



# GOOD NEWS

for the unsaved WORLD!

(#187)

Continuing in salvation, faith and obedience.

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### SALVATION – BROUGHT TO US BY GOD.

- God saves us by **grace**, through **faith** (a gift), for the purpose of **good works** (our calling).
 

For it is **by grace** you have been saved, **through faith**—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—**not by works**, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus **to do good works**, which God prepared in advance for us to do.
 

Ephesians 2:8-10 (NIV)
- God changes us into *new* people, with *changed* hearts and desires.
 

"... I will put **my laws in their hearts**, and I will write them **on their minds**."
 

Hebrews 10:16b (NLT)

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a **new creation**...
 

2 Corinthians 5:17 (CSB)

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- God empowers us so that we will do these good works.
 

For God is **working** in you, giving you the **desire** and the **power** to do what pleases him.
 

Philippians 2:13 (NLT)

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- **ALL people have an obligation to pursue the good works that come from righteousness**; but only those who have these changes will succeed.
- **Without these changes, *nobody* is righteous.**

... all our righteous acts are like **filthy rags**; ...
 

Isaiah 64:6b (NIV)

As the Scriptures say, "**No one** is righteous—**not even one**."
 

Romans 3:10 (NLT); see also v. 11-18.

Indeed, there is **no one** on earth who is righteous, **no one** who does what is right and never sins.

Ecclesiastes 7:20 (NIV)

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### OUR OBLIGATION – A RESPONSE CALLED "FAITH."

**It's one part of the entire "process of salvation."**

- As we've seen in the past, "faith" (= trust, believing) is connected to several other aspects of salvation: accepting the Good News message, repentance, baptism, confession (publicly admitting one's decision to follow Jesus), etc.
- When people trust God, all of these other things also occur (some before the faith, and some after it). Because of this, Scripture often uses the word "faith" to represent all of these "salvation issues."
- This *faith* concept has 3 focuses...

**FAITH focus #1**

① Scripture has a strong emphasis on the fact that **salvation is "by faith"** – by trusting Jesus, without attempting to add human merit. (Example: Ephesians 2:8-10, which we have already quoted.)

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**FAITH focus #2**

② This **faith is fact-based**. It is focused on Scripture and the Good News message, as well as on Jesus and the facts about what he did. *It is not ambiguous or based on pretension or personal opinions.*

... a salvation that came through the Spirit ... and through your **belief in the truth**.  
[God] called you to salvation when we told you **the Good News** ...

2 Thessalonians 2:13b-14a (NLT)

**FAITH focus #3**

③ There is also a strong emphasis on the **"continuing" nature of this faith**. This faith is *living*, not *dead*.

In this life, there will be struggles with sin. But the issue here centers around this question:  
**"As you go on with life, what controls your thinking, your values, and your conduct?"**

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**KEY ISSUE:** *Genuine faith is based on truth, and will continue; fake faith and temporary faith are not like this.*  
(The issue *isn't* whether or not we claim to have "genuine faith." What your faith is based on, and whether or not it continues to exist, is what proves if it is genuine.)

- ✓ **TEMPORARY FAITH:** These people will "look" saved, but will eventually abandon the faith. **Genuine faith continues.**
- ✓ **FAKE FAITH:** These people will do "religious" things, but will have unchanged hearts. **Genuine faith involves a change, based on truth.**

They believe for a while, but in the time of testing **they fall away**.  

Luke 8:13b (NIV)

**They went out from us**, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.

1 John 2:19 (NIV)

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-- TEMPORARY -- FAITH

Now the Spirit expressly states that in later times some will **abandon the faith** to follow deceitful spirits and the teachings of demons, influenced by the hypocrisy of liars, whose consciences are seared with a hot iron.  
1Timothy 4:1-2 (BSB)

... having a **form of godliness but denying its power.**  
2Timothy 3:5a (BSB)

... **on the outside** you appear to be righteous, but **on the inside** you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.  
Matthew 23:28b (BSB)

Many will say to me on that [judgment] day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, **you evildoers!**'  
Matthew 7:22-23 (NIV)

FAKE FAITH

**THE "CONTINUING" NATURE OF FAITH? YES! If you have saving faith...**

- ⇒ There are certain things you will continue to do...
- ⇒ There are certain things you will NOT continue to do.

Faith – and all of salvation – is NOT a matter of "get it done and then go to the next thing on your list."

**NOT THIS**

**CHECKLIST**

- GO TO PARTY
- CLEAN the HOUSE
- VISIT GRANDMA
- GET SAVED**
- GO SHOPPING
- GET SOME SLEEP

- ✓ It's an ongoing way of life that influences everything we do.
- ✓ Genuine salvation has a beginning... but it never stops expressing itself.
- ✓ Yes, we fight with sin... but we fight it, not cling to it!

