

Midtown Messenger

Volume 1

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Issue 30

LOST BY FAITH ONLY

Ronnie Scherffius

One of the most cherished errors of protestantism is the doctrine of salvation by faith only. Under Part III, Section III, Article 9 of the *2016 Book of Discipline of the Methodist Church* we find:

“We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that **we are justified by faith, only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort**”

Under Articles of Faith, Article V. *Justification* of The Standard Manual for Baptist Churches (Edward Hiscox, 1903) we read:

We believe the Scriptures teach that the great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in him is justification; that justification includes the pardon of sin and the gift of eternal life on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but **solely through faith in Christ**; by means of which faith his perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us by God.

Such beliefs/teachings of salvation by faith without, before, and/or apart from any works of obedience (i.e., salvation by faith apart from and/or before baptism) can be found across the spectrum of the denominational world. In fact, within the pages of the aforementioned Standard Manual for Baptist Churches one reads:

It is most likely that in the Apostolic age when there was but “one Lord, one faith, and one baptism,” and no differing denominations existed, **the baptism of a convert by that very act, constituted him**

a member of the church, and at once endowed him with all the rights and privileges of full membership. In that sense, “baptism was the door into the church.” Now, it is different; (Chapter V, Church Membership, p 22)

One might question the Baptist: “Why it is different from the Apostolic Age?” “Who was authorized to make a difference?” “Where in the Scriptures is such a difference taught?” The fact of the matter is, salvation does not come by faith apart from works of obedience! James by inspiration wrote:

“What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? **Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.**” (James 2:14-17)

According to our brother James, faith apart from works has as much saving power as words without action has a benevolent profit-making power! In other words, one is not saved by faith only but rather lost by faith only. Faith gives one the power or ability to become a child of God (John 1:11-12), and faith is rewarded in obedience. We should neither minimize the importance of faith nor the necessity of faith for the Hebrews writer exclaims: “But without faith it is impossible to please him:” (Heb. 11:6). Yet when one considers the *hall of faith* of Hebrews 11 he quickly discovers that by faith all obeyed!

To demonstrate this timeless truth, that one is lost by faith, we need only to consider further the words of James: “Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble” (James 2:18-19). Apart from an outright rejection of truth, one cannot deny the fact that “the devils” (i.e., evil spirits) have a faith in God, yet they are lost! Were one to object that it is not a “faith in God” but a “faith in Jesus” that saves, we should direct them to the confession of the faith of the evil spirits when Christ walked the earth: “And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice, Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God” (Lk. 4:33-34). From this passage we learn: 1) the devils know who Jesus is; 2) the devils willingly and unprovoked confessed Jesus; 3) the devils have faith that Jesus is who He claimed to be (the Holy One of God); 4) the devils believe Jesus has power over the spiritual realm; 5) the devils believe Jesus has the power to destroy them; 6) the devils believe also in God; 7) the devils, though they have faith in both Jesus and God, have no part of them! Friends, faith alone does not save!

Though there are many passages that could be noted to demonstrate the necessity of works, actions, doing, or obedience (however one wishes to term it!) on the part of man, we will consider one: “Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37) It is worthy to note that when those on Pentecost heard the **first** gospel sermon they immediately inquired, *what shall we do!* Their question was not of faith, for their hearts clearly burned with faith in the Jesus of whom Peter preached! Their desire was to know **what to do!** The implication is clear - faith demands action/works/obedience.

There is no scripture that teaches salvation

by faith alone. Salvation comes by faith working through obedience. Hear James, “Seest thou how faith wrought with **[was working together with]** his works, and by works was faith made perfect?” (James 2:22) One is lost by faith alone. One is lost by works alone. It takes obedient works to make our faith complete.

Just Win Today

Many parts of life are much more manageable if we focus on each small victory at a time. This is especially true spiritually. We all want to get to heaven. To help us get there, let's focus on the smaller, daily victories. Scripture supports such a mindset.

Luke 9:23 – “And He was saying to them all, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross **daily** and follow Me.”

Hebrews 3:13 – “But encourage one another **day after day**, as long as it is still called ‘**Today**,’ so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.”

