

LESSON 21

GREAT BIBLE THEMES

TO WHAT SHALL WE ATTRIBUTE OUR SALVATION?

Did you ever hear salvation attributed to one thing by one speaker and to another by someone else? It is possible for this to be very confusing and may be so presented to appear that the Bible presents several contradictory ideas about salvation. For your study today we want to approach the Bible with this question in mind, namely: What really saves or to what may we attribute salvation? In the references used below you will find a number of other terms that mean the same as salvation. Notice such terms as being reconciled to God, being justified, having everlasting life, and receiving the remission of sins. We take these to mean the same as being reconciled to God.

We are sure that you would agree that the ideal attitude toward such a study is to really want to know what the Bible teaches irrespective of our own notions in the matter. We should also recall the principle that every passage of scripture should be interpreted in the light of the teaching of every other passage. Our task then is to come to understand the Bible teaching on the subject of what saves so as to include every teaching that we can on this subject.

The following questions constitute an outline for this study: . . .

1. Give at least fifteen (15) different statements of things to which salvation is attributed. The answers to the next three questions may be taken from this list.

make these two verses contradict each other, but we must understand every passage in the light of every other passage. We want to keep this very important principle in mind throughout this study.

It is interesting to notice the different things about Christ's life to which salvation is ascribed. For instance read Romans 5:9-10, "Much more then, being now _____, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were _____ to God by the _____; much more, being reconciled, we shall be _____." Notice also that his resurrection was for our justification. Romans 4:25, "Who was delivered for our offenses, and was _____ again for our _____." In these verses we have four different things about Christ's life that are said to justify us. Would it be proper to say that we are saved by his death, or his life, or his resurrection? Would it be consistent to contend that we are saved by his blood and, therefore, we are not saved by his life? Of course, we are to understand that each of these different elements of his life contributed to making salvation possible. No one of them is to be understood in any light that would mean that we are saved by that element only.

Two other verses that express the same idea as the ones we have noticed are Titus 3:5 and Ephesians 2:8. The first of these says, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his _____, by the washing of _____, and renewing of the _____." The second reference says, "For by _____ are ye _____"

through _____; and that not of _____: it is the _____." From these we see that salvation is a gift from God made possible through his mercy and grace. The fact that we are saved by grace just means that God did not owe us our salvation, but that he made it possible in spite of our sins. It was given as an unmerited favor. We are also saved by the washing of _____, and by the renewing of the _____. In a previous lesson, we studied some about God's plan involving being born again or regenerated and, in a future lesson, we plan to study more about the work of the Holy Spirit in our salvation. Just here it is sufficient to notice that they each have a part to play in our salvation.

Let us now look to a number of references that attribute salvation to some things entirely different from these things that have been done for us by the Lord. An often quoted passage is Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the _____; for it is the _____ to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first and also to the Greek." The gospel just means the good news concerning salvation through Christ. Would it be correct to say that we are saved by the gospel of Christ? Would we understand this to mean that we are not saved by God or by God's mercy and grace? Another passage that sets forth this same idea but in different words is 1 Corinthians 1:21, "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by _____ to _____ them that _____."

See also James 1:21, "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the

_____ _____, which is able to _____ _____." Are we then saved by the preaching of words? You may recall our reference in a previous lesson to the instructions the angel of the Lord gave Cornelius, found in Acts 11:14, when he was told to send for Peter, "Who shall tell thee _____, whereby thou and all thy house shall be _____." Here again we would think that anyone who would insist that we are saved by the Lord but not by the preaching of his word, is guilty of a very serious error in taking part of the Word of God and interpreting it in a way that would contradict other passages.

It might be well to notice especially that the references in the paragraph above referred to things that God did not do, but that others do for us. Others have brought the gospel to us and proclaimed it to us that we might believe.

There are a number of references in the Bible that attribute salvation to things entirely different from the ones mentioned above. We want to look up a number of these verses. Then we will want to make a summary of the things mentioned in them that are said to save.

John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever _____ _____ should not _____, but have _____."

Acts 2:38, "_____ and _____ every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the _____, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

Romans 10:9-10, "That if thou shalt _____
 _____ the Lord Jesus,
 and shalt _____
 _____ that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou
 shalt _____. For with the heart man
 _____ unto righteousness; and with the
 _____ is made unto _____."

