

Rom. 14:19
So then let
us follow
after things
which make
for peace,
and things
whereby we
may edify
one another.



THE LENEXA EDIFIER

John 8:32
And ye shall
know the
truth and the
truth shall
make you
free.

December
2
2018

Salvation by grace through faith

by Jim Stauffer

“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.” (Eph. 2:8,9)

No one believes salvation is something man can or has ever earned. When the Scripture tells us, *He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Cor. 5:21)*, we must understand it was the action of our Lord that enabled us to be made righteous.

Since this point is rarely ever disagreed upon, maybe we can start here to understand then how this salvation by grace through faith demands we obey Christ our Lord in order to be saved (**Heb. 5:8,9**).

Those who defend the religious position of “faith only” often refer to such passages as **Romans Chapter 4** as a proof text. Let us take a look at the teaching of that chapter. **Rom. 4:2,3** *“For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say?*

“ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.” It is clear from this text The Holy Spirit is saying Abraham did not earn his righteousness by his works, but rather it was credited to him by God because of his faith.

Now let us look at three incidents in the life of Abraham that demonstrate this faith for which he was credited with righteousness.

First, God called him to leave his home and go to a land he would show him and give to him as an inheritance. Abraham took his family and went to this place (**Heb. 11:8**).

Second, Abraham was promised he would be the father of a great nation. Yet his wife Sarah was barren. How was this to happen? If we read **Rom. 4:16-22**, we learn that an old couple past the age of bearing children were blessed with a son because God promised and they believed. How was that son conceived? Certainly God’s power intervened in the process and Sarah conceived. This passage and **Heb.**

11:11,12 tell us this happened not just because God promised, but because Abraham and Sarah believed He would keep his promise.

Third, God told Abraham to take this son, Isaac and offer him as a sacrifice on Mount Moriah. The Scriptures tell us this was a test of Abraham’s faith by God, but Abraham did not know this. The story is detailed in **Gen. 22:1-19**. Abraham took Isaac to the mountain with the full intention of offering him as God had requested. We are told in **Heb. 11:17-19**, Abraham believed God could and would raise Isaac from the dead to keep his prior promise of a great nation. **James 2:21-24** defines this conduct of Abraham’s as a demonstration of faith accompanied by works. But James is not telling us Abraham was credited with righteousness because he earned it. He was credited with righteousness because his faith was real and he trusted God and obeyed the commands of God in all these incidents.

How then can anyone with an open and objective mind conclude Jesus meant anything other than what He said when He gave this command to His apostles and to all those who become His disciples, *“And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.” “He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.”*

We must then agree that the faith that must accompany grace to provide salvation must also be sincere to the point of obedience.

There simply is no biblically based argument to support the religious doctrine of faith only. Faith, by its biblical definition includes obedience to God and Christ.

John records over and over again the teaching of Jesus Himself, that our love for Him is manifested in our obedience to His commands (**John 14:15; 1 John 2:1-4**).

SOUND DOCTRINE

“As I urged you when I went into Macedonia—remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith. Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith, from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk, desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm” (1 Timothy 1:3-7).

The challenges of preaching are many. Just ask Paul and Timothy! It may be hard to relate to the words of NT writers, especially when we read about the trials and tribulations they faced in carrying out Christ's Great Commission. After all, we don't face physical persecutions; we rarely face any kind of stigma at all, even when we find enough gumption to try to talk with someone about God's word. But persecution or not, we must try. Believing that we have the same message 1st century Christians had, makes it our responsibility to take up the banner of truth, go forth boldly and plainly, and teach all who will listen. Will we have enough faith to do as Timothy was instructed to do?

Paul's apostolic authority is not an issue in 1st Timothy. The people in Ephesus, especially after Paul's extended stay and work, would have known that he was an apostle of Christ; his appointment was from the Christ (**Acts 9:15**). If anyone questioned Paul's credentials, he was ready to exert his apostolic authority. More, though, Paul is trying to remind Timothy about the serious business of preaching, work they shared together. Timothy was Paul's true son in the faith; Paul had great confidence in this younger man (**Philippians 2:20**). After joining Paul (**Acts 16**), Timothy's world widened. He lived in a world of preaching, travel, danger, and reward. What a rude awakening it must have been, when Timothy saw Paul and Silas being beaten “half to death.” But he also saw a seller of purple and a jailor obey the gospel.

Travels continued to Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, and then back to Thessalonica. Finally, Timothy met up with Paul and others in Corinth. **Acts 19** is Luke's account of Paul and Timothy in the city of Ephesus; this chapter ties their gospel work in that city to 1st Timothy. Paul left Timothy in Ephesus, after laboring there a long time. **Acts 19:10** says: *“And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.”* Their successful work, though, was mingled with opposition from the pagans in Ephesus. And more, especially after reading 1st Timothy, it is clear that lots of work remained for Timothy, as he taught God's people how to behave (**1 Timothy 3:15**). False teachers,

defections from the faith, persecutions, and perhaps timidity on Timothy's part, all say that Paul's charge to Timothy was serious.

What would sustain Timothy in his continued work in Ephesus? Paul said: Timothy, you need to have love from a pure heart, a good conscience, and sincere faith. How can people who turn from sound doctrine know something about genuine love? How can myths and genealogies produce a good, clear conscience? Where does true faith come from? From false teachers and false teaching? No! The sacred trust of the gospel, given to Paul and to Timothy, was to be guarded, preached, and practiced. Are you ready to go to Ephesus and work with Timothy?

Randy Harsbarger

Remember the Time!