Matthew 6:34 – “So do not worry about **tomorrow**; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

Sometimes the end goal of heaven feels far off. So then just focus on winning today. Focus on encouraging others and keeping them faithful today. Focus on following God today. And if God brings tomorrow, then win that day.

Keep pressing on, one day at a time.

- Selected-

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE

Week of October 7, 2018

Sunday Morning:

Announcements: Bryant Siegel
Scripture Reading: Isaac Jobes

Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread: Mark FitzSimmons
Fruit of the Vine: Clifton Rutherford
Offering: Dennis Bryson
Assist: Kirk FitzSimmons, Sammy Scherffius, BJ Davis

Sunday Evening: Mark FitzSimmons, Clifton Rutherford

Prayer

A.M. Opening: Will Cleveland
A.M. Closing: Ron White
P.M. Opening: Will Cleveland
P.M. Closing: Lupe Escojido

Ushers: Don Lynn
Allen Clifton

Wednesday Devotional: Mark FitzSimmons

Open/Close Building: Willie & Hellen Cannady

Sound System: Curtis Scherffius

Greeters:

Will Cleveland
Allen Clifton
Don Lynn

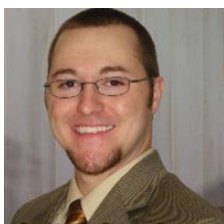
Prepare Communion: Millie Jamison

FALL ONE DAY MEETING

Sunday, October 21, 2018

Guest Speaker: Cody Westbrook

Cody will be preaching the Morning Adult Bible Class, Morning Service and 1pm service. The 1pm service will be conducted by the young men of our congregation.



There will also be a potluck meal after morning service. Please bring a potluck dish to feed your family and a visitor.

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

BILL YOUNG, as he continues to have health problems.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct. 7: Forever Young game night
Oct. 9: Ladies/Men's Bible Classes
Oct. 14: Jr./Sr. high devo hosted by the Pitchford's
Oct. 16: Ladies/Men's Bible Classes
Oct. 21: Fall One Day Meeting with Cody Westbrook
Oct. 23: Ladies/Men's Bible Classes
Oct. 28: Trunk or Treat
Oct. 30: Ladies/Men's Bible Classes

IN THE AREA

Oct. 26-28: Fall Retreat @ Peach Valley

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES:

Happy Birthday: Willie Cannady, Janet Morales (7); Ashley Price, Sally Law (8)

Happy Anniversary: Scott & Mickey DeDear (7); Kin & Sandra Marie (12)

KEEP IN PRAYER

MIDTOWN MEMBERS

Jeff Cannady Della Rampley
Dee Gilpatrick Clark Withers
Ann Pantel

SHUT-INS

Faye Henderson Sandy Malone

FRIENDS & FAMILY

Victor Benitez Vikram Gottam
(brother of Virginia Escojido) (brother-in-law of Archana Verma)
Kim Neel-Farthing Antonio Benitez
(daughter of Joyce) (brother of Virginia Escojido)

If you would like to add or remove a name on the "Keep in Prayer" List, please see Nina Siegel.

MIDTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST

Elders:

Will Cleveland
Tom Pitchford

Deacons:

Adrian Cannady
Mark FitzSimmons
Doug Jobs
Bryant Siegel

Minister: Ronnie Scherffius**Secretary:** Nina Siegel**TIMES OF SERVICES**

Sunday Bible Class: 9:00AM
Sunday Morning Worship: 10:00AM
Sunday Evening Worship: 5:00PM
Wednesday Bible Class: 7:00PM

RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Week of September 30, 2018

Bible Class.....117
A.M. Worship.....161
P.M. Worship.....95
Wednesday Bible Study.....93

Offering \$5,237

QUICK REFERENCE

Use this quick reference to help you grow in knowledge:

Hell

Torment.....Luke 16:19-31
Mark 9:43f; 2 Thes. 1:7f; Rev. 20:14-15

**SUPPORTED WORKS**

India - Mani Pagidipalli
New Zealand - James & Emily Cammock
Bible Land Passages - John & Carla Moore
Southwest School of Bible Studies - Cody Kilgore

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