

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

By What Is a Person Saved?

By Bobby Witherington, Edited

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23). *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord* (Rom. 6:23).

It would be difficult for the truth to be more plainly stated; namely, (1) *“all have sinned”* and (2) *“the wages of sin is death.”* *“Death”* as used in the Bible, basically means separation. When used in a physical sense, death denotes the separation of the spirit from the body (Jas. 2:26). When used in a spiritual sense, it denotes the separation of the sinner from God (Isa. 59:1-2). In the day of Judgment, when the *“dead”* will be judged *“according to their works”* those who are not saved will be *“cast into the lake of fire”* which is described as *“the second death”* (Rev. 20:12-15). Clearly, *“the second death”* refers to *“eternal”* separation from God (Matt. 25:46), and in a place described as *“the lake of fire”* (Rev. 20:15), which is the same place where *“the devil”* will be *“cast”* (Rev. 20:10; cf. Matt. 25:41)!

In view of these facts, it is exceedingly important that a person be among “the saved.” Fortunately, that is God’s desire, for the Bible says God *“desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth”* (1 Tim. 2:4). This is why **God** sent Jesus into the world, (Jn. 3:16), and it is why **Jesus** came into the world, it being *“to seek and to save that which was lost”* (Lk. 19:10; cf. Matt. 18:11). Indeed, Jesus *“came into the world to save sinners”* (1Tim. 1:15). The Bible not only informs us who the *“Savior”* is; it also informs us regarding the things by which a person is saved. Hence, we ask the question, **“by what is a person saved?”**

One is Saved By:

1. **The gospel of Christ** – which is described as *“the power of God unto salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek”* (Rom. 1:16).
2. **The grace of God** – *“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God”* (Eph. 2:8).
3. **The “life” of Christ** – *“For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life”* (Rom. 5:10).
4. **Faith** – *“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”* (Rom. 5:1). *“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household”* (Acts 16:30).
5. **Baptism** – *“There is also an antitype which now saves us – baptism (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) through the resurrection of Jesus Christ”* (1 Pet. 3:21).
6. **Faith and baptism** – *“He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned”* (Mk.16:16).
7. **Works** – *“You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only”* (Jas. 2:24).
8. **The name of Christ** – *“Nor is there salvation in any other, but there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved”* (Acts 4:12).

9. Hope – “For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does a man still hope for what he sees” (Rom. 8:24).

10. “The washing of regeneration” – “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:5).

Observations

In the preceding paragraphs we have noted ten things by which a person is “*saved*.” In no instance do we find a particular item mentioned, and then read of salvation being attributed to that item “only.” Yet in today’s world we hear preachers declare that a person is saved by “*faith only*,” or that one is saved by “*grace alone*.” Admittedly, the expression “*faith only*” does appear in the Bible, but the one time when that expression is used, the inspired writer said, “*You see then that man is justified by works, and not by faith only*” (Jas. 2:24).

An analogy could be made between the physical and the spiritual. Physically, a person lives by eating, by breathing, by exercise, and by countless other items too numerous to list. But he doesn’t live by any one of these items “only,” to the exclusion of the rest. So it is in the spiritual realm; one is saved by the gospel, the grace of God, the life of Christ, by faith, by baptism, by faith and baptism, by works, the name of Christ, by hope, by “*the washing of regeneration*” etc., but no one is saved by any one of these items only. It is time for preachers to start proclaiming “*the whole counsel of God*” (Acts 20:27), and quit picking and choosing what they prefer to the exclusion of the other items which God has also ordained. Eternity is too long, hell is too horrible, and heaven is too wonderful for any person to take such liberties with that precious word by which we shall all be “*judged*” (Jn. 12:48)! – *Seffner Church of Christ Bulletin, January 8, 2017.* ■

“*Evil Suspicions*”

By Larry Ray Hafley

The Bible warns against the danger of “*evil surmisings*,” or “*evil suspicions*” (1 Tim. 6:4). In 1 Chronicles 19, Nahash, the king of Ammon, died. “*And David said I will show kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, because his father showed kindness to me. And David sent messengers to comfort him concerning his Father.*” However, certain political leaders among the Ammonites were suspicious and said to Hanun, “*Do you think that David is honoring your father, in that he has sent comforters to you? Have not his servants come to you to search and to over-throw and to spy out the land?*”

Hanun, acting on their suspicions, mistreated and “*greatly humiliated*” David’s servants. As a result, a destructive war of death and destruction soon followed. It was all caused by “*evil surmisings*,” by “*evil suspicions*.”

A suspicious attitude is hard to fight. One who has such a defiled disposition can always “justify” his reasons for feeling as he does. He sees every extended, helping hand as a clenched fist. He views your smile as proof that you are laughing at him. If you give him an egg for breakfast, he thinks you are calling him “a chicken.” If you give him a peach for lunch, he thinks you are the pits. There is just no way to satisfy a negative, suspicious state of mind. Such people spread their dark thoughts to others and cause them to become wary and unsettled. They assign evil motives to even the most harmless of words and deeds. See 1 Chronicles 19 related above.

Brethren, beware of this gloomy outlook. True love is not suspicious. It “*thinketh no evil*” (1 Cor. 13:5). It does not assume the worst. It expects that which is good and puts the best construction on the motives and deeds of others. Love builds. Suspicion tears down. Love unites. Suspicion divides. Love trusts. Suspicion doubts. Love smiles. Suspicion glares. Love attracts. Suspicion repels. Love forgives and forgets. Suspicion remembers what never happened. Love appreciates this article and its admonition. Suspicion says, “It was aimed at me.” (For once, suspicion’s fears are confirmed. It was.) – *Truth Magazine, August 15, 1996.* ■

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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