

The Four Key Concepts – #3

FAITH

So far we've looked at how everyone is guilty of sin, and therefore deserving of the punishment of hell. But we also saw how God responded to humankind's hopelessness by graciously sending his Son Jesus to pay for sin. But that raises the question, "If Jesus paid for everyone's sins, isn't everyone going to be saved?" The answer revolves around the third key concept – faith. In this lesson, we hope to answer the following questions:

- What is the difference between those who are saved and those who aren't?
 - What is "faith"?
 - Does faith save us?
 - How does someone come to faith?
-
-

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THOSE WHO ARE SAVED AND THOSE WHO AREN'T?

Please read the following passages and then answer the corresponding questions.

John 3:16 – "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son...

2 Corinthians 5:19 – God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them.

1 John 2:2 – He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

2 Thessalonians 1:8,9 – *He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power.*

Matthew 25:46 – "Then they will go away to *eternal punishment*, but the righteous to eternal life."

1. **According to the underlined portions of those passages, whose sins did Jesus pay for?**
2. **According to the italicized portions of those passages, does the Bible teach that everyone is saved?**

Key Concept #3 - FAITH

John 3:16 – “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, *that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*”

Mark 16:16 – “*Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.*”

John 3:18 – *Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.*

- 3. According to the italicized portions of those passages, whom does the Bible teach will be saved?
- 4. And according to the underlined portions of those passages, who will not be saved?

2 Corinthians 4:13 - With that same spirit of *faith we also believe* and therefore speak.

Romans 3:22 - This righteousness from God comes through *faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.*

1 Peter 1:21 - Through him *you believe* in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so *your faith* and hope are in God.

- 5. According to those passages, what is another word for “believing”?

On the basis of the passages we have looked at, how would you then answer the question, “WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THOSE WHO ARE SAVED AND THOSE WHO AREN’T?”

WHAT IS “FAITH”?

James 2:19 – You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that – and shudder.

Matthew 8:28 - When he arrived at the other side in the region of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men coming from the tombs met him. They were so violent that no one could pass that way. “What do you want with us, Son of God?” they shouted.

Key Concept #3 - FAITH

Romans 10:10 – For it is with *your heart* that you believe...

Hebrews 10:22 - Let us draw near to God with a sincere *heart* in full assurance of faith, having our *hearts* sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

Psalms 78:22 - They did not believe in God or trust in his deliverance.

John 14:1 - Jesus said, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me."

Hebrews 11:1 - Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

6. Faith affects more than the head. It also affects the...? (Look at the italicized portions of those passages.)
7. What is another word you could use to describe this "heart-knowledge"? (Look at the underlined portions of those verses.)
8. According to Hebrews 11:1, what does faith enable people to trust in?

Romans 8:38,39 - For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, *nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Isaiah 12:2 - Surely *God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid.* The LORD, the LORD, is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation."

Galatians 2:20 - The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the *Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

Romans 3:22 - This righteousness from God comes through faith *in Jesus Christ* to all who believe.

Ephesians 2:8 - It is by grace you have been saved, through faith...

9. According to the italicized portions of these passages, what exactly is the object of our faith? What do we put our trust in?
10. What does our faith trust that God did? (Look at the underlined portions of those passages.)

On the basis of the passages we have looked at then, could you please answer the question, "WHAT DO WE MEAN WHEN WE SAY FAITH?"

Key Concept #3 - FAITH

DOES FAITH SAVE US?

Please read the following passages and then answer the corresponding questions.

Acts 16:30,31 – [The jailer said], “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.”

Romans 10:4 – Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

Genesis 15:6 - Abram believed (IE – had faith in him) the LORD, and *God credited it to him as righteousness.*

Romans 4:3 - What does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and *it was credited to him as righteousness.*"

Romans 4:23,24 - The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom *God will credit righteousness -- for us who believe in him* who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.

Philippians 3:8,9 - What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ -- the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.

1 John 2:1 - If anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense -- Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

11. Does the Bible teach that it is necessary for someone to have faith if they are going to be saved? (Look especially at the first two passages.)
12. According to the italicized portions of those passages, what does God do for people who put their faith in Jesus as their Savior?
13. Whose righteousness do we receive as “credit” through faith? (Look especially at underlined portions of those verses.)

