

Faith Means Work

Many have been taught that faith and works are antithetical to one another. They have been told faith alone saves. They have been taught that any kind of action upon the part of an individual for salvation reflects a lack of faith and, worse, the belief that one can earn his salvation. The Bible contradicts this mentality. It teaches that faith means work.

Hebrews 11 contains a list of faithful men and women from the Old Testament. By faith Abel offered a sacrifice to God (Heb. 11:4). His faith in God compelled him to obey and offer a sacrifice--he worked. By faith Noah built an ark (Heb. 11:7). By faith Abraham sojourned (Heb. 11:8-9). These men did something. They did not do these things to earn God's favor, for no man can do that. They responded to God's commands. They obeyed! As a result, they were pleasing to God and were blessed by Him. No man is pleasing to God without obedient faith (Heb. 11:6).

Some protest the command to be baptized to have their sins washed away (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Mk. 16:16). They say, "I believe God can save me without baptism. I believe in the Savior and trust in Him to deliver me, not my actions." Could Noah have made a similar protest and had any hope of deliverance? No. He believed in God's love and power, AND he believed God's word, His command to build the ark!

Some say, "Salvation is the gift of God and if you do something for it, it is no longer a gift." It is true that salvation is the gift of God that is not earned (Eph. 2:8-9). Jericho was a gift of God (Josh. 6:2). However, Joshua and the Israelites could not have said, "Jericho is a gift from God. Therefore, we do not need to do anything for it." You know their belief in God led them to obey the command to march around the city; only then was it given to them. So it is with salvation. God commands us to not only believe, but also to obey and DO His will (Heb. 5:9; Jas. 1:25).

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