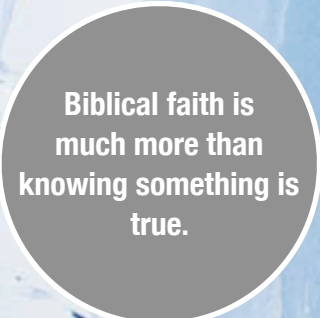


SAVING FAITH

Distinguishing false faith from true saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.



Biblical faith is much more than knowing something is true.

SAVING FAITH IS NOT JUST ACCEPTING FACTS

We “believe” all kinds of things. We believe there was a man named George Washington, who was the first president, and we believe there was a man named Jesus who died on the cross.

Many people think they are Christian simply because they accept a set of facts about God, Jesus, the crucifixion, and the resurrection. However, let's take a moment and examine what Satan himself believes. First, Satan knows there is a God. Satan used to live with Him. (Isa. 14:12) Second, Satan knows that Jesus is the Son of God (Mark 1:24). Third, Satan knows that Jesus was crucified. He spoke through Peter to try to prevent the crucifixion (Mark 8:31-33). Finally, Satan

knows that Jesus rose from the dead. This was the central proclamation of the Apostles and the church for 2000 years.

So, Satan believes in God, in Jesus, and knows the truth of the crucifixion and resurrection. By most people's modern definition, Satan himself would be classified as a Christian. There are even some who would defend him, saying, “You really shouldn't judge people who believe all those things.” He is just as much a Christian as you or I!



Jesus' Temptation

Satan knows the truth of Christ. However, this is not saving faith. Simply knowing the facts are true doesn't save anyone.

Defining Biblical Saving Faith

Biblical faith includes three different aspects. Knowledge, Belief (assent), and Trust (commitment). Knowledge alone is not enough (Rom. 1:32; James 2:19). Knowledge is necessary. Man must know that Jesus is the only sacrifice for his sin. However, knowledge alone saves no one. Knowledge and a belief in the facts is not enough (John 3:2; Acts 26:27-28). Simply believing that the story of Jesus is true saves no one. The demons believe that Jesus is who He said He was, and they believe He did what the Bible claims He did.

Saving faith includes both knowledge and belief but these alone do not save. Saving faith must include a personal trust or commitment to the person of Christ. True faith is "To trust in Jesus Christ as a living person for

forgiveness of sins and for eternal life with God."

Faith is an individual placing his eternal soul's destiny completely in the person and work of Jesus Christ. It is a channel of living trust between man and His God.

This does not mean that, at conversion, faith is complete and perfect. Believers grow in their faith throughout this life. (Rom. 10:17) However, there can be no conversion where there is no trust or commitment.

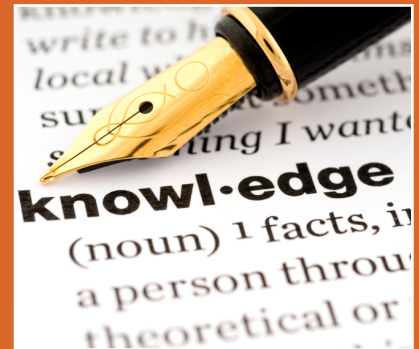
Today, there is a huge debate between "Easy believism" and "Lordship salvation." The former says that all man needs to do is believe the facts of the gospel. The latter says that one must commit to the lordship of the Savior.

The Bible is abundantly clear. "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." (Luke 4:27).

Jesus is not
savior if he is
not Lord

JESUS IS LORD

PARTS OF FAITH



Pisteuo - greek word "faith"

"-to entrust oneself to an entity in complete confidence, believe (in), trust, with implication of total commitment to the one who is trusted."

-Bauer, Danker, Arndt, and Gingrich Greek Lexicon of the New Testament.

SAVING FAITH INCLUDES REPENTANCE

Paul applauds the saving faith of the Thessalonian believers in 1 Thessalonians 1:9. He says that believers all over Macedonia and Achaia were talking about their salvation. Paul describes their salvation by saying that they “turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.”

Notice that the Thessalonians did not simply believe. They turned from their former beliefs and trusted in Christ to save them. There is no faith without repentance and there is no repentance without faith. They are two sides of the same coin. Faith and repentance are ONE act, not two. The individual turns from sin (repentance) and turns to Christ for salvation (faith).