On the basis of the passages we have looked at, how would you answer the question, “DOES FAITH SAVE US?” Or perhaps if we wanted to ask the question more specifically, “DOES FAITH IN AND OF ITSELF SAVE US, OR DOES THE OBJECT OF OUR FAITH (JESUS CHRIST AND HIS RIGHTEOUS) SAVE US?” (*circle one*)

WE ARE SAVED BECAUSE OF OUR FAITH

WE ARE SAVED BECAUSE OF THE OBJECT

Key Concept #3 - FAITH

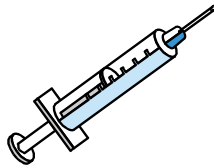
The relationship between faith and salvation can be illustrated in the following way.



Think of sin as a terrible disease which, if left untreated, always results in death.



Think of God's gracious gift of Jesus Christ and his righteousness as the antidote to our sin.



Think of faith as the way God gives you the antidote to sin – the benefits of Christ's death and resurrection.

When you received the injection of that antidote and your life was saved, you probably wouldn't sing the praises of that wonderful hypodermic needle. You'd sing the praises of the antidote. The hypodermic needle had to be there, or you wouldn't have received the antidote. But you know that the needle isn't what saved you.

Likewise, faith has to be there if someone is going to be saved (cf. John 3:16 or Acts 16:30,31). However, we know faith isn't the cause of salvation. Salvation is the result of the object of our faith, Jesus Christ. Through faith we receive the benefits of his work.

HOW DOES SOMEONE COME TO FAITH?

Please read the following passages and then answer the corresponding questions.

Ephesians 2:8 - For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith -- and *this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.*

Romans 12:3 - For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of *faith God has given you.*

John 15:16 – [Jesus said], “*You did not chose me, but I chose you.*”

1 Corinthians 12:3 - No one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

14. Is faith something we accomplished on our own? Did we choose to have faith? (Look at the italicized portions of those passages.)

15. If we didn't chose to have faith, how did we get it? (Look at the underlined portions of the

Key Concept #3 - FAITH

2 Timothy 3:15 – From infancy you have known the *holy Scriptures*, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

2 Thessalonians 2:13,14 - But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. He called you to this through our *gospel*, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

16. According to the italicized portions of those verses, what does God use in order to create saving faith?

Romans 2:8 - But for those who are self-seeking and who *reject the truth* and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.

Ephesians 3:16,17 - I pray that out of his glorious riches he *may strengthen you with power* through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

17. While the Bible teaches that we don't have the power to come to faith, we do have one awesome power. According to Romans 2:8, what is that power?

18. That's why God's Word is important in our lives. According to Ephesians 3:16,17, what does the Holy Spirit do for our faith through God's Word?

On the basis of the passages we have looked at, how would you answer that question, "HOW DOES SOMEONE COME TO FAITH?"

Not only is the sacrifice Christ made for us a gift from God, our faith is a gift from God! Our salvation, then, is entirely God's doing. This raises the logical question, "What about our good works? How do they fit in?" That is the focus of our final key concept – WORKS.

Ephesians 2:10 - We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do **GOOD WORKS**, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

TAKING IT DEEPER...

- A. Agree or Disagree – Jesus paid for the sins of those people who are in hell.**
- B. Agree or Disagree – The devil knows that Jesus died on the cross.**
- C. Agree or Disagree – The devil has faith in Jesus’ death on the cross.**
- D. Agree or Disagree – We will go to heaven if we believe in Jesus and try to live according to our faith.**
- E. Agree or Disagree – Faith comes to those who pray for it.**
- F. Agree or Disagree – We have the power to keep our faith strong.**
- G. Agree or Disagree – A good pastor will bring many people to faith.**
- H. What do you think? A common expression is “Keep the faith!” Another one is “You just got to have faith.” In light of what we said saving faith is, can you explain why those expressions are completely meaningless unless further explanation is given?**
- I. What do you think? You can say a Hindu, or a Muslim, or a Buddhist have faith. You could even say that they have strong faith. But if you say that, how are you defining faith? Could you say those people have *saving* faith?**