

Grace Home Bible Ministries

DICTIONARY OF THE GOSPEL

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QUESTIONS CONCERNING SALVATION

Now that we understand the meaning of these biblical terms, we ought to have a deeper understanding of "Salvation" So let's go back to the five questions asked at the beginning of this book and see how we can answer them confidently.

QUESTION #

IS A PERSON SAVED THROUGH FAITH ALONE?

We understand "SAVED" to mean Saved from God's wrath against sin. To be saved from the judgement of our sins, we need to be found RIGHT in God's sight. So "JUSTIFICATION" (being declared righteous before God) is our salvation.

Romans 3:28 concludes everything that Paul was teaching in the first three chapters of the Book of Romans and particularly in verses 21-27 of chapter three. The conclusion was:

"THEREFORE WE CONCLUDE THAT A MAN IS JUSTIFIED BY FAITH WITHOUT THE DEEDS OF THE LAW."

So the answer is YES! A person is saved through faith and faith alone. Remember, "faith" is in the saving blood of Christ - Romans 3:25. Since salvation is through faith and faith alone, God has excluded any human boasting according to Romans 3:27.

Before I leave this question, someone may be wondering about Water Baptism. Perhaps you remember Mark 16:16 which says, "HE THAT BELIEVETH AND IS BAPTIZED SHALL BE SAVED," or Acts 2:38 which says, "REPENT AND BE BAPTIZED FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS..." How can salvation be through faith and faith alone if these verses teach salvation and forgiveness through faith and water baptism?

It may help you to review the comments made under the section "ANOTHER REASON FOR CONFUSION" at the beginning of this study.. There we pointed out that there was a different gospel (good news) being proclaimed by Jesus Christ and his Twelve Apostles while He walked the earth. That gospel was called "THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM". Acceptance into the Earthly Kingdom promised to Israel required faith and water baptism. However Israel rejected the Kingdom, even after the resurrection of their King - The Lord Jesus Christ. When they did, God set Israel (as a nation) aside and postponed that promised Kingdom. This is what Romans 11:11,12,15, & 25 is about. Rather than God sending the prophesied judgement of the tribulation upon them, He set that Kingdom program aside and began a NEW AGE which was never prophesied to come. It is referred to as "THE MYSTERY" and is called "THE AGE OF GRACE" - see Ephesians 3:1-11 and Colossians 1:24-27.

The Apostle Paul was miraculously saved in Acts Chapter 9 to be God's chosen vessel to reveal this new age of grace which affects the Gentiles as well as the Jews. Before the Apostle Paul was saved and given the revelation of this new age, Gentiles could only be saved through the nation Israel, based upon Israel receiving her promised Kingdom. But today it is different. Paul does not preach the

good news of the Kingdom, but the good news of the Cross - Galatians 6:14,15. Part of the new revelation given to Paul is the good news of salvation for this age - see Galatians 1:11,12; 2:1,2,9.

This new revelation given to Paul explains fully how the Cross saves sinners. Paul's explanation of justification began in Romans 3:21 with the words "BUT NOW." Things are different today because of the new revelation given to Paul concerning this new age of grace. Today water baptism has nothing to do with our salvation. More is said in the following appendix of this booklet where the term "Baptism" is defined.

QUESTION #2

ARE WORKS PART OF SALVATION?

Since salvation is through faith and faith alone, then, "NO," works are not part of salvation at all.

The word "GRACE" takes care of this question. Grace is receiving something you don't deserve and cannot earn, and Ephesians 2:8,9 says salvation is by grace. Therefore you cannot do a work to deserve it, nor earn it. That is why Ephesians 2:8,9 says salvation is a "GIFT," and the means of receiving this gift is "FAITH" - believing in Jesus Christ as your Savior.

Romans 11:6 is a tough verse to read, but simple to understand. It basically says that salvation is either by grace or by works, but it cannot be by a mixture of both grace and works.

Read carefully Romans, and you will see that if a person chooses to work for salvation, he will not be saved. But if a person gives up thinking his works can save him and only trusts in Jesus Christ, God will save him.

As we've said, Romans 11:6 says that salvation cannot be a mixture of grace and works. It must be one or the other, and Ephesians 2:8,9 spells it out plainly for us:

"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."

Yet many who believe that their works are a necessary part of their salvation quote James 2:20 "FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD," as a defense for their belief. I've often wondered how they rationalize this contradiction in their minds. They compare two passages of Scripture that seem to say the opposite of each other, as a way of proving a point. But it proves nothing. It's just a way of using Scripture to confuse people into thinking they have a point. However, God is not the author of confusion, nor does Scripture contradict itself.