As I write this article it is Tuesday morning before the Thanksgiving holiday. I am writing in anticipation of all of us doing what we naturally do this time of year – we overeat. Yes, I know that we are all approaching this day with the ‘steely resolve’ that “This year it's going to be different! This year I'll STOP when I am pleasantly full, and then enjoy one helping of my favorite dessert. That way I won't put on those extra pounds through the Holiday season.” I don't know about you but I don't think I'll not eat this Thursday, and probably the wrong stuff, too!

You know what's going to happen then? You'll start feeling guilty about eating too much – and STOP RIGHT THERE! Don't beat yourself up about something that makes life beautiful! Life has its ups and downs. It has its times of feasting and it also has its times of fasting. The wise man said, *“There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven-- A time to give birth and a time to die; A time to plant and a time to uproot what is planted.; ... A time to weep and a time to laugh; A time to mourn and a time to dance... A time to embrace and a time to shun embracing. A time to search and a time to give up as lost; A time to keep and a time to throw away. A time to tear apart and a time to sew together; A time to be silent and a time to speak. A time to love and a time to hate; A time for war and a time for peace.”* (**Ecclesiastes 3:1-8**) A wise person EMBRACES the ebb and flow of life!

Cleveland Reddinger

WHY STOP THE CHARIOT?

John Issac Edwards

Acts 8:26-39 records the conversion of the Ethiopian treasurer. **Verse 38** makes some things stand out: *“And*

he commanded the chariot to stand still..." Has it occurred to you that if some things men today say are true, it would have been entirely unnecessary for this man to stop the chariot? Explore this with me.

If just being a good, honest person is all that it takes. The man must have been a good, honest man to have the job that he did - *"...under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure..."* (Acts 8:27). No need to stop the chariot if just being a person of integrity is all that it takes to please God and go to Heaven.

If just being religious is enough. The Ethiopian was a religious man. He *"...had come to Jerusalem for to worship"* (Acts 8:27), a distance of nearly 1,000 miles one way! Most people would think a fellow like that would already be saved. Why stop the chariot?

If just reading the Scriptures is all that is required. The man was a Scripture-reading man. He was reading **Isaiah 53** out loud (Acts 8:28-34). Some think they read the Bible and no more is really necessary. If that be true, why stop the chariot?

If just hearing preaching saves. True, *"...it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save..."* (1 Corinthians 1:21). The Ethiopian heard preaching as *"Philip...preached unto him Jesus"* (Acts 8:35). Some hear a lot of preaching, but do no more. Not this man!

If justified by faith only. The Ethiopian had faith. He confessed, *"I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God"* (Acts 8:37). If justified by faith only, why not keep the chariot wheels rolling down the Gaza road?

If baptism is not necessary for salvation. Most have been made to believe baptism is not essential to salvation. Please tell us why then did the man of Ethiopia command the chariot to stand still and be baptized, if that be true?

If saved by praying "the sinner's prayer." Many have been made to think that to be saved they just need to pray a prayer like this: "Lord, I confess to You my sins. I accept You into my heart as my personal Lord and Savior." Why stop the chariot, if saved this way?

If sprinkling or pouring are sufficient. If sprinkling or pouring of a little water upon the person will substitute for immersion of the whole person in water, why do we read, *"...he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water..."* (Acts 8:38-39)?

Let me suggest to you that due to the shortness and uncertainty of life (Proverbs 27:1; Luke 12:16-20; James 4:13-15), the value of your soul (Matthew 16:26), the fact that judgment is coming (Acts 24:25), and you must obey the Lord to be saved (Matthew 7:21; Hebrews 5:9) that you need to stop the chariot. Did you observe who stopped the chariot? It wasn't the preacher. It was the man who needed to obey the Lord. You are the one who must stop the chariot. There is an urgency about obeying the gospel as this record shows. Now is

the time to stop the chariot. *"...behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation"* (2 Corinthians 6:2).

*~via Truth's Pillar & Ground; Riverdale, Maryland.
Taken from the Market Street Messenger*

The God Who Provides

Logistics of the Exodus

"And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children. And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle." (Exodus 12:37-38)

Moses and the people were in the desert, but what was he going to do with them? They had to be fed, and feeding 2 to 3 million people requires a lot of food. The people needed 2,000 tons -- four million pounds -- of food each day. To bring that much food each day, would require three freight trains each a mile long!

In the desert they needed firewood to cook and keep warm. Each day this would take 4,000 tons -- eight million pounds -- of wood and a few more freight trains, each a mile long.

Of course, they needed water. If they only had enough to drink and wash a few dishes, it would take 11 million gallons each day, and a freight train with tank cars 1,800 miles long, just to bring water!

And then another thing: They had to get across the Yom Suf ("sea of reeds") in one night. If they went on a narrow path, double file, the line would be 800 miles long and would require 35 days and nights to get through. So, there had to be an opening in the Yom Suf 3 miles wide so that they could walk 5,000 abreast to get over in one night.

Each time they camped at the end of the day, they needed a campground two-thirds the size of the State of Rhode Island, about 750 square miles.

They journeyed in the desert forty years. Do you think Moses worked all this out before he left Egypt? Moses put his trust in God. God handled things every day for 40 years.

If you think God can't handle your problems . . .

THINK AGAIN!

Source unknown; Taken from TCOW Edited by Kevin Greer

Let us be reminded to pray for those we support who are preaching in other areas of this country and also of the world. Remember to pray for Kyle Bennett in Boston Ma., Matt Hodge in Marshfield, Mo. and Cleveland Reddinger in El Dorado, Ks. Overseas we need to remember, Wilfredo Pelino and Jonathan Sapitula in the Philippines as well as Arao Uchaio, Francisco Vascob in Mozambique.

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Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

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WEDNESDAY EVENING
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JIM STAUFFER - TEACHER

SUNDAY SERMON:

A PECULIAR PEOPLE



What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10