

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



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

September
9
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SALVATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH

Jeff Asher

The Church at Ephesus was established while Paul briefly passed by that way journeying to Jerusalem at the end of the second tour (**Acts 18:19-21**).

No mention of specific converts is made until those found in **Acts 19:1-5**. Paul did in Ephesus as he always did; he preached the word in the synagogue seeking to convert the Jews first. Later, he turned to the Gentile population (**Acts 19:8-9**).

Ephesus became Paul's third center of evangelism. In the beginning, it was Antioch in Syria. Later, it was Philippi in Macedonia. Now, it was Ephesus. Paul's work in the school of Tyrannus allowed him to spread the Word throughout all Asia (**Acts 19:10**). During the two years at Ephesus, churches of Christ were established in Laodicea, Heirapolis, Sardis, Pergamos, Thyatira, Smyrna, Philadelphia, Colosse and Troas (**cf. Revelation 2 and 3; 2 Cor. 2:12**).

The conversions at Ephesus are sometimes misused by those who hold the false doctrine that salvation occurs at the point of faith before and without water baptism. A favorite passage of these people is **Ephesians 2:8-9**, "*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.*" Let's consider the evidence which the Scriptures reveal concerning their redemption. Specifically, let's see what the New Testament says about their baptism.

Not Of Our Own Works, But Of God's Grace

There is no debating about whether or not salvation is a matter of grace—it is (**Eph. 2:8**). We are not saved by works of our own righteousness but according to God's mercy (**Titus 3:5**). The question is whether or not there are works of another class included within the realm of grace. Does the Bible teach there are "*works*" which exclude boasting consistent with divine grace?

The Bible says that Abraham was saved by "*works*" (**Jam. 2:21-23**). These were works of faith, that is, obedience to God which was rooted in and sprang forth from faith (**Heb. 11:8, 17-19**). There is no sense in which the works which Abraham did can be said to have

been "his own works." He did not appoint the journey. He did not originate the sacrifice of his only son. God asked for these things and Abraham with implicit trust obeyed God.

Thus, we are urged to walk in the steps of Abraham's faith (**Rom. 4:12**). How can we so walk, if "doing" nullifies grace?

Peter clearly declares salvation is promised to him that fears God and works righteousness (**Ac. 10:34-35**). Paul affirms that he preached in order to secure from others the "*obedience of faith*" (**Rom. 1:5; 16:26**). Such obedience is not inconsistent with grace, but establishes grace (**Rom. 6:15-18**).

Their Faith Came By Hearing The Word of God

Paul speaks very favorably of the Ephesians in his letter to them. He writes of their exalted position in Jesus Christ "*in heavenly places*" (**Eph. 1:3, 20; 2:6**) and of the Church which is the bride of Christ, and the fact that they are that Church which is the visible expression of the "*manifold wisdom of God*" (**Eph. 3:10**).

Now, the Ephesians were the inheritors of all the spiritual blessings in Christ (**Eph. 1:3**) when they trusted in Christ (**Eph. 1:13**). However, that faith could not exist apart from "*the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation.*" Their faith existed "after" they heard (**cf. Rom. 10:17**). Saving faith is always the result of hearing the Gospel.

Baptism Is Justification By Grace Through Faith

The Ephesians were most certainly baptized (**Acts 19:1-5**). With respect to their baptism Paul said, "... *Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word*" (**Eph. 5:25, 26**). What did Christ sanctify and cleanse? It was the Church. With what did Jesus sanctify and cleanse the Church? Jesus used two things in setting the Church apart in holiness: baptism and the Gospel.

Notice that it is "*the washing of water,*" baptism (**Acts 22:16**), "*through the word,*" the Gospel. Baptism

is efficacious to our sanctification because God has revealed it (**Mark 16:16; Acts 2:36-40**).

Our faith is not in ourselves and what we have done (**Titus 3:5**), but rather it is in His mercy and what He has promised (**Col. 2:12**). The baptized believer is not trusting in himself so that he can boast and demand a reward as a matter of debt.

Similarly, Peter affirmed that baptism saves us *"by the resurrection of Jesus Christ who is gone into heaven and is on the right hand of God"* (**1 Pet. 3:21-22**). Clearly the saving power is not ourselves but the Resurrected Redeemer Who has all power in Heaven and in earth.