In James 1:1, we are told clearly to whom James is writing:

"THE TWELVE TRIBES (OF ISRAEL) WHICH ARE SCATTERED ABROAD."

James writes to the believing remnant of Israel who were scattered among the Gentiles because of the persecution going on in Jerusalem. James writes to them concerning the "TRYING OF YOUR FAITH" (1:3) and about being "DOERS OF THE WORD AND NOT HEARERS ONLY" (1:22). Part way through chapter two he reminds them about the judgement which Jesus Christ will render to them upon his return and rewards they will receive then for their faithful service.

For those who have not shown mercy, they will receive no mercy. Therefore at this judgement, a Kingdom Saint will need more than faith. His works are being tried. Reward will follow faithful service, so that faith alone is not enough to save him from "JUDGEMENT WITHOUT MERCY" (2:13) when being judged by the "LAW OF LIBERTY" (obedience to God's Word). The Lord Jesus Christ taught Israel this in His sermon on the mount in Matthew 5:7:

"BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL: FOR THEY SHALL OBTAIN MERCY"

Just as mercy is something you "show" to others, so is the "faith" that James is writing about. He challenges his readers to show their faith without works. This is impossible. The only way to show others your faith is by your works - says James 2:18. So when James writes and says, "YE SEE THEN, HOW THAT BY WORKS A MAN IS JUSTIFIED, AND NOT BY FAITH ONLY" (2:24), he is speaking of being justified (declared righteous) in another man's sight. The example given (2:21) from Abraham's life is an event that took place at least 30 years after God declared Abraham righteous by faith. The record of Abraham offering up his son Isaac to God demonstrates to man the faith which God saw in Abraham 30 years earlier (2:23). James also uses "RAHAB THE HARLOT" (2:25) as one who was "JUSTIFIED BY WORKS" Of course, he was not referring to the life of a harlot as an acceptable life style to God. She was an example of a Gentile who was declared righteous by Israel because of her works in helping the spies escape Jericho.

The point is that James is speaking about justification in man's sight by works. Whereas, in the matter of salvation, Paul is speaking of justification in the sight of God. Read carefully Romans 3:20;4:1,2 and Galatians 3:11; and notice how Paul clarified his statements by including the words: "IN THE SIGHT OF GOD"! "Man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks on the heart," says I Samuel 16:7. Therefore God justifies a man upon faith alone.

QUESTION #3

CAN A PERSON KNOW FOR SURE HE IS SAVED?

Remember the meaning of "faith"? Faith is taking God at His Word and leaving the consequences to rest upon His faithfulness. Since God is faithful, He cannot lie, and He always does what He says. Therefore, on the authority of God's Word, I can know I'm saved and going to Heaven when I die.

Being saved by faith is believing what God said Jesus Christ has done for me. HE died on the cross for my sins and was raised from the dead for my justification. I believe that. Therefore, I am saved, forgiven, and justified.

I John 5:9-13 ought to be read with this question in mind because it says that by not believing God's Word we are calling him a liar. Furthermore, it says, by believing the record God gave of His Son, we can "KNOW" WE HAVE ETERNAL LIFE.

QUESTION #4

WHAT IF A PERSON SINS AGAIN AFTER BEING SAVED?

There really is no question about it, you will sin again after being saved. I was saved at about age eight. Therefore, the majority of sins I've committed have been since I've been saved.

The very basic understanding of the gospel answers this question. The gospel is the good news that Jesus Christ died for my sins. Jesus Christ paid for all of my sins - past, present, and future. He left no sin unpaid. This is the very meaning of "REDEMPTION" - I'm free from hell because Jesus Christ paid the price for my salvation. "PROPITIATION" tells me that I am accepted in to the family of God because God the Father was satisfied with the payment Jesus Christ made for me on the cross. Therefore I can enjoy total and complete forgiveness from the moment I trusted in Jesus Christ as Savior. This is what the term "REMISSION" has taught us.

The Scriptures teach me that if (or when) I sin, I ought to recognize it to be contrary to what God would have me to do. Thank Him for the forgiveness in Christ. Correct the wrong, and go on living for the Lord.

QUESTION #5

CAN A PERSON LOSE HIS SALVATION?