**OUR OBLIGATION – TO "LIVE-OUT" THE SALVATION GOD GAVE US.**

**The ongoing nature of salvation.**

**"Getting saved" may refer to something that happened in the past; but "being saved" is an ongoing way of life.**

- In the language of the New Testament, present-tense verbs normally indicate a "continuing" process – not something done just once.
  - ✓ Example: "Living by faith" shows us that faith is to characterize the way we live every day.

For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "**The righteous will live by faith.**"  
Romans 1:17 (NIV)

- Many passages tell us to *continue* in things related to salvation, or to do them *increasingly*, or *always*, etc. Other passages tell us that there are certain things we *cannot* continue to do; they are *not an option!*

**YES, it is true... GOD saves us; we can't work for our salvation.**

- ✓ It's NOT because of our works, or even our faith, but because of God, in his mercy and grace. Nothing we do can remove the consequences of our sin. (We trust God to do it.)

**YES, it is true... WE are not sinlessly perfect (in this present life).**

- ✓ Our lives will be characterized by a struggle with sin. The impulses of our flesh (old nature) will fight the desires of the Spirit, who now lives in us and empowers us.
- ✓ But salvation involves a *change* in thoughts, values and conduct. As these changes increase (= as we pursue the renewed mind of Romans 12:2), sin will become less and less enjoyable. Righteousness will increasingly become the desire of our heart.
- ✓ When we *do* sin, we will learn to not wallow in it (like a pig in the mud), but will get up and resume our pursuit of following Jesus.
- ✓ If we have victory over one area of sin, we will probably discover other sins that we need to overcome, with God's power.

**① Pertaining to SIN: wicked people DO continue in it; righteous people DON'T continue in it.**

★ **These verses are statements of FACT.** ★  
(One is a consequence of obeying a COMMAND.)

**Sin and wicked people:**

- They continue to sin, even though they know that they deserve death for doing so – Romans 1:32 (sin examples in vs. 29-31).
- They have a continuing desire to gratify their sensual desires – Ephesians 4:19. They do it shamelessly.
- Those who continue to live in sin do not know Christ – 1 John 3:6b, 10.

No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.  
1 John 3:6b (NIV)

- People who don't continue to accept the truth about Christ do not have God – 2 John 1:9a.

**Sin and righteous people:**

- Those born of God cannot continue to sin; they cannot go on sinning – 1 John 3:6a, 9 (they have a new life in them); 5:18 (they are protected by God).

Those who are God's children do not continue to sin, because the new life God gave them stays in them. They cannot keep sinning, because they have become children of God.  
1 John 3:9 (ERV)

- People who continue to accept the truth about Christ have both the Father and the Son – 2 John 1:9b.

The issue is: "What characterizes your life?" John has already told us that sin may occur; but it is no longer the *defining factor* in our lives.

If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and not living in the truth.  
1 John 1:8 (NLT)

- **Growing** in salvation includes turning away from sin. This requires a willingness to learn (and apply) what Scripture says.

Therefore, **rid yourselves** of all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all slander.

Like newborn infants, desire the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may **grow** up into your salvation,

1 Peter 2:1-2 (CSB)

But **grow** in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 3:18a (CSB)

As **WE** focus on growing in our **knowledge** of God's Word (and apply it to our lives), we discover that **GOD** has been pouring out his **grace** upon us. This is how we **grow** in BOTH!

★ This **growing** is how we keep from being led astray, which Peter warns us about, in 2 Peter 3:16-17. ★

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## ② Pertaining to GOD, and our attitude toward him.

Most of these verses are **COMMANDS**, pointing to our obligation. One is an "if" statement, pointing to the importance of our choice.

### Our relationship to him:

- **Continue** in the grace of God – Acts 13:43. [Context: Accepting the Good News about Jesus.]
- **The need to continue** in God's kindness; if we do, we won't experience his sternness – Romans 11:22. [Context: A warning about arrogance and unbelief – thinking you're more special than others, and losing sight of your need to *trust* Jesus.]

### Our interaction with him:

- **Pray continually** – 1 Thessalonians 5:17.
- **Continually offering a sacrifice of praise to God**, acknowledging who he is (and our relationship to him) – Hebrews 13:15.

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## ③ Pertaining to the TRUTH about Scripture.

A variety of commands, "if" statements, and fact statements. (Most of these verses imply the need to **obey** the truth.)

### Facts pertaining to the need to accept and live by the truth:

- **The person who continues** to pay attention to the "law that gives freedom" will be blessed in what he does – James 1:25. (Merely hearing the word and NOT doing what it says leaves you self-deceived – v. 22-24.)
- **The need to continue** in the teaching of Christ – 2 John 1:9.
- **When Christians continue** to live in the truth, it brings joy to other believers – 3 John 1:3.

An "if" statement, pointing to our responsibility, and the importance of our choice:

- **If you continue** in the faith, you are reconciled to God – Colossians 1:23. [We must hold on to the message of the Good News. Otherwise, we are alienated from God, and an enemy.]

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## A command pointing to our obligation; also the command's value:

- **Continue** in what you have learned and found to be true – 2 Timothy 3:14 (= in contrast to following the ways of the world).