We are justified by grace through faith when we believe and obey the Gospel.

Calling On the Name of the Lord by Marshall McDaniel

This promise is found throughout the Scriptures and is intended to instill in us the hope that God can and will save us, if we will turn to Him. Yet, among professed Christians today, this statement is the source of confusion and debate; many affirm that calling on the name of the Lord simply involves faith accompanied by repentance and prayer—specifically a “sinner’s prayer.” But is this what the Bible teaches? What is meant by calling on the name of the Lord?

We note, first, that calling on the name of the Lord is not merely a New Testament concept; it is rooted in the Old Testament. It is first mentioned in **Genesis 4:26**, but faithful individuals, like Abraham, David, and Elijah, also called on the Lord for salvation and blessing, and in worship (see **Genesis 12:8; Psalm 18:6; 1 Kings 18:24**). Yet, such was not simply making a request; it required seeking God, forsaking evil, and returning to the Lord (see **Isaiah 55:6; Jeremiah 29:12-13**). In essence, it meant, by faith, doing whatever God expected.

The New Testament continues with the same understanding but defines it in view of the grace shown through the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible does not teach that a “sinner’s prayer” is the means to salvation. (In fact, the “sinner’s prayer” as it is taught today is found nowhere in the Old or New Testaments.) Instead, we learn that we are forgiven of our sins by God’s grace through our faith—which involves obedience—in the Lord (see **Ephesians 2:8; Hebrews 5:9**).

So how do we call on the name of the Lord today? There are two passages in the New Testament that explicitly state that **everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved (Acts 2:21; Romans 10:13)**.

In **Romans 10**, we learn that calling on the name of the Lord includes various actions associated with faith and obedience: (1) hearing and believing the word of Christ (**vv. 14-17**) and (2) believing and confessing the Lordship of Jesus (**vv. 8-12**). We can now begin to outline what it means to call on the name of the Lord: **Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved** = Everyone who hears, believes, and confesses the name of Jesus will be saved.

The New Testament does not, however, conclude with the above actions. We learn in **Acts 2** that calling on the name of the Lord does involve recognizing Jesus as Lord but places other conditions on our salvation (forgiveness): (1) repentance and (2) baptism (**v. 38**). (It is worth noting that there is a connection between calling **on the name of the Lord (v. 21)** and being baptized in (**literally, on**) **the name of Jesus Christ (v. 38)**). Thus, **Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved** = Everyone who hears, believes, confesses, repents, and is baptized in the name of Jesus will be saved.

Though many reject the necessity of baptism as part of calling on the name of the Lord, it is precisely at this point that God has determined that we are calling on Him for salvation. The Bible even says, *Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on Him name (Acts 22:16; see also 1 Peter 3:21; Romans 6:3-4; Mark 16:16)*. Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved, but anyone who has not heard, believed, repented, confessed, and been baptized has not called on His name. The question, then, comes to you and to me:

“Have I called on the name of the Lord?”

“THE CHURCH OF CHRIST”

It is popular these days to laugh at and ridicule the idea of a Bible pattern. There are those who refer to themselves as New Testament Christians, who repudiate the concept of a pattern concerning our work and service to the Lord. This mind-set is simply a reflection of modern man’s desire to express himself as he sees fit. Man has become his own god; and as such, no one has the right to tell him what he will or will not do regarding his life, or in this case, regarding his service to the Lord. I doubt that many would be so blatant in their expression of this attitude, but the result is the same.

Hermeneutics is a word that refers to the science of Bible interpretation, or simply put, to the rules of Bible study. You don’t have to know about that word in order

to go to heaven, but consider the fact that you have been using hermeneutical principles in Bible study for a long time. For example, what do you say when someone asks you: "Why do you folks in the church of Christ partake of the Lord's Supper every first day of the week?" You refer them to the EXAMPLE of **Acts 20:7**, don't you? You believe that the Bible teaches by example (cf. **Phil. 3:17; 4:9**). Someone asks: "Why do you take the Lord's Supper EVERY Lord's Day?" You answer that it is NECESSARILY IMPLIED from **Acts 20:7**, that you should engage in this act of worship unto the Lord AS OFTEN AS THERE IS A FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK. Likewise, you recognize that there are many DIRECT STATEMENTS that express the Lord's will for your life. You are engaging in the science of hermeneutics. These simple ways of recognizing how the Bible teaches are not contrived; rather, they simply take into account how the Lord revealed His will to us.

