

Faith & Works

What is sin ?

- Is disobedience to God and violation to His rights
- God is infinite, therefore, sin against him is infinite
- “The wages of sin is Death.” (Romans 6:23)
- Since any sin is infinite, only an infinite death would redeem man
- Only The infinite God, incarnated and crucified on our behalf, thus becoming the infinite sacrifice for our sins, would satisfy God’s infinite justice, at the same time satisfying His infinite mercy and love for mankind

No Salvation without the Blood of Christ

- All the righteous who have satisfied God with their good works in The OT waited in Hades until The Lord Christ brought them out
- After His Crucifixion, Christ's blood is ready and capable to save
- "He is the propitiation for our sins and not for ours only but also the sins of the whole world." 1 John 2:2
- Yet there are certain conditions to be worthy of Christ Salvation: 1-Faith, 2-Baptism, 3-Sacraments, 4-Good works.

Faith is a condition for Salvation

- “He that believes on Him is not condemned, but he who does not believe is condemned already because he has not believed in the Name of The Only Begotten Son of God.” John 3:18
- Thus we can gain salvation if we believe , and without faith there is no Salvation.
- “for if you believe not that I am He, you shall die in your sins.” John 8:24

What is Faith?

- “Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”
Hebrew 11:1
- “Examine yourselves, whether you are in faith ; prove your own selves.” 2
Corinthians 13: 5
- This faith must be a living faith, and one that is supported by works.
- A lifeless faith that is not supported by works can not save anyone.

Faith as the first step to Salvation

- “If you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.” John 8:24
- “He who believes and is baptized will be saved.” Matthew 16:16
- Faith is the first step towards salvation but not the only one.
- For example: Simeon the elder when he took The Child Jesus in his arms and said “Lord, now you are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen Your Salvation.” Luke 2:29-30
- Did Simeon The Elder see the Salvation that The Lord made on the Cross ?

Two golden Verses

- “What does it profit , my brethren, though a man say he has faith and have not works? Can faith save him? ... The devils also believe and tremble.”
James 2:14,19
- “For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but Faith which works with Love.” Galatians 5:6

The importance of Good Works

- The absence of good works means that faith is dead and fruitless
- Good works are the fruits of faith and the evidence of its presence
- With such, faith is perfected
- Good works however are not from our volition only. We need the support of God's Grace and the work of The Holy Spirit within us
- "Without me you can do nothing." John 15:5
- "You see that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only." James 2:24

The Lord is knocking....

“ Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him and he with me” Rv 3:20

It is evident from all these teachings that while The Lord granted us salvation through His Son, that stands at our door and knocks, that we are called to work in synergy and cooperation with God- by hearing(Knowledge of Faith) His knock and opening for Him (our works).

St. John Chrysostom

“ God never draws anyone to Himself by force and violence. He wishes all men to be saved, but forces no one ”

St. Cyril of Jerusalem

“ It is for God to grant His Grace, your task is to accept this Grace and Guard it”

Evil works leads to perdition

- “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these : adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies. Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelling and such like of which I tell you before as I have also told you in the past , that they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.” Galatians 5:19-21

Judgement according to works

- We may lose the Kingdom of God if our hearts are void of mercy and love
- No matter what faith we have, it would avail us nothing.
- “For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with his angels and then he shall reward every man according to his works.” Matthew 16:27
- Matthew 25:41-43

Good works the fruits and evidence of faith

- A living faith MUST bear fruits
- Good works are also the fruits of the work of the Holy Spirit within us and are the fruits requisite for the life of penitence which we should live .
- John the Baptist cried out saying “Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance” Luke 3:8
- “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness , goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control. Against such there is no law.” Galatians 5:22-23
- Also James 1:27

The factor of Time

- “Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits there of.” Matthew 21 : 43
- We should act fast “ Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”
Ephesians 5 : 16
- “ For the evil communications corrupt good manners.” Corinthians 15 : 33

Behavior and good works

- “ Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ , that you withdraw yourselves from every brethren that walks disorderly and not after the tradition which he received from us “ 2 Thessalonians 3 : 6

Good works are the evidence of God's sonship

- “If you are Abraham’s children, you would do the works of Abraham” John 8:39
- You are not God’s children simply because we have already been renewed, baptized or sanctified
- “Let your light so shine before men, that they would see your good works and glorify your Father who is in Heaven” Matthew 5:16

Faith and Good Works together

- Neither faith alone nor good works alone can save!
- “And though I have all faith so that I could move mountains and have no charity, I am nothing.” 1 Corinthians 13:2
- “But will you know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? .. For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”
James 2:20, 26
- “Therefore to him that knows to do good, and does not, to him it is sin.”
James 4:17

Also

- “Not everyone that says unto me, Lord, Lord shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that does the will of my Father who is in Heaven.”
- “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name? And in your name have cast out devils? And in your name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, you that work iniquity.” Matthew 7:21-23

Faith without Deeds is dead !

“Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead” Js 2:17

Moreover, no where in The Holy Bible we find that we are justified by “ Faith alone”

Grace, Faith & Works

“ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God” Ephesians 2:8

“ Not of works, lest anyone should boast” Ephesians 2:9

“ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” Ephesians 2:10

C. S. Lewis says

- Christians have often disputed as to whether what leads the Christian home ?
Is it Good Actions or Faith in Christ?
- I have no right really to speak on such a difficult question, but it does seem to me like asking which blade in a pair of scissors is most necessary.

Examples

- + The prodigal son
- + The Samaritan woman
- + The Paralytic man
- + The Man born Blind
- + The Right Thief on the cross

AMEN