carry me across a lake. It is not enough to look at the boat and to admire it. You must actually get into the boat and trust it to carry you safely to the other side.

Have you trusted Jesus to take away your sin?

Some people say they believe in Jesus, but they continue to go through their old religious rituals. This proves they are not truly trusting in Jesus.

When we trust Jesus, we realize that we do not need any vain religious rituals for salvation.

3. Saving faith is a convinced faith.

To be saved I must be fully convinced that Jesus is Lord and Saviour and that He will fulfill His promises to me.

True salvation is a 'know-so' salvation. This is the kind of faith that Jesus' early disciples had.

Peter's testimony in John 6:66-69 below.

Joh 6:66 From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

Joh 6:67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, **Will ye also go away?**

Joh 6:68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

Joh 6:69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

This is the testimony of a genuinely saved person.

We can be sure because of God's promises!

1Jn 5:11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

1Jn 5:12 He that hath the Son hath life; *and* he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

1Jn 5:13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

4. Saving faith is an unmixed faith.

Saving faith cannot be mixed with human works.

Eph 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:

Eph 2:9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Eph 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

This is one of the most important passages in the Bible. It teaches that a person must receive Christ's salvation as a free gift, not as a reward for good works. Then after we receive God's free salvation, we serve Him with a thankful heart.

People do not serve God in order to be saved; people serve Him because they are already saved.

A gift is something that someone else purchases and then gives to one freely.

Jesus is the one who purchased our salvation with His death and the shed blood on the cross.

Are you enjoying God's free salvation in Jesus Christ today, or are you still trying to earn your salvation?

5. Saving faith is a receiving faith.

Saving faith receives Jesus as Lord and Saviour. Saving faith doesn't merely believe in Jesus as a historical person; it calls out to Him and asks Him for salvation.

Joh 1:11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

Joh 1:12 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:

Rom 10:13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Salvation is a personal relationship with Christ.

II. What is the place of works in the Christian life?

A. Does believing in Christ mean that I don't have to do any works in the Christian life?

B. What is the place of works?

Again, look at:

Eph 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:

Eph 2:9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Eph 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

1. God wants us to live obedient, holy lives, but that comes *after* salvation.
2. Good works are *the product* of salvation, not *the way* of salvation.
3. Good works are produced in the believer by the Holy Spirit.

Commandments that the believer is to obey:

In the epistle of Ephesians, there are nearly 90 commandments that the believer is to obey.

being humble (Eph. 4:1)	longsuffering (Eph. 4:1)	putting away lying (Eph. 4:25)	putting away anger (Eph. 4:26),
not stealing (Eph. 4:28),	not speaking any corrupt thing (Eph. 4:29)	being kind (Eph. 4:32)	forgiving (Eph. 4:32),
putting away fornication and uncleanness (Eph. 5:3)	having no fellowship with the works of darkness (Eph. 5:11)	redeeming the time (Eph. 5:16)	understanding God's will (Eph. 5:17)
not being drunk (Eph. 5:18)	being filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18)	wives submitting to their husbands (Eph. 5:22)	husbands loving their wives (Eph. 5:25)
children obeying their parents (Eph. 6:1-3)	fathers training their children and not provoking them to wrath (Eph. 6:4),	servants being obedient to their masters (Eph. 6:5)	masters treating their servants justly (Eph. 6:9)

We must be reconciled to God through Jesus, forgiven of our sins, and indwelt with the Holy Spirit.

Only then can we serve God acceptably.

III. Is salvation a religious process?

A. A popular heresy today is the teaching that salvation is a *process*, but the Bible says it is a miraculous conversion *experience*. This was what Jesus taught in Matthew 18:3 And said, **Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.** and John 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, **Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**

The new birth conversion is not a long process; it is a supernatural, life-changing single event! Just like the physical birth from our mothers.

And this happens when the sinner repents towards God and puts his faith in Jesus as his only Saviour.

This is what we see in the Bible.

B. Those who were saved in the book of Acts were saved on the very day they received Christ.

1. This includes the Jews who believed on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:41),
2. the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:36-39),
3. Cornelius and his household (Acts 10:44-48),
4. Lydia (Acts 16:14-15),
5. and the Philippian jailer and his household (Acts 16:30-34).