

The Bulletin

Meeks St. Church of Christ

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“The Characteristics of Saving Faith” #1

By Brian Meade

In the Religious World of today, there is an overemphasis on just having faith to be saved from our sins. Although faith is absolutely essential to our salvation, it does not begin and end at the point of mentally believing in Jesus Christ. What most people who hold the view of salvation by faith alone will say, “It takes a *saving faith* to save someone.” But what is saving faith all about?

I. Saving Faith is a Strong Conviction that God Exists.

“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”
(Hebrews 11:1)

Conviction is defined as, “The state of being convinced, as of the truth of a belief.” (Webster) The Bible teaches us that the basis of our hope (why we hope) is our conviction that God exists. Contrary to what many believe today, Faith is not a “blind leap in the dark,” but rather a walk that is based on the fact and reality of God, our Creator (2 Cor. 5:7). We have strong evidence that points us to the fingerprints of God all around us! (Psalm 19:1-6; Romans 1:20)



But even more than belief in our Creator, God wants us to have a faith that not only believes in Him, but also seeks after Him— in order to please Him. Notice Hebrews 11:6, “*But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*” (NKJB) That kind of faith is more than just saying “*I believe in God*”— it is the active & obedient faith, because of our convictions, that motivates us to do God’s will (Matt. 7:21).

To have saving faith means that I NOT ONLY believe in God, but that I am willing and ready to be and do everything Jesus asks of me (Matthew 5:3-10; Luke 6:46). Jesus did not want His followers to just acknowledge Him that He exists and then go on with business as usual (Luke 9:23-24). When we *really* believe in Jesus as our Savior and our Lord— it changes us forever!

Because we believe, we repent of all sin (Luke 13:3-5). Because we believe, we are not ashamed to confess Him (Mark 8:38). Because we believe we are baptized into Christ (Mark 16:15-16; Galatians 3:26-27). And just like Paul was teaching the Romans about their conversion— we put the old self to death when we were baptized with Him (Romans 6:1-18; 2 Corinthians 5:17).

Saving faith is the underlying motivation for our new conduct and life after we have come to the knowledge of the Savior (John 20:30-31; I Tim. 2:4).

When we know that we know Jesus— we can never go back to the old life of sin and shame— without a guilty conscience. (Hebrews 10:26-27)

However, many people will admit to a belief in God, but never go beyond the fact of God’s existence on to a total surrender to Him. They believe *only* and keep that fact well hidden to the world by their actions (or lack thereof). They are much like the ones who believed in Jesus in John 12:42-43, “*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; ⁴³for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.*” They really did not believe enough to step out in saving faith, to confess Jesus and obey Him!

II. A Strong Confidence in God's Promises.

Saving faith is also when we believe in God and we place great trust & confidence in Him. We trust in God's word (Psalm 119:42).....His promises (Hebrews 6:13-18).....His teachings and direction for our lives (Psalm 143:8; Proverbs 3:5-7).....His provision (Matt. 6:25-33).....His salvation (Psalm 13:5; Eph. 1:13).... His Word will not fail us (Psalm 37:5). We trust God that when He says there will be a resurrection, Judgment Day, Heaven, Hell, and eternity (John 11:23-27; I Thessalonians 4:13-18).

We read of trust in God by men of faith before us, in Hebrews 11:13, *"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."*

Saving faith is embracing the promises of God to us personally, not to just men such as Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David, Peter, James, John, and Paul....etc. The promise of eternal life (Titus 1:2-3) is for us too!

But we must show the same level of confidence in God that they did and as the scriptures teach us, *"And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, ¹² that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises."* (Hebrews 6:11-12) May the Christians of the New Covenant also believe & trust God fully, and therefore be saved!

"States of Contentment, part 1"

By Phillip R Keathley

Lesson text - Philippians 4:11 *"Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content"* (NKJB)

In Philippians 4:11, Paul the Apostle relates to us his outlook on a life that has been filled with what we would call *"ups and downs."* Despite the tumultuous times he his life encountered, he remained content with whatever state he was in. Can we say the same for ourselves? Let us take a brief look at some aspects of our own lives and let the word of God guide us toward the same stance as Paul.

1. Are we content with the material things of our lives?

In 1Tim 6:9-10, Paul warns of the snare of greed, its destruction and the sorrows that accompany it. However, just before this warning, Paul gave this admonition in verse 8, *"And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content."* God will always take care of His children. True happiness does not come from material possessions, but from serving God (Luke 12:15-21).

2. Are we content with our health?

The Apostle John wrote in 3rd John verse 2, *"Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers."* A healthy body is a vessel for the servant of God to serve Him, but the most important aspect of our being is our spiritual health. We are told in 1 Timothy 4:8, *"For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come."*

3. Are we content with our marriage?

The society we live in today diminishes the institution of marriage. To be married is frowned upon and often treated in such a casual way that many see marriage as a waste or burden. The honor of marriage has been tossed aside for the glorification of the "Hollywood" perception of marriage. Yet the Bible teaches us in Heb 13:4, *"Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge."* Marriage is God's first great institution that we read about in the Bible (Gen 2:23-24). It is the foundation of the family and a society. Do not let society tell you otherwise.

A Women's Bible Class

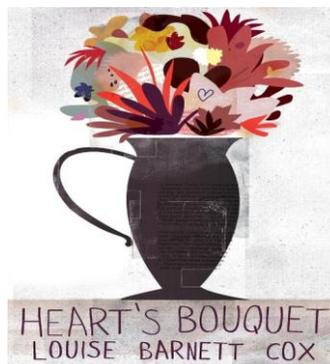
will meet monthly at Miche, Tn.

At the home of

Chris and Kathryn Callahan

The 3rd Thursday of the Month

at 7:00 PM



News and Notes: sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, Crystal Harris, Betty Hurst, Janis Johnson, Steve Switcher, Billy Mac Fredrick, Gail Armstrong, Nicky Curtis, Cheryl Ridgeway, & the family of Janell Eaton (who passed away),
Elmo Wilson is in the Hospital (Booneville?)
David Hartsell was sent home last week with days to live.
Prayers for his family: Him & Belinda, and children Holly, Brad, and Kattie.
Mirgie Duncan (whose house burnt recently)
Walter & Patty Case in Ky. (whose house burnt)

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Dan Cottrell
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon: *"The Need For Consistency in Religion"*

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am

Jerry Kennemur

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service: *The Book of Luke (Mike Willis)*
Page 56, #1 *Overcoming Denominational Error*

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements: Russell Briggs
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Lee Busby
Micah 7:18-20
Song Leader: Chris Callahan
Lord's Table: Paul Johnson
Assisting: Russell Briggs & Brian Meade
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon: *"God's Compassionate View of the Lost"*
Closing Prayer: Paul Busby

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

December 13th:

Auditorium Bible Class: Paul Busby
1 & 2 Samuel (Mike Willis)
Page 8, Question #10.
Invitation: Russell Briggs
Song Leader: Adam Harris
Closing Prayer: Tim Harris Jr.