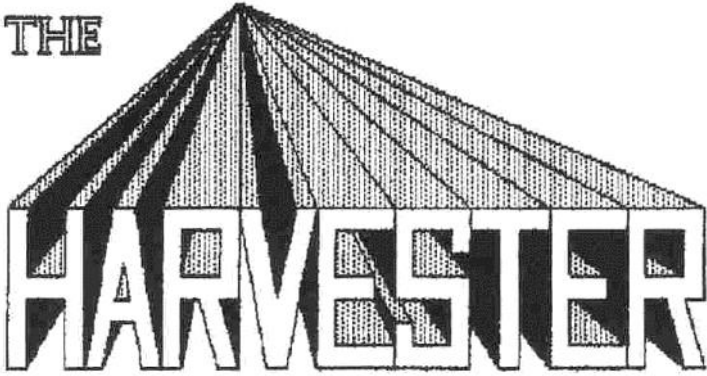


THE



"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest" (Luke 10:2)

November 2014

No. 347

IS SALVATION CONDITIONAL?

In Acts 8:36-38 we read about the baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch: "And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." Earlier, in verse 29, we glean that the Spirit of the Lord

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told Philip to join himself with the chariot. Thus, we conclude that Philip was recognized via the Spirit of God as one qualified to engage in a knowledgeable conversation about salvation in Jesus Christ. The eunuch asked Philip about baptism. Philip told him he could be baptized if he believed. The eunuch confessed his belief in Jesus Christ and was baptized into the Lord's church.

On Pentecost Sunday the Apostle Peter preached the first Gospel sermon. Peter, being filled with the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:4), vividly expounded to the large assembly, *"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ"* (Acts 2:36). If someone told you that you had participated in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, how would you feel and what would you say to them in response?

Many denominations in modern times will purport that there is "nothing" that the house of Israel could have done about crucifying Jesus. Also, they will tell that you and I can do nothing to be saved from our sins. John Calvin, a former Catholic priest and so-called "reformer", had 5 major points he taught in relation to salvation. They can be easily remembered via the acronym **T.U.L.I.P.** Mr. Calvin's doctrine teaches the following 5 major points: 1) We are Totally depraved. We received a spot of sin on our soul at birth and we are so very sinful to the point of not being able to do anything to please God. 2) Grace is Unconditional. There is nothing you can do to be saved. There are no required conditions for one to comply with in order to enter heaven. 3) Atonement for sin is Limited to the elect. God knew who would be saved or lost before the world began and there is nothing anyone can do about it. 4) Grace is Irresistible. The Holy Spirit operates directly

on the heart of the sinner and the sinner can do absolutely nothing about it. The Holy Spirit saves one without any response whatsoever. 5) Perseverance of the saints. Once one has been saved via a direct operation of the Holy Spirit there is nothing one can do to fall from grace and ultimately be lost eternally. Notice I said earlier that the T.U.L.I.P. doctrine is what John Calvin taught. This doctrine is named after him and is called Calvinism. If you can trace a denomination or a doctrine to a "name", it is unscriptural and of human origin.

What was the response of the house of Israel when they were told they had crucified Jesus? We read clearly in Acts 2:37: *"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?"* They were "pricked" in their hearts when they heard what they had done! From the Strong's Dictionary we learn that the Greek word for "prick", *katanussō* (kat-an-oos'-so), means "to pierce thoroughly, that is, (figuratively) to agitate violently ("sting to the quick"): -prick. This does not sound like a "totally" depraved heart at all! If they had been totally depraved why would they have even cared to begin with? Then, they asked "what shall we DO?" At this point in this article I ask you to take particular note of Peter's response in Acts 2:38. Peter, being filled with the Holy Ghost was qualified by God the Father to give an answer to this VERY important question: What Shall We Do? Peter had the following to say: *"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost"* (Acts 2:38). If there had been absolutely nothing for the house of Israel to do or for me and you to do to be washed clean of our sins

- in verse 38 Peter would have said "there is nothing for you to do." However, the opposite is the case - Peter told them plainly what to DO! They believed in Jesus and what He did for us. They were then baptized for the remission of their sins! They were not "totally" depraved. They responded to the Gospel call via faith. We will come back to what faith is shortly. Did the Holy Spirit operate directly on the house of Israel or does He operate directly on the sinner in modern times? Again, let us go to the Apostle Peter for the answer and not John Calvin's doctrine. In the Holy Bible, Peter was directed via the Holy Spirit to say (verse 38): "*and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*" Earlier, Philip had been directed by the Spirit to talk to the unsaved eunuch. Philip had received the Holy Spirit when he had been baptized for the remission of his sins! The Holy Spirit does not work directly in the heart of the sinner. The house of Israel received the Holy Spirit after they were baptized in faith! Is faith our response to the Gospel call via choice or - do we not have a choice at all and faith is done for us? Again, let us NOT ask John Calvin or any other denominational teacher. This time we will let Jesus answer this VERY important question. In John 6:28-29 we vividly understand: "*Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.*" They were told to believe! From these verses we learn from Jesus that faith is a work and thus IS something we are to do! To make the point very clear that faith IS a requirement on our part let us read what the inspired John had to say about faith and love: "*And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments*

dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us" (1 John 3:23-24). Let us take further note of the word "love" (agape) in 1 John 5:2-3: *"By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."* We love God and Jesus by DOING His commandments: by DOING what He has asked us to do! Faith and Baptism are required commands that we are to DO! In so doing - we LOVE (agape) God! The faith that obeys is the faith that saves. The inspired James teaches us that *"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also"* (James 2:26). The works required of God's children are 1) not works of the Old Law (Gal. 2:16), 2) not works that we thought of via human reason and/or merit (Acts 7:41, 2 Tim. 1:9), but 3) they ARE the works that God had penned in the Bible so that we could obey His will (James 2:14-26, John 6:28-29, Matt. 7:21, Titus 1:16, 2 Thes. 1:7-9).

Can the child of God fall from grace? John Calvin would say no. However, what does God say? In the inspired Apostle Peter's 2nd letter we understand: *"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall"* (2 Peter 1:5-10). Verse 10

plainly states that if we "do" the above requirements that we shall never fall from the grace of God! Once the alien sinner has obeyed the Gospel by being baptized in faith for the remission of sins then they are to grow in the grace of God by doing the above 7 mentioned items of: Virtue, Knowledge, Temperance, Patience, Godliness, Brotherly Kindness, and Charity (*agape*). If the Christian fails to continue to walk in love (*agape*) toward God via the Bible - they will have fallen in one of the 7 areas of Christian growth. And thus we answer the question "Is Salvation Conditional?" YES - salvation is conditional!

TIM ELDRIDGE
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APOLOGIA

QUESTION: Is it scriptural for a woman to lead prayer in the presence of a man in private?

ANSWER: Prayer is enjoined upon every Christian: "*Pray without ceasing* (1 Thes. 5:17), "*Continuing instant in prayer*" (Rom. 12:12), "*In everything by prayer...let your requests be made known unto God*" (Phi. 4:6).

A distinction was made between men and women at the time of the Garden of Eden, not only in their physical difference, but also in their intended position in the family structure. Eve was made as "*an help meet for*" Adam (Gen. 2:18)

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and God "brought her unto the man" (v. 22). After Eve was deceived and Adam consented with her in disobeying God, Eve was told, "Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (3:16).

By inspiration Paul further explains this relationship,

Let the women learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety (1 Tim. 2:11-15).

This is the basis upon which Paul instructed the early disciples,

Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church. (1 Cor. 14:34-35)

Other Scriptural passages, however, instruct: *The aged women...teach the young women to be...obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" (Tit. 2:3-5), Aquila and Priscilla [his wife, a woman] "took him [Apollos] unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly" (Acts 18:26), and Philip "had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy." (Acts 21:9)*

The contrast between these two situations is that one applies to the church assembly where the woman is restricted, while the other pertains to a woman's liberty to speak when her doing so does not appear to dominate the man.

Gospel Meetings

DATES	PLACE	SPEAKER
November 28 - 30	Verona Congregation Verona, KY	Joe Hill Hager Hill, KY

Man is appointed by God to be the dominant figure in the family and it would normally be expected for him to take the lead. I feel this would be the most Scriptural and appropriate arrangement. This is almost always the understanding and custom observed wherever I have been. But under the condition often suggested, where a mother (or woman) leads the prayer at meals, the occasion would not constitute a church assembly and she would not appear to be in a dominating role. I could not say the woman's prayer would be offensive to God.

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SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

...and remember September's questions?

1. Under the old law, which living creatures in the water were deemed unclean? **THOSE WITHOUT FINS AND SCALES** (Deuteronomy 14:10)
2. Who went up yearly to worship God in Shiloh, and one year prayed to God for a baby? **HANNAH** (1 Samuel 1:3-11)
3. What gift did Salome, daughter of Herodias, ask for after she danced for Herod? **JOHN THE BAPTIST'S HEAD** (Matthew 14:6-8)
4. When Jesus walked on water, which sea was it? **SEA OF GALILEE** (John 6:1-19)
5. Who did Paul send to Rome, requesting that she was given a welcome worthy of the saints? **PHOEBE** (Romans 16:1-2)