

SALVATION THROUGH “FAITH ONLY” (2)

BY KEITH GREER

Promise of the Spirit Through Faith. Paul informed the Gentiles, “*Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*” {Galatians 3:13,14} On the Day of Pentecost, Peter preached the same truth when he quoted the prophet Joel, “*And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams.*” {Acts 2:17} As Paul said, we receive the Spirit through faith—“*For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free--and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.*” {1 Corinthians 12:13} One who follows a different course than this one does not have true faith.

Children of God by Faith. Some who claim to be God’s children have actually rejected the process they should have followed to become members of His family. Listen to Paul’s clearly stated instructions to the Galatians, “*For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*” {Galatians 3:36,27} When a person believes and is baptized into Christ, he becomes God’s child, through faith. What did Jesus say about the Pharisees who rejected baptism? “*But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.*” {Luke 7:30} Today, scores of people continue to reject God’s counsel by refusing to be baptized. Didn’t Christ, God’s final prophet, give His disciples the same message when He sent them out with the Great Commission? Read *Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:16; Luke 24:44-47*. True faith doesn’t question God’s authority—it acts on it!

Buried in Baptism—Raised by Faith. “*Buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.*” {Colossians 2:12} When we submit to baptism, we demonstrate faith that Jesus arose from the dead and that we, too, will be raised. Why would one follow this instruction unless he believes it will result in remission of sin? “*...Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*” {Acts 2:38} Paul stated the case even more clearly in his letter to the church in Rome, “*Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised*

from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” {Romans 6:3,4} According to Paul’s second letter to the church in Corinth, the obedient are “*a new creation in Christ,*” {*2 Corinthians 5:17*}. Only one who has proper faith knows at that moment that God has remitted his previous sins!

Saved through Faith. Grace is unmerited favor bestowed on us by God. The plan of salvation is an expression of God’s grace. We don’t deserve it; we cannot merit or earn it. It’s a gift God gives us because He loves us. Please read *Ephesians 2:8,9*. It does not contradict *James 2:14-26*; James was discussing a different type of work! Paul was saying that works of the Old Law can’t save us; James was talking about works involving obedient faith—these can save us. Carefully read and understand these words given by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, “*But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.*” {*James 2:18*} Do you believe what the Bible teaches in this verse? My obedience to the commands of God is an expression of my FAITH in Him.

Remember, FAITH is a very important piece of God’s plan for our salvation, but it’s not the **ONLY** piece. Bible faith is obedient faith. ***