CONTINUE IN IT!

IT TEACHES US HOW TO BE SAVED.

IT TEACHES US HOW TO LIVE.

But as for you, **continue** in what you have learned and have become convinced of, ... the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you **wise for salvation** through faith in Christ Jesus.

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be **thoroughly equipped for every good work**.

2 Timothy 3:14a, 15b-17 (NIV)

This "continuing" assumes that you have learned what Scripture says; otherwise, it implies a **need** to learn it.

(In Timothy's case, he had been taught it since infancy.)

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Fulfilling this "truth-focus" obligation: It **starts** at a specific point in time (= past tense) ... and then it **continues** from then on (= present tense).

- **Continuing** to accept (and live by) the Good News message.

IN THE PAST.

Now, brothers and sisters, I want you to remember the Good News I told you. **You received that Good News message,**

CONTINUING IN THE PRESENT.

and **you continue to base your life on it.** That Good News, the message you heard from me, is God's way to save you.

THE NEED FOR IT TO CONTINUE.

But **you must continue believing it.** If you don't, you believed for nothing.

1 Corinthians 15:1-2 (ERV)

⌈ This Good News message is about JESUS (see v. 3+). It has to do with who he is, what he did, the significance of it, etc. ⌋

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## ④ LIVING as a saved person.

Mostly commands, a fact statement, and an expression of confidence that the obligations are being done.

### A life that is based on Jesus:

- **Continue** to live your life based on the Good News message (about who Jesus is: our Lord/Master) – Colossians 2:6. (Don't become ensnared by human teachings.)
- **Remain** in Christ (and don't follow the false teachers) – 1 John 2:28. (Then we can look forward to the day when Christ returns.)

### Doing good and helping others (even if we are being persecuted):

- **Keep on doing good**, even if you are suffering for God-honoring reasons – 1 Peter 4:19. (Entrust yourself to God, and make sure your suffering *isn't* because of wrongdoing on your part – v. 15.)
- **As you continue** to help God's people: God will not forget the way you have done so – Hebrews 6:10. (Don't become lazy – v. 12. Also, doing these things is an expression of *love to God!*)

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**Without this "continuing," Can we say we are saved? NO!**  
**Without this "continuing," Can we say we are justified? NO!**

⇒ At the *initial point* of *genuine* salvation, **GOD** can say we are justified. **HE** is the one who has *changed* and *empowered* us; so he *knows* that we will *continue* in our salvation. He also knows that the *continuing* will *continue*!

⇒ **This is why PAUL can say:**

For we maintain that a man is **justified by faith apart from works** of the law.  
 Romans 3:28 (BSB)

**AND:** Now it is clear that no one is **justified** before God by the law, because the righteous will **live by faith**.  
 Galatians 3:11 (CSB)

**PRESENT TENSE VERB = A CONTINUING WAY OF LIFE.**

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⇒ But **WE** can't say for sure that we are justified unless the *continuing continues*.

⇒ **This is why JAMES can say:**


Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and every expression of evil, and **humbly accept the word** [= God's Word] planted in you, which can save your souls.  
**Be doers of the word**, and not hearers only. **Otherwise, you are deceiving yourselves.**  
 James 1:21-22 (BSB)

**WITHOUT THE CONTINUING, YOU ARE DECEIVING YOURSELF.**

**AND:** You see that a person is **justified by works and not by faith alone**.  
 For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also **faith without works is dead**.  
 James 2:24, 26 (CSB)

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Paul often talks about the "starting point" of salvation; but he also recognizes its *ongoing* nature. So we can conclude that when Paul and James talk about JUSTIFICATION, they are just focusing on *different* aspects of the *same* thing.



[ PAUL ]

**SALVATION HAS A BEGINNING POINT, AND GOD JUSTIFIES YOU AT THAT POINT, WITHOUT YOU WORKING FOR IT!**

For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham **believed** God, and it was **credited to him as righteousness**."  
 Romans 4:3 (BSB)



[ JAMES ]

**SALVATION IS A CONTINUING PROCESS, AND YOU KNOW YOU ARE JUSTIFIED WHEN YOU SEE THE WORKS THAT COME FROM IT!**

Was not our father Abraham **justified** by **what he did** when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that his faith was working with his actions, and his faith was perfected by what he did.  
 James 2:21-22 (BSB)

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# < Our MISSION >

**IF THESE SALVATION CHANGES ARE A PART OF OUR LIVES!**  
 We can *rejoice* that we can *learn* to be righteous and do good works!

All people have this obligation, but *we who are following Jesus* actually have the *power* to do it!

**IF ANY OF US HAVE NEVER HAD THESE CHANGES**  
 (or have had a fake or temporary "faith"):

**We need to decide whether or not we think these changes are important enough to pursue. *What do we value the most?***

God has given us the Good News facts in the Bible, and has offered us the power to change.  
**Do we trust him to keep his promise?**

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