No! If he could, then he only had "PROBATION" and not "SALVATION"

The very meaning of "SALVATION" is being saved from the penalty of my sins (which is death in hell) and instead, possessing eternal life.

If I'm Saved From Hell,

Then I Will Never Be In Hell!

If I have Eternal Life,

Then I Will never Suffer The

Second Death - The Lake Of Fire!

The assurance of our salvation is not left up to reasoning, thank the Lord. God has promised us salvation upon faith in His Son and He keeps His promise all of the way. The guarantee is given in Ephesians 1:13,14 where it is not only written down for us but we have already been given a security deposit -

"IN WHOM (CHRIST) YE ALSO TRUSTED, AFTER THAT YE HEARD THE WORD OF TRUTH, THE GOSPEL OF YOUR SALVATION; IN WHOM ALSO AFTER THAT YE BELIEVED, WE WERE SEALED WITH HOLY SPIRIT OF PROMISE, WHICH IS THE EARNEST (DOWN PAYMENT) OF OUR INHERITANCE UNTIL THE REDEMPTION OF THE PURCHASED POSSESSION UNTO THE PRAISE OF HIS GLORY."

This security deposit lasts until Jesus Christ comes and takes possession of (us) His purchase. By the Holy Spirit, therefore, we are: (Ephesians 4:30)

"...SEALED UNTO THE DAY OF REDEMPTION."

After teaching the doctrine of our salvation in the first eight chapters of the Book of Romans, Paul asks four questions and gives four answers which guarantee that our salvation cannot be lost.

1) Romans 8:31 "IF GOD BE FOR US, WHO CAN BE AGAINST US?"

Paul argues that God has not held anything back from us. He has already given the dearest thing to Him--His Son--for our salvation. Therefore, if he has already given His Son for us, He is not going to lose us now!

2) Romans 8:33 "WHO SHALL LAY ANYTHING TO THE CHARGE OF GOD'S ELECT?"

Here Paul argues that if it is God who has declared the believer righteous, then no one can say otherwise!

3) Romans 8:34 - "WHO IS HE THAT CONDEMNETH?"

Now Paul argues that if Jesus Christ died to save us, and He is risen, making intercession for us, then no one is capable of lodging a complaint against us.

4) Romans 8:35 - "WHO SHALL SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST?"

Finally Paul argues that nothing can separate us from Christ's love. Remember, death is separation from God. The very meaning of not being separated from Christ's love implies not being separated from Him! The reason given for the impossibility of being separated from Jesus Christ is because we are...

"MORE THAN CONQUERORS THROUGH HIM THAT LOVED US"

In Roman 8:38 Paul says he has a settled conviction about Eternal Security. No person, (not an angel nor yourself) will get between Jesus Christ and His love for you. Not even time ("THINGS PRESENT, NOR THINGS TO COME") will change anything. That's security.

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Concerning verses that seem to teach a person can lose his salvation, let me say this. there are verses in Matthew, Mark, and Luke that indicate a person must "ENDURE TO THE END" to receive life. The book of Hebrews also warns against "FALLING AWAY." Here again, "RIGHTLY DIVIDING " the Scriptures is a must.

The "enduring to the end" is a reference to the future tribulation that will come upon the earth as a means of judgement upon Israel for rejecting her Messiah. It is also a means whereby God will weed out and destroy the unbelievers from the earth to purify Israel and to set up the promised Kingdom on earth. We who live in this present age of grace will not even be on earth during this time because God has promised that we will "OBTAIN SALVATION" before this time begins - see I Thessalonians 5:9 and II Thessalonians 2:13, 14. So again, God has completely provided for our security.

Concerning the warning of "falling away" in the book of Hebrews, first know that the Book of Hebrews is written to the Hebrews – Israel. Secondly, the Book of Hebrews follows the Books of Romans through Philemon which are the revelation of the interruption in God's dealings with Israel. When the age of grace is over (and the Believers of this age are raptured into heaven) God will continue where He left off dealing with the nation of Israel. Therefore the Book of Hebrews is a warning to the Nation of Israel not to "fall away" from following Jesus Christ during the tribulation.

According to II Corinthians 6:2, today is not a day of God's wrath (the tribulation); but instead:

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"...NOW (TODAY) IS THE DAY OF SALVATION."

Today God's grace is holding back His anger, allowing mankind a timely opportunity to be saved.

Today is your opportunity to trust Jesus Christ--and His payment for sin--to be your salvation. Please don't call God a liar. Trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior today