

Losing the Joy of Salvation

by Dan Jenkins

Have you ever experienced that time in your life when you had done wrong and were so depressed that you were close to just giving up trying? You hated what you had done and were so disappointed in yourself? Embarrassment and shame for your actions had taken control of your life.

It was not always that way, for each of us have vivid memories of other times when we felt so close to God. There was great joy. There was peace. There was thanksgiving. At such times, we could hardly imagine how life could get any better.

David had these same experiences. He had great joy when those tribes who did not support him to be king came to him pledging their loyalty to him. He then defeated the Philistines. He had captured Jerusalem and moved the ark of the covenant to the holy city. His armies were defeating all nations around them. He had joy!

All of this began to change when he failed to lead his army in battle. David stayed home and, standing on the roof of his palace, and watched Bathsheba bathing. The events which followed this are well known—the “pleasure” of forbidden sin, the pregnancy, the attempt to deceive Bathsheba’s husband, the death of that husband, the period of grieving for the dead husband and then the marriage. Then it happened!

“Thou art the man!” How these words must have shaken King David to the very core of his heart. The sin which he had so skillfully hidden from men was about to become known. It was to be recorded for all of mankind to know. He was the man—not the one whose purity of heart was like the heart of God, but one whose heart had “...despised the commandment of the Lord to do evil” (2 Sam. 12:9).

The heading to Psalm 51 indicates that this psalm was likely written shortly after Nathan’s words, “Thou art the man.” He begged God to “...blot out my transgressions, wash me thoroughly from my sin... purge me...wash me...do not cast me away...deliver me” (Psa. 51:2-14). But perhaps the most meaningful words showing the nature of all sin are, “Restore to me the joy of Your salvation.”

There is no joy worthy to be compared to the joy in our hearts the day we became Christians. I have seen this joy on the faces of hundreds who had just been baptized. Remember the day of your salvation and the joy you had. David had that same joy, but sin had snatched it from him. Is there any despair to be compared to that when we have wronged God?

Is there a way to restore that joy? Absolutely. This is why David asked God for its restoration. God longs for you to be in heaven. David sinned—we all do. David lost his joy—we all have. David’s joy was restored—we too can regain that joy!

Are We Saved by Works?

by Jon Mitchell

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast” (Eph. 2:8-9).

From this passage we see that we are saved by God’s grace through our faith, and that we did not save ourselves, but rather our salvation is a gift from God (Rom. 6:23).

However, the Bible also has more to say about this question, and we must not ignore what its entirety says (Ps. 119:160). Notice that Paul said that we are saved not only *“by grace,”* but also *“through faith.”* What is faith?

The Bible has a lot to say about faith. It is necessary for salvation (Mark 16:16), it is necessary to please God (Heb. 11:6), and it is defined both as *“the substance of things hoped for, the evidence for things not seen”* (Heb. 11:1) and believing that *“(God) is and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him”* (Heb. 11:6).

Does faith have anything to do with works? The Bible asks, *“What does it profit...if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?... Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead”* (James 2:14, 17). So we see that in order to have a living faith, a faith that pleases God, we must have works. Otherwise, our faith is dead.

So what does the Ephesians passage mean when it says that we are saved by grace through faith and not of works? If you go back to that passage and skip down to verse 10, you’ll see that we were created for good works, works of obedience (cf. Eccl. 12:13). When we do “works,” i.e., obey God, we are only doing what we were supposed to be doing in the first place (Luke 17:5-10).

However, we all sin (Rom. 3:23; 1 John 1:8, 10). When we sin, our just God requires a penalty for that sin (Rom. 2:8-9). It is through his love and grace that Christ paid that debt on the cross (John 3:16). We could not pay it because of our sin that requires the

debt to be paid in the first place (Rom. 3:23). Therefore, no works that we do could save us because our sin cancels out those works. That’s where God’s grace comes in.

Jesus saves those who obey him. Nevertheless, God still requires us to obey him if we want salvation (Heb. 5:9), even though he has offered us his grace (Rom. 6:1). If we truly believe that he *“is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him”* (Heb. 11:6), then our faith will prompt us to obey him (James 2:14-26). Thus, we are saved through faith (Eph. 2:8).



Think about it. The last time you gave into a temptation to do something that you know the Bible says is a sin, did you truly believe God’s Word at that moment in time when you gave in and committed the sin anyway? If you had, then you would

not have committed the sin. Your faith was weak.

