

## Saving Faith

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**Is not something more than faith in Christ necessary to salvation? No, nothing more.**

*“But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ ” (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or, “‘Who will descend into the abyss?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith which we preach): [that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved](#)” (Romans 10:6–9).*

May we accept these words, especially the statement in the last verse, as literally true? Shall we not be in danger if we do? Is not something more than faith in Christ necessary to salvation? To the first of these questions we say, Yes; and to the last two we say, No; and refer to the Scriptures for corroboration. So plain a statement cannot be other than literally true, and one that can be depended on by the trembling sinner.

As an instance in proof, take the case of the jailer at Philippi. Paul and Silas, after having been inhumanly beaten, were placed in his care. Notwithstanding their lacerated backs and their manacled feet, they prayed and sang praises to God at midnight, and suddenly an earthquake shook the prison, and all the doors were opened. It was not alone the natural fear produced by feeling the earth rock beneath him, nor yet the dread of Roman justice if the prisoners in his charge should escape, that caused the jailer to tremble. But he felt in that earthquake shock a premonition of the great Judgment, concerning which the apostles had preached; and, trembling under his load of guilt, he fell down before Paul and Silas, saying, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” Mark well the answer; for here was a soul in sorest extremity, and what was sufficient for him must be the message to all lost ones. To the jailer’s anguished appeal, Paul replied, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved” (Acts 16:30–31). This agrees exactly with the Words which we quoted from Paul to the Romans.

On one occasion the Jews said to Jesus, “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?” Just the thing that we want to know. Mark the reply: “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent” (John 6:28–29). Would that these words might be written in letters of gold, and kept continually before the eyes of every struggling Christian. The seeming paradox is cleared up. Faith is all-sufficient, because faith does the all the necessary work. No amount of struggle makes any difference, “but

faith working through love" (Gal. 5:6). Faith comprehends everything, and without faith there is nothing.

The trouble is that people in general have a faulty conception of faith. They imagine that it is mere assent, and that it is only a passive thing, to which active works must be added. But **faith is active, and it is not only the most substantial thing, but *the only real foundation***. The law is the righteousness of God (Isa. 51:6, 7), for which we are commanded to seek (Matt. 6:33); but it cannot be kept except by faith, for the only righteousness which will stand in the Judgment is "that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith" (Phil. 3:9).

Read the words of Paul in Romans 3:31: "Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law." Making void the law of God by man is not abolishing it, for that is an impossibility. It is as fixed as the throne of God. No matter what men say of the law, nor how much they trample upon it and despise it, it remains the same. The only way that men can make void the law of God is to make it of none effect in their hearts, by their disobedience. Thus in Num. 30:15, a vow that has been broken is said to have been made void. So when the apostle says that we do not make void the law through faith, he means that faith and disobedience are incompatible. No matter how much the law-breaker professes faith, the fact that he is a law-breaker shows that he has no faith. But the possession of faith is shown by the establishment of the law in the heart, so that the man does not sin against God. Let no one decry faith as of little moment.

But does not the apostle James say that faith alone cannot save a man, and that faith without works is dead? Let us look at his words a moment. Too many have with honest intent perverted them to a dead legalism. He does say that faith without works is dead, and this agrees most fully with what we have just quoted and written. For if faith without works is dead, the absence of works shows the absence of faith; for that which is dead has no existence. If a man has faith, works will necessarily follow, and the man will not boast of either one; for by faith boasting is excluded. (Rom. 3:27). Boasting is done only by those who trust wholly in dead works, or whose profession of faith is a hollow mockery.

Then how about (James 2:14), which says: "What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?" The answer necessarily implied is, of course, that it cannot. Why not? Because he hasn't faith. What does it profit if a man say he has faith, if by his wicked course he shows that he has none? **Must we decry the power of faith simply because it does nothing for the man who makes a false profession of it?** Paul speaks of some who profess that they

know God, but who deny Him by their works. (Titus 1:16). The man to whom James refers is one of this class. The fact that he has no good works — no fruit of the Spirit — shows that he has no faith, despite his loud profession; and so of course faith cannot save him; for faith has no power to save a man who does not possess it.

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