

By Grace Are You Saved Through Faith

By Ron Boatwright

God's word tells us, "For by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourself; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9). God's grace is unmerited favor He gives to undeserving man. One can never do enough to earn salvation. Salvation is a gift from God that one does not deserve.

But the Bible says, "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men" (Titus 2:11). Since the grace of God has appeared to all men, does this mean that all people will be saved? No. Man's salvation is not by "grace alone", nor is salvation by "faith alone". There are conditions that man must meet or else all people would be saved.

God's grace will not save in the absence of faith. Our faith is a necessary part of our salvation. Our faith must be a live faith and not a dead faith. God's grace will not save one with a dead faith because, "But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?" (James 2:20). A dead faith is a "faith without works". A dead faith is useless and will cause one to be eternally lost. "Faith only" is a dead faith because God's word says, "You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only" (James 2:24). "Faith only" will not justify anyone. The doctrine of salvation by "faith only" is a doctrine that originated with Satan that is designed to cause many good and honest people to lose their souls in the eternal fires of hell. If "faith only" is all that is required for one to be saved, then the demons will also be saved. The Bible says, "You believe there is one God, you do well, even the demons believe and tremble" (James 2:19). We know the demons who have a "faith only" belief are not going to be saved.

Even our faith or belief is a work that is necessary for our salvation. "Jesus answered and said to them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent'" (John 6:29). Our belief in Christ is a work of God. Salvation is not by "grace alone", nor is it by "faith alone, as some falsely claim. Salvation is by God's grace, but when does one's salvation occur? The Bible says concerning Jesus that, "He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him" (Hebrews 5:9). Our salvation occurs when we obey the Lord. He has only promised to save those who obey Him. If we believe in Jesus we are going to believe and do all He says. If we don't believe in Jesus we will not do what He says. Jesus says one cannot go to heaven unless he "does the will of My Father in heaven" (Matthew 7:21). God's grace will only save man

when he does God's will. Faith saves when one's faith and confidence in the Lord causes one to do what Jesus says one must do in order to be saved.

What is God's will for us so we can be saved and go to heaven? If we really believe in Jesus, we are going to do all that He says, how He says, when He says, and for the reason He says. When one believes and does what Jesus says in Mark 16:16, "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved" then he will be saved. One needs help to misunderstand what Jesus says here. By not believing Jesus when he says we must be baptized in order to be saved, proves that one does not believe Jesus. According to Jesus, one must both believe and be baptized to be saved.

There are many who say that baptism has nothing to do with salvation. This contradicts what Jesus says and shows that they do not believe in Him. They say when one "accepts Jesus as his personal saviour and says the sinners prayer" he is saved. Then a week or so later he is baptized, but not to be saved since he thinks he is already saved. If this is the case then one still has every sin he has ever committed and is still lost. Doing what man says cannot save us. Judgment Day will be the beginning of a continuous eternal horror for all those who believe that God's grace will save those who want to be saved by "faith only" and not by what Jesus says. One's faith must be an active and obedient faith if he expects to be saved and go to heaven.