God’s grace saves us, but that grace teaches us to live righteously (Tit. 2:11-12). We will do so if we have faith. If we don’t have faith, we will live unrighteously and thus will not be saved by His grace in the end (Rev. 21:8). Will grace save us if we don’t follow grace’s teachings? God very explicitly says, “No.” (Rom. 6:1-2)

Are you allowing the grace of God to bring salvation to your soul? Obey God’s Word and become a Christian through penitent, confessed faith in the Son of God and his kingdom (Matt. 10:32-33; Acts 8:12; Rom. 10:9-10; 2 Cor. 7:9-11; 1 Cor. 6:9-11) and baptism into his body for salvation and the forgiveness of sins (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:26-27; 1 Cor. 12:13; 1 Pet. 3:21). Remain faithfully obedient by walking in the light of fellowship with God by continually confessing and repenting of your sins (Matt. 7:21-27; Rev. 2:10; 1 John 1:7-9; Heb. 10:26-31; Luke 13:3, 5).

Don’t receive the grace of God in vain.

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Mission Works

Westhill Works

Benevolence Program

Local Works

Cherokee Children's Home - www.chc4kids.org
House to House, Heart to Heart
In Search of the Lord's Way
Preaching Students - Southwest School of Bible Studies
The Truth in Love - www.ttil.tv
WVBS Online School - school.wvbs.org

Prison Works

La Poynor Prison Ministry - Steve & Carrie Handley

Foreign Works

Four Seas Bible College, Singapore - Peter & Pooi Fun Chin
New Zealand Harvest Missions - James & Emily Cammock

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Cory Myers - 512.627.6672 (Youth & Family)
Tim Cooke - 903.641.5515 (Seniors)

Prayer List

Meagan Gould recently had a scan that showed two new areas of cancer. She is now off the clinical trial and will see a doctor in three weeks to find out how they will proceed with treatment.

Iris Ramsey, wife of the late Johnny Ramsey (former minister here) is recovering from heart surgery from a few months ago and is doing well. She would love to hear from her Westhill family. Her address is: 3826 Larkin Lane, Garland, TX 75043.

Continue to Remember: James Ainsworth, Gayle Garner, Velma McDougald, Bud Moore, Henry & Eula Parrish, Patty Williams, Johnny Fullbright, Connie Ivie

Service Men: Clay Bayes, Jason Book, Alston Compton, Robert Johnson, Ryan Payne, Douglas Ramsey, Ryan Stewart

Announcements

Update Contact Info:

- **Lynn & Melissa Webster's** new address is: 2909 W. 4th Ave., Corsicana, TX 75110.

- **Cathy Privitt** has also moved. Her new address is: 101 S. Cone St, Searcy, AR 72143. She says hello and sends us all her love.

"Just want you to know how much I appreciate all the folks that came to Leonard to "put on" our VBS. You have a great group of young people and young adults. I can't say enough good about them. We all appreciate them so very much." Our love to all, Nell Marie Hollis, Leonard, TX

SYS Tuesday hosted by the Northwest congregation in Ft. Worth. We will leave at 5:15.

Boys' Leadership Initiative begins this Friday at 5:30 PM. Registration & information online.

5th Sunday Next Week! Everyone is invited to bring a favorite dish and stay for a meal and fellowship followed immediately by our second service, led by the young men. No 6:00 PM service.

There is One Room (4 spaces) Available for our yearly ladies retreat at Summers Mill in Belton September 23-24. Cost is \$65, and the t-shirt (optional, but always cute) will be \$12. See Lanette Stewart, Vicki Ivy, Lee Owens or Julie Dilbeck to sign up. **Payment is due to Lanette ASAP!**

Discipleship University is August 5-6. Register online and sign up at the back if you plan to go.

We're Hosting the Summer Youth Series on Tuesday night, Aug. 2. If you'd like to contribute, we need cookies & brownies for approximately 300 people. Sign up in the back of the auditorium.

Birthdays This Week

July 24 - Don Bowen, Laura Briceno, Vicki Ivy, Shirley Wardlaw

July 26 - Kathy Green, Darrell Olsen

July 27 - Paxton Southard

July 28 - Nancy Sloan

July 30 - Willow Hall

Next Week's Adult Class

The Crucifixion

(Mat. 26:2-27, 38; Mark 15:24-38; Luke 23:32-46; John 19:16-30)

Records for July 17, 2016

Bible Class	153
AM Worship.....	222
PM Worship	121
Wednesday	141
Contribution	\$7,689.50

Privileged to Serve

Song Leader	Tyler Baumgartner
Opening Prayer	Kyle Slaughter
Communion Leader	Scott Barham
Communion Servers	
Tim Cooke	Millard Dowdle
Jim Haden	Nick Hoffman
James Horn	Clay Jackson
Eric Olsen	Greg Olsen
Brody Owens	Larry Rowden
Dalton Shastid	Justin Williams
Closing Prayer	Hank Jett
Nursery	Nancy Sloan & Ann Wylie
Security	Mark Blaylock, Mike Drain, Wade Hall
PM Song Leader	Brody Owens
PM Opening Prayer	Carter Bearden
PM Closing Prayer	Austin Roughton
Wed. Song Leader	Cory Myers
Wed. Summer Series Speaker	Neal Thurman
July Contact Elder	Paul Slaughter - 903.872.1228