1 Peter 3:21, "The like figure whereunto even _____
 doth also now _____."

In these verses we have listed the things that man must do for himself. God cannot do them for us, neither can other people. Others may encourage us, but obedience is an individual responsibility. The most basic of all the conditions is belief or faith in God. Other conditions are repentance, confession of the Lord Jesus with the mouth, and baptism. Shall we interpret any of these in a way that will make them seem contradictory to other things to which salvation is ascribed? Would we be correct in saying that salvation is a gift from God, therefore, there is nothing for us to do in order to be saved? Is there any one of these things that we could be justified in leaving out as being non-essential?

Notice Hebrews 5:9, "And being made perfect, he (Jesus) became the _____
 _____ unto them _____
 _____." Can we think that obedience to God is not a condition of salvation? Would the person who reasons that salvation is a gift from God conclude that therefore obedience is not essential by closing his eyes to some of the other teachings of the Bible? While we are thinking about salvation being a gift from God we shall also consider the statement Peter made in Acts

2:40, "And with many other words did he testify and exhort saying, _____ from this untoward generation." Shall we say that Peter was wrong because we cannot save ourselves? Of course, he was speaking as the Spirit directed, thus we know that man has a part in saving himself. Shall we conclude that man can save himself, then, without Jesus or God's grace?

Do you suppose that it is possible for us to give so much emphasis to some condition of salvation that we neglect or deny others? One of the writers of the New Testament must have had such a possibility in mind when he wrote James 2:24, "Ye see then how that by _____ a man is _____, and not by _____." This is the only time that we have found the term "only" in this study. We mentioned 15 or 18 different things that are said to save us in this lesson. Would we be doing justice to the Scriptures to add the word "only" after any one of these? Are we saved by baptism only? Are we saved by God only?

One further thing that is said to lead us to salvation is given in Revelation 2:10. The last part of this verse says, "be thou _____, and I will give thee a _____." Jesus had set forth this principle when he sent his apostles on a special preaching tour in which they were to go to the Jewish nation only. Matthew 10:22, "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that _____ _____/ _____/ _____." Paul also stressed the importance of faithfulness as an essential to salvation in 1 Corinthians 15:2. In referring to the gospel he said, "By which also ye are saved, if ye _____ _____/ _____/ _____"

_____ /
unless ye have believed in vain.”

Notice why Jesus said some would be blessed in the judgment. Matthew 25:34-36, “Then shall the King say unto them on his right, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an

_____, and ye
_____: I was
_____, and ye
_____: I was a _____ and ye
_____; _____, I was _____ and ye
_____; I was in _____, and ye
_____.” Are we

justified in referring to these as conditions of salvation also?

One of the greatest questions man can consider is, “What must I do to be saved? Possibly his greatest danger is to be found in the Word you write in the following blank from Hebrews 2:3, “How shall we escape, if we _____ so great salvation?” We need to give diligence to make our calling and election sure. **2 Peter 1:10, Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: (AKJV)**

TEST

Be sure that you understand the question, and then answer it strictly according to God's Word.

1. After studying the scriptures in this lesson we learned that: (a) man is saved by "faith only", (b) man is saved by God's grace only, (c) man is saved by the grace of God through Jesus Christ coupled with man's faith and obedience to certain requirements of God, (d) man has nothing to do to be saved, (e) man is saved by works only. _____
2. In our lesson today we noticed that several things were required of man that he might be saved. We saw that man must: (a) have faith (believe), (b) repent of his sins, (c) confess Christ, (d) be baptized, (e) and remain faithful unto death. Which one of the following can be omitted? (a) faith, (b) repentance, (c) confession, (d) baptism, (e) faithfulness, (f) none can be left out. _____
3. Man (is, is not) justified by faith only. _____
4. Man is saved: (a) wholly by grace, (b) by grace through faith, (c) by faith only, (d) by meritorious works. _____
5. The gospel: (a) has nothing to do with man's salvation, (b) saves every individual, (c) is only for the Gentile races, (d) is God's power to save. _____
6. Man (is, is not) saved by the washing of regeneration. _____

7. Were any persons ever told to save themselves? (yes or no)
8. Once a person believes, he (does, does not) have to keep in memory the preaching of the gospel. _____
9. If we neglect so great a salvation, how shall we (supply the correct word) _____
10. Baptism (does, does not) save. _____

Score: 10 points for each correct answer _____

Correct answers for lesson 20:1:

1. (b)
2. (a)
3. (d)
4. (false)
5. (c)
6. (false)
7. (c)
8. (b)
9. (d)
10. (a)

List below others who wish to take this course.