

faith unto *salvation*

2 Corinthians 5:9-10 - Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Each one of us must appear and give account before the Lord for what *we* have done. This does **not** mean what our church ministry did, or what the money we put into the offering plate went towards, but what **we** have *done*. We know that a faith without works is dead. We must have faith and we show that faith through works. We cannot borrow someone else's faith, and we cannot borrow someone else's works. We must have our *own*. This is why it is so important to build our own faith. How do we do this, remember? Faith comes by hearing (and attending to) the word of God. Good works will come naturally through a true devotion to God.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 - To everything *there is* a season,
A time for every purpose under heaven:

14-15 - I know that whatever God does,
It shall be forever.
Nothing can be added to it,
And nothing taken from it.
God does *it*, that men should fear before Him.
That which is has already been,
And what is to be has already been;
And God requires an account of what is past.

Okay, so we have been given a **time** and we have been given a **purpose**. What will we do with it? Will we use our **time** to *fulfill* our **purpose**? I hope so; we must each give account of what is past.

12:13-14 - Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:
Fear God and keep His commandments,
For this is man's all.
For God will bring every work into judgment,
Including every secret thing,
Whether good or evil.

We do not know what amount of time will be allotted for us, but we *can* know our purpose and fulfill it through faith in Christ.

Hebrews 4:12-13 - For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give* account.

How does the word of God correspond with the account we must give? God knows everything about us and all that we've ever done. So we want to fulfill our purpose and we want to please God. But how do we know that we are doing this? If we do these things, we will have salvation. How do we know if we have a faith that leads to salvation? Can we be really be sure of our salvation?

John 12:42-50 - Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *Him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogues; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. Then Jesus cried out and said, "He who believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me. And he who sees Me sees Him who sent Me. I have come *as* a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness. And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken on My own *authority*; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak."

We see here that we are judged according to the word of God: whether we followed and fulfilled our purpose through Him.

Romans 1:16-17 - For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "*The just shall live by faith.*"

The good news, the powerful word of the Lord (which is in the Bible) contains what we need to access salvation through Christ. We are called to follow Christ; His example and His commandments if we love Him. How can we do this if we are not familiar with what these are?

2 Timothy 3:14-17 - But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

So can we be sure that we have salvation? If we do the things we are told and live according to His command, fulfilling our purpose, **yes!** We can be absolutely sure, without a doubt, that Christ will save us. Satan causes us to doubt and say to ourselves, *I've messed up too many times*, or *I'm not worthy*, or *I've become disqualified*. If we mess up a million times, God will still take us back in so long as we repent and let Him change us - this is good news! Of course we're not worthy, we are only deserving of death, but through the grace of God we have been given **life** - because we recognize that we are not worthy and humble ourselves before the Lord, He lifts us up and **makes** us worthy. If Christ is in us, "I trust that you will know that we are not disqualified." Satan tries to discourage us and cause us to stumble in our faith, but if we trust in the Lord with all our heart and have faith in Him, we can **know** that our faith is unto salvation.

1 Peter 1:3-9 - Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of *your* souls.

Not only *can* we be sure, we **need** to be sure! ...how come?

Colossians 4:2-6 - Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains, that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak. Walk in wisdom toward those *who are* outside, redeeming the time. *Let* your speech always *be* with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.

Are those that are not of the faith going to be interested in listening to us if we *think* we have salvation or if we hope that we *might* be saved? No way! We *need* the knowledge and wisdom of our salvation (not only for ourselves) and we need to be ready to tell others about it! To say, 'we *know* that salvation has been given unto us' so that those who are outside may come to know the Lord.

Now, many folks spend a lot of time debating the steps for salvation, as if it's an equation. Many will attempt to break it down to the bare minimum of things we must to do, or those who overcomplicate it by endlessly analyzing hypothetical situations. This, I do not wish to do. I do want to please the Lord, and I want to be sure of my salvation. And graciously He has given us His word, that we might become wise for salvation through faith(**2 Timothy 3:10-17**). I'm not trying to scrape by with the bare minimum, I want to do anything that the Lord has asked of me (and more **Ephesians 3:20-21**) that I might completely fulfill my purpose through the time He has given me.

I do not like to think of salvation as an algebra equation. That being said, I believe it is clear in the Scriptures that there are certain steps which lead to our salvation, and by them we can **know** at what point we come into contact with the blood of Christ, which cleanses us from unrighteousness. Just to be absolutely clear, *it is not* for me to determine (or any other man) who will and will not be saved, or if God will provide grace to those who are truly seeking but have not exactly followed His plan for us. He has given us His Word, which reveals the standard to which God will judge. All questions regarding salvation shall be referred to the One who sits on the judgment throne.

Acts 2:36-42 - "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." Now when they heard *this*, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said to them, "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. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added *to them*. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

The **reason** I don't like to think of this as an equation is it seems to give us the wrong idea about what's expected of us. We must continue in these things: remaining faithful. We hear for the first time and we must continue to hear (attend to) the Word, - we believe and then continue to believe and place faith in the name (authority unto salvation) of the Lord - we repent of our dead works and continue to repent (Godly sorrow that leads to change of behavior) that we may have fellowship with God - we confess Him and continue to confess with our mouth and our lives that Jesus is the Christ - we are baptized of water for the remission of our sins and we continue to allow the Spirit to sanctify us and cleanse us from unrighteousness - we begin our new life and continue to fulfill our purpose during the time we have on earth. Now, we **by no means** earn our salvation by doing these things, but these things we are called to do that we might be given eternal life through our **faith** in Jesus Christ: *this is the grace of God*. Really when it gets down to it, we have a simple answer, back in Ecclesiastes:

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all."

If we do these things, we can be sure that our faith leads unto salvation.

I encourage you to build your **own** faith, so that you can be *sure* of your own salvation, that you might lead others to receive this blessing. There should be no reason for us to have any doubts about our salvation. If we devote ourselves to the word of God, the Bible, we will come to an understanding of our own special purpose and witness the transformation of our lives.