

## Opening.

The greatest stumbling block to men and women entering Eternal Life is the legalism which *adds* to the Message of Grace and *obscures* the simplicity of salvation. Man, by his very nature — in order to feed his ego, feel good about himself, or ‘worthy’ in some way — wants to *do* something to earn his salvation. But God says it is a precious gift of grace because Jesus Christ paid its price on the Cross. He *bought* Eternal Life for every man, woman and child. How does one acquire it? Simple. The gift must be *received* by faith. “**Trembling with fear,**” the Philippian jailer asked Paul and Silas, “**Sirs, what must I do to be saved?**” To which they replied, “**Believe in the Lord Jesus** [*aorist* tense, at this moment in Time], **and you *will* be saved...**,” Acts 16:30-31a.

## The Simplicity of Salvation.

Let me give you nine things salvation *is* which not only simplify but clarify the issue. Salvation is:

As simple as coming when called. “**Come to Me, all you who are weary and heavy-laden, burdened**” under the shame of your own sin {as well as weighed down with religion}, said our Lord, “**and I will give you *rest*,**” the eternal “**rest**” of salvation — Matthew 11:28.

As simple as drinking water. To the Samaritan woman at the well Jesus said, “**But whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to Eternal Life**” {Jn. 4:14}. Jesus stood and cried out loudly to His generation, “**If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and *drink*. Whoever *believes* in Me,**” He told His fellow Jews, “**as the Scripture has said, ‘*rivers* of living water will flow from within him...**,” John 7:37b-38.

As simple as eating bread. In John 6:35 Jesus declared, “**I am the Bread of Life. He who comes to Me will never go hungry, and he who *believes* in Me will never be thirsty...**,” and again, in v. 51, “**I am the Living Bread that came down from Heaven. If anyone *eats* of this bread, he will live forever....**”

As simple as entering a door. Using the figure of the Good Shepherd and His Sheep Christ said, “**I am the Door** [‘the Gateway to the Sheepfold:’ *thura* means- an ‘opening, entrance, the way in’]; **whoever enters through *Me* will be saved....**” {Jn. 10:9}.

As simple as receiving a gift. Romans 6:23 tells us, that “**the wages** [‘payment:’ used in the ancient world for the rations of a Greek foot soldier] **of sin is *death*** [spiritual ‘death’ means separation from God and all that He is {Light, Life, Love} forevermore], **but the *free* gift of God** [that’s *grace*] **is Eternal Life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**”

As simple as calling for help. The apostle Paul in Romans 10:13 said, “**for ‘Everyone who *calls* on the name of the Lord will be saved [Joel 2:32].’**” This consists of a simple prayer which can be expressed inwardly and in privacy, outwardly among a trusted few, or any other way: “God, I believe Jesus was the Son of God and Savior of Man, and I’m trusting Him now for the redemption of my sin, for Your perfect righteousness, and for Life Eternal. With you, Father, *all* things are possible.”

As simple as looking toward the Light. Upon His entry into Jerusalem Jesus told the nation of Israel, “**I have come into the world as Light, so that *no one* who believes in Me will remain in darkness,**” John 12:46. Earlier in this same passage He had said to them, “**Put your *trust* in the Light while you have it, so that you may become *Sons* of Light...**” v. 36.

As simple as believing in Jesus Christ. “**No one has seen the Father except the One who is from God [Jesus, His Son]; only He has seen the Father. I tell you the Truth, he who believes [that Jesus came forth from the Father as His One and Only Son {Jn. 3}] has Everlasting Life**” {Jn. 6:46-47}. In John 11:23 Jesus said to Martha, “**Your brother will rise again. Martha answered, ‘I know he will rise again in the Resurrection at the Last Day.’ Jesus said to her, ‘I am the *Resurrection* and the *Life*. He who believes in Me will *live*, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in Me will *never* die,**” vv. 24-27a. Then He makes the issue what it always *is*, and always *has* been: *personal* and *individual*. He asks her, “**Do you believe this?**” “**‘Yes, Lord,’ she told Him, ‘I believe that You are the *Messiah*, the Son of God, who was to come into the world,’**” v. 27.

## Finale.

Each of the examples and illustrations I’ve given you is designed to show the simplicity of faith. The Scripture says in Romans 10:17, “**...Faith comes from *hearing* the Message, and the Message is heard through the Word of Christ.**” See, faith is *trusting* what the Word of God says. In the final analysis it all comes down to the question in John 11:26, “**Do you *believe* this?**” A man or woman’s response to this single, solitary question determines their destiny: either eternal *glory* in Heaven or eternal *misery* in the Lake of Fire. Legalism in Jesus’ day kept many of those in His generation from recognizing and receiving the Son of God. Legalism in Paul’s day tried to take those who had been saved by grace and bind them to a system of rules, rituals, and regulations that passed away with the death of Jesus. And legalism in our day is still the greatest stumbling block to the simplicity of the Gospel for the unbeliever, and to the spiritual freedom which is the birthright of every Child of God in the Age of Grace!

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