

God's Plan of Salvation:

1. Hear - Romans 10:17
2. Believe - Mark 16:16
3. Repent - Acts 2:38
4. Confess - Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized - Acts 22:16
6. Live faithfully - Revelation 2:10

Announcements:

Sick: Mrs. Douglas, Mrs. Belinda Law, Samuel Law, Longs, Mr. Mathis, Lamar Mathis, Ms. Matchett, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Newsome, Mrs. Rogers (Ashely Law's Granmother), Mr. Winns.

If you would be interested in any of the following ways to study the Bible, feel free to let us know:

- Home Bible Study - We will come into your home or other place you feel comfortable and study the Bible with you. Bible questions are welcome in these studies and we will seek to give a Bible answer.
- Correspondence courses - We will be glad to mail you a correspondence lesson that you can fill out and mail back to us and we will send you the next lesson.
- Call us with your Bible question - #503-707-6014.
- Visit our website: www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com.
- Come and visit - We always strive to have good, practical Bible instruction at each of our assemblies.

Oak Grove Church of Christ Bulletin
2922 NW 76th Terrace, Jennings, FL 32053

February 4, 2018

Is Belief Alone Enough to Save?

By Derek Long

The connection between belief and salvation is made in many passages (John 1:12; 3:15-16, 36; 6:47; 8:24; 11:25-26; 20:31; Acts 10:43; 13:39; 16:31; Romans 1:16; 3:22; 4:5, 24; 1 Corinthians 1:21; Hebrews 11:6; 1 John 5:1). Appeals are often made to some of these verses to prove belief is the only thing necessary to be saved. We can learn from these passages belief is essential to salvation. However, we cannot prove belief is the only thing required to be saved by these passages.

One important thing to understand about the word belief in the Bible and especially in the New Testament is it is used in different ways. There are times when belief is used in a comprehensive sense and includes with it the concept of obedience as well. "Now all who believed" in Acts 2:44 is not a reference to people who merely accepted certain facts about Jesus but to those who acted upon their belief by being baptized (Acts 2:41). There are other times when belief is mentioned in the New Testament when it refers to belief without obedience. In James 2:19 we read of how "Even the demons believe - and tremble!" but this is clearly not a saving belief because it does not cause them to obey the Lord. Therefore, we may find verses which say whoever believes has everlasting life but these are talking about individuals with a belief that moves them to obey.

Belief alone is not enough to save if we fail to confess our faith. John 12:42-43 says, “Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.” These rulers believed but they were not saved because they refused to confess Jesus. Jesus makes it clear only the person who confesses Him before men will be confessed by Him (Matthew 10:32-33). Confession is required to be saved and yet confession is something in addition to belief (Romans 10:9-10).

Belief alone is not enough to save if we fail to repent of our sins. Acts 2:37 records for us the response of some to the preaching on the day of Pentecost, “Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Men and brethren, what shall we do?’” These men obviously believed what Peter and the others were teaching about Jesus to ask such a question and to be cut to their heart. Yet these men were told they still needed to “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38). If we refuse to repent, the Bible teaches we will perish (Luke 13:3, 5; 2 Peter 3:9). One cannot be saved by belief alone without also repenting of one’s sins.

Belief alone is not enough to save if we fail to be baptized. Acts 2:38 shows how a group of people who believed were still required to be baptized to be saved. Jesus makes it very plain in Mark 16:16 when He says, “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.” Belief and baptism are both essential for a person to be saved. One cannot argue belief alone is enough to save a

person just as one cannot argue baptism alone is enough to save a person. Throughout the book of Acts when we read of people being saved, we read of them believing and being baptized (Acts 8:12-13; 16:14-15; 18:8).

Belief alone is not enough to save if we fail to continue to live a life of faithfulness. The book of Hebrews reminds us, “For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise” (Hebrews 10:36). It is not enough to simply accept certain facts about who Jesus is. We must live our lives in harmony with the facts regarding who Jesus is. People who had believed on Jesus in the past were told, “Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life” (Revelation 2:10). These people needed to continue to live by their faith in order to have the reward of a crown of life. We must live lives of faithful service to God if we are going to be saved in the end.

Jesus says, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven” (Matthew 7:21). Sounds like He makes it very clear belief alone will not be enough to save a person.