Repentance is a heartfelt sorrow for sin, a renouncing of it, and a sincere commitment to forsake it and walk in obedience to Christ. Just like faith, repentance includes the knowledge of sin, the

belief in Scripture’s teaching about sin’s wretchedness, and a personal commitment to turn from sin and seek God’s forgiveness.

Scripture requires both faith and repentance for salvation.



Sometimes both are mentioned (Isa. 55:6-7; 2 Cor. 7:9-10; Acts 20:21; Heb. 6:1), sometimes only faith is mentioned (John 3:16; Acts 16:31; Rom. 10:9; Eph. 2:8-9), sometimes only repentance is mentioned (Luke 24:46-47; Acts 2:37-38; Acts 3:19; Rom. 2:4).

It is also important to understand that faith and repentance continue to grow throughout the believer’s life. Faith and repentance do not stop at conversion. They are the lifestyle of all believers. We continue to grow in our repentance and we continue to grow in our faith.

Repentance Greek: Metanoia

A change of mind...Also with the nuance of remorse (as regret for shortcomings and errors)...with a focus on the

need of change in view of responsibility to deity...repentance, turning about, conversion; as a turning away.

FAITH / REPENTANCE



THE EVIDENCE OF TRUE FAITH

A FAITH THAT WORKS JAMES 2

The Kind of Faith that Saves

We are saved through faith, but only through a particular kind of faith. The faith that saves produces works in our lives. If a man claims to have faith and there are no works to show his faith, then his faith is not genuine. This is made clear in James 2



Faith alone saves, but the faith that saves is never alone.

“What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?...Yea a man may say, thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works...For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also” (James 2:14-15; 18; 26).

James is not saying that faith alone cannot save. He is speaking of a particular kind of faith. The kind of faith that cannot save is faith that does not

A Saving
Faith is a
working Faith

produce works in the believer. Men cannot see the heart, therefore, to be justified before men, faith must be seen in action. Faith alone saves, but the faith that saves is never alone, it is always accompanied by works. This should not cause us to think, “Man, I need to start performing to prove my faith is real!” The point is that true faith produces works. We all need to do better in our works. That isn’t the point. The point is that we should examine our faith to see if it is producing these works at all.



Faith Works



...faith apart from works is dead. James 2:26

Study Questions

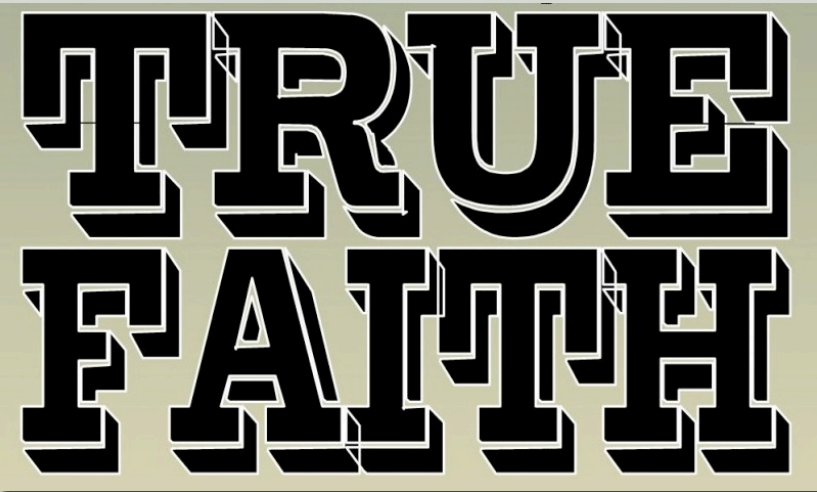
1. Over 80% of Americans claim to be Christians, do you think this is a fair representation? Why or why not?

2. Would you agree that biblical faith includes knowledge, agreement, and commitment? Why or why not?

3. The Bible is clear, faith alone is required for salvation. However, true saving faith produces what?

4. Does true faith in Christ include submitting oneself to

the Lordship of Christ? Can you think of any Scripture to go with your answer?



5. Do you believe that belief and repentance are both integral components of saving faith? Can you prove this from Scripture?

