

Finishing In Faith

(Saving Faith Series - #6)
May 31, 2009

Review:

What kind of faith is saving faith?

Many believe that (kind #1 – assent) Jesus is the Son of God.

But we must believe in (kind #2 – trust) Jesus to be saved.

The faith that saves is the faith that obeys.

Repentance is Required

Repentance is a *change of mind* that includes: a hatred of sin, remorse over sin, a desire to be rid of sin, and a determination to forsake sin.

Confession is Called For.

Public confession that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and our Lord is called for - at the time of our initial obedience and throughout our life.

Baptism is Basic.

Baptism is the specific time when God bestows His gifts of salvation.

Basics of Baptism..

Baptism is not for infants, but for those old enough to understand, believe, repent, etc. Immersion is the scriptural mode of baptism.

Question: If the final judgment was held today, would you be saved?

Answer 1: “Yes, no matter what I do or believe!”

The Bible says a Christian is SECURE in his salvation...

by its clear teaching:

1 John 5:13 ...you may know that you have eternal life.
Rom. 8:15-17 ...we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ...
John 10:29 ...no one can snatch them (my sheep) out of my Father’s hand.
Rom. 8:31-39 ...(nothing) will be able to separate us from the love of God

by personal examples:

2 Tim. 1:12 I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.
Phil. 1:21-23 For to me, ...to die is gain. I desire to depart and be with Christ.
2 Tim. 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day.

Some people read those passages and believe a doctrine of
“once saved, always saved.”

Answer 2: “Maybe” “I hope so” “If I’m good enough” “I’m not sure”

The Bible says a Christian can fall from grace and BE LOST...

by its clear teaching:

1 Cor. 15:1-2 By this gospel you are saved, IF you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.
Col. 1:21-23 Once you were alienated from God... Now he has reconciled you... to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation - IF you continue in your faith...

1 Cor. 10:12 IF you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall!
2 Peter 1:10-11 ...make your calling and election sure. For IF you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord...

by personal examples:

*Gal. 5:4 (Jews trying to be justified by the Law)
You have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.*
*2 Tim. 4:10 (Demas – Paul’s coworker)
Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me...*

Some people read those passages and practice a doctrine of
“always trying, never sure.”

Answer 3: “Yes, because I believe in God’s power to save.

The Bible says a Christian is SECURE and needs to REMAIN FAITHFUL to be saved.

1 Peter 1:5 Through faith you are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.
1 John 1:7 If we walk in the light... the blood of Jesus, his Son, (continually) purifies us from every sin.

A biblical doctrine of Christian assurance would be
“simply trusting, fully forgiven.”

A believer is completely, 100% forgiven (justified) by the blood of Christ. He is completely free from the condemnation for sin (Rom. 8:1). He is a *forgiven* person, even though he is not a *perfect* person.

What is “falling from grace,” or “falling away?”

We not only initially become justified by faith (lessons 1-5), but we also *remain* justified by faith in the atoning death of Jesus. Falling from grace occurs, then, when we stop trusting in the blood of Jesus.

How does one “fall from grace?”

Our faith can die three ways:

1. A deliberate decision to stop believing in Christ and his saving work – renouncing the Christian faith.
2. Slow starvation. Faith begins in a stage of infancy, and must mature through spiritual disciplines. Faithful Christians devote themselves to such things as “teaching, fellowship, and prayer” (Acts 2:42) (see Matt. 13:5-6, 20-21)
3. Strangulation by sin. If a Christian allows sins to continue and flourish, they will choke out faith. (see Matt. 13:7, 22)

Note: Much of the content of this lesson is from Jack Cottrell’s chapter on *Assurance of Salvation* in his book The Faith Once For All. (College Press, 2002)