



"Salvation by Grace"

There is nothing anyone can do to be good enough to walk through the gates of heaven. Moreover, there is no one worthy to be a temple, a dwelling place for the Holy Spirit of God and yet God's Spirit chooses to dwell within those who accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Grace is unmerited favor. You could even say, "It is the gift that no one should ever receive." That is the incredible truth of God. He offers us salvation and holiness simply by grace.

However, grace is not cheap. God forgive the one who would treat God's gift lightly. Grace led Jesus down the Via Dolorosa, the Way of Sorrows, all the way to the cross to offer His life in our place so grace could be born. We have grace through faith. In this study we will learn the essence of true faith, faith that lives in the power of God's Spirit and in an intimate relationship with Jesus as Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

While works of any kind cannot save us, living faith creates spiritual works in us. We are driven to do God's work in the name of Christ because our faith has molded us into His image. Like Jesus, we cannot look the other way while the world cries out for help. Let's look at some teachings from God's Word on faith, then some teachings from His Word on Christian works and allow God to show us how they are uniquely one.

FAITH

1. **Hebrews 11:1** - What is faith?
2. The Greek word that is used in the Scripture for 'being sure' is the word **HYPOTOSTASIS**. It means to be confident, certain or assured. God is telling us that faith is being confident, certain of the hope that we have in Jesus Christ. How can we be certain of what we can't see? That is a great question that deserves an honest answer. I would ask you, "Has anyone of you ever seen a microwave?" No, of course not. They are invisible. Yet by the evidence of what happens to food placed in a microwave oven we know they are real. Likewise, we can't see the information that travels through space to bring us television broadcasts from satellites. Yet, by the evidence on our TV we know the invisible network exists. By the very order of nature and all creation, we have evidence for our Creator's existence and His active hand in our universe and in our lives.
3. Make a list of all the things you believe in but cannot see.
4. **Hebrews 11:6** - Why is faith so important to God and to us? Notice that just living a good life, oblivious to God is not enough to please Him.

5. **Galatians 2:15-16** - What role does faith play in our salvation?
6. **Romans 3:21-24** - How can we receive righteousness from God that none of us are capable of attaining on our own?
7. **Romans 4:16** – The Scripture says that all the nations of the earth would be blessed through his "Seed", which is Christ. How does the Scripture say we receive the promise of Abraham?
8. **Ephesians 2:8-9** - Can you be saved by works? Salvation and eternal life can only be attained by the grace of God through faith in Christ. No one, not even the kindest, the most generous, the most loving person in the world can do anything to please God enough to find hope. Hope and life are given only by the Creator on His terms, not ours. We cannot set the guidelines to conquer death and the grave. We need God.

WORKS

1. **Titus 2:11-14** - What should we be eager to do if we are truly God's people?
2. **2 Timothy 3:16-17** - What is God's Word intended to equip us for? Obviously the good we are set apart by Jesus to do is the good that Jesus lived out and recorded for us. His will for our lives is clearly recorded within the Bible. The Christian life is one of living to carry out the will of Jesus until He returns.
3. Make a list of some of the good things Jesus did.
4. **Ephesians 2:10** - What are we created to do?
5. **Hebrews 6:7-8** - God uses a principle from the world of the farmer. What principle related to good works is God setting forth?
6. **Hebrews 6:9-12** - What are things that accompany salvation?

SALVATION BY GRACE: THE INSEPARABLE BALANCE OF FAITH AND WORKS

1. **James 1:26-27** - What does God have to say about sincere religion?
2. **James 2:14-17** - What does James tell us about faith without works? If a Christian's faith is genuine, the Word of God moves from head knowledge, to the heart, to passion and action. We begin to live out what we believe. Our faith becomes who we are because of the Holy Spirit guiding and counseling us. If this difference is not there, James tells us that our faith is dead. Dead faith saves no one, not even if you were baptized!
3. **James 2:18-19** - Do demons believe in Jesus? Do they have faith? Are they saved? James points out that just believing is not enough. He also points out that just having deeds, caring about and helping people is not enough to save us. Faith that saves has both belief and actions driven by those godly beliefs. Grace is a transforming power.

4. **James 2:20-26** - How does James explain that faith is made complete? What is the connection between faith and works?
5. **1 Timothy 6:17-19** - What command from God does Paul give Timothy?
6. **Matthew 25:31-46** - What significance did Jesus attach to faith combined with works?
7. It is very important that we never form an opinion on God's word until we have looked at all God has had to say on the matter. Some people want to believe that it is only by faith that we are saved. This frees them, so they believe, from the responsibility of being the servant that God would have them be. Yet Jesus called us to be servants.
8. There are also those who want to make it on their works. They are the ones who say, "God would never keep me out of heaven. I am better than most people." Yet they never submit to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Jesus hits the nail on the head when He says, "No one can serve two masters" (Matthew 6:25). If our treasure is in this life and there is no time to give ourselves to the Lord's work, our faith is not living. It is only a poor excuse made to fit our desires.
9. Faith and works are like the links on a chain. Although each link may be very strong, they have very little usefulness when they are not joined. Like Abraham, we are called to do God's will, whatever it may be, knowing that God always "works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28).

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