

THE RIGHT KIND OF FAITH ***(What Specifically We Must Believe)***

In order to be saved there are some things one must KNOW and then BELIEVE. The Bible is clear that God desires all people “to come to the knowledge of the truth” and thereby be saved (1 Tim. 2:4). Note the following points:

1. The content of one’s faith (what a person believes) makes all the difference in terms of whether one goes to heaven or hell.

The Jews had a ZEAL for God but were ignorant of how to truly be right with God on the basis of faith in Christ (cf. Rom. 10:1-4). John wrote the long and lengthy book of John so people might know the truth of WHO Jesus is as the Christ, the Son of God, and thereby believe and have life (John 20:31). God has given us the testimony of His Son to the end whoever believes in Him may know that they have eternal life (1 Jn. 5:9-13).

2. Concerning the nature of saving faith, its essence is the same in both the Old Testament and the New Testament.

The premiere example of saving faith in all the Bible is that of Abraham. Paul in the key chapter of Romans 4 at great length shows we are saved by faith ALONE as illustrated in Abraham.

Romans 4:1–3 (NKJV)

1 What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh?

2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.

3 For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.”

The writer of Hebrews in establishing the truth of “justification by faith” uses example after example from the Old Testament Scriptures to make his point as seen in Hebrews 11.

However, God's revelation of Himself and His plan were progressive. Therefore, saving faith in terms of specific content corresponds to the revelation given (cf. Jn. 1:17; Acts 17:30-31; Rom. 3:25-31; Heb.11).

3. The Old Testament is foundational for much of what we learn about faith in the New Testament. There is much that is foundational in the gospels that the rest of the New Testament then builds on (cf. Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11; 2 Tim. 3:15; Rev. 19:10). The nature of faith is always the same but the development of gospel truth was progressive climaxing in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ and New Testament Revelation.

4. The object of faith in both Testaments is not seen to be in the gift of salvation, but rather in the GIVER Himself. It is amazing how many people over look that emphasis in the New Testament on importance of believing in Christ's NAME (that is His person) as seen for example in John 1:12.

John 1:12 (NKJV)

12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His NAME: (Bold emphasis mine)

The Bible stresses faith in the PERSON of our Lord Jesus Christ. Of course, recognizing Him for WHO He is goes hand in hand with WHAT He does for us. His PERSON and His saving WORK go together. LORD and SAVIOR are a package! Biblically, you can't hold to the one without the other.

5. Saving faith involves people seeing their sin, their need of salvation, and the God of Biblical revelation as the only means of their salvation. Romans is the most systematic presentation of the gospel that we have in the New Testament. After Paul's introductory prologue (Rom. 1:1-17), his first and prolonged section deals with the issue of SIN (Rom. 1:18-3:20). This is where Paul STARTS! Unless people understand their depraved sinfulness, they won't see their need of a Savior (cf. Ps. 14; Isa. 53; 64:6; Rom. 3-5).

The knowledge of the truth includes knowing I am a sinner and that God has provided a Savior Who is the Lord Jesus Christ. A saving faith recognizes Jesus as Savior Who died for all my sins and believes in Him as risen Lord.

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved” (Acts 16:31).