Pattern theology is nothing to be ashamed of. The Lord has consistently delivered a pattern to His people in all ages. His pattern governed Moses and the children of Israel in building the tabernacle (**Heb. 8:1-5**). The same was true when Solomon built the temple. The same is true in regard to the Lord's spiritual temple, His church. To deny that there is a binding pattern or norm for God's people today is to effectively say: Let every man do that which is right in his own eyes (**Judges 21:25**).

In our ongoing quest to simply be Christians, there is the need to continually examine God's word and the place it occupies in our hearts and lives. Yet, the sufficiency of modern man gets in the way of recognizing the great need to simply listen to the Lord as He speaks through His word. Man's inflated ego refuses to allow him to listen to anyone or anything but himself. Again, it is a matter of authority. Will we recognize the claim God makes over our lives, or will we turn away trusting solely in self?

Could it be that when we speak about hermeneutics and Bible study and even the matter of authority, we turn something that is simple into something that is hard and seemingly unattainable? For example, the religious lawyer in the story of the Good Samaritan completely missed the point about eternal life. Yet, a most unlikely candidate for spiritual service, a Samaritan, understood his duty and simply went about the business of helping the wounded man. No debate. No questioning. No glance over his shoulder to make sure someone was watching. He simply did what he was supposed to do. We are the church of Christ! If so, the next question is: Will we *"Go, and do likewise?"*

Randy Harshbarger

Changing Your Life, The Two Alternatives

Do you want to make changes in your life? Are they

important changes? If you make the change you're considering, will it make you a godlier individual? Good! Will it make you healthier? Good, that's important, too! Will they make life better for your family and loved ones? You get the idea!

Now, in scripture who's master of the slow seductive change? Did Jesus pop into your head or did Satan? Satan slowly changed Saul, the humble son of Kish, into the man who even tried to murder his own son, (**1 Sam. 20:33**).

Who is it that says, "You need to change. Change now, before it's too late!" It was the God of Heaven who told the inhabitants of Jerusalem, *"Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Remove the evil of your deeds from My sight. Cease to do evil, Learn to do good; Seek justice, Reprove the ruthless, and Defend the orphan, Plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool. If you consent and obey, you will eat the best of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword."* (**Isaiah 1:16**)

When changing your life for good the slow seductive change never really works. It's got to be an all or nothing decision! Will there be failures? Of course and God has the power to deal with them, *"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, (1 John 2:1).*

Cleveland Reddinger

FAITH AND WORKS

A young boy, on an errand for his mother, had just bought a dozen eggs. Walking out of the store, he tripped and dropped the sack. All the eggs broke, and the sidewalk was a mess. The boy tried not to cry. A few people gathered to see if he was OK and to tell him how sorry they were. In the midst of the works of pity, one man handed the boy a quarter. Then he turned to the group and said, "I care 25 cents worth. How much do the rest of you care?" James 2:16 points out that words don't mean much if we have the ability to do more.

Stanley C. Brown.

Psa. 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.

HOURS OF WORSHIP

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study
Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship
Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship
Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

Visitors welcome

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We offer Correspondence Courses

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Elders: Ron Peck and Jim Stauffer
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OUR ADDRESS IS:

7845 Cottonwood Dr.
Lenexa, Kansas 66216
913-764-9170

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NEWS AND NOTES:

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PLEASE REMEMBER JAN PATRICK,
STEPHEN KIMKER, STEVE AND
SUZANNE WIMP, LINDIA JACKSON
AND ALMA BAUMGARTNER'S MOTHER.
ALMA IS RECOVERING FROM
SURGERIES AT BROOKDALE-ROSEHILL
- RM. 106

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS -
FOLLOWING THE MESSIAH
RON PECK

WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS -
THE CHRISTIAN AND HIS
GOVERNMENT
JIM STAUFFER

SUNDAY SERMON: EVENTS THAT WILL
TAKE PLACE AT THE SECOND COMING



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