

# THE HARVESTER

*"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)*

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## "FAITH ONLY" TEXTS IN CONTEXT - Part 2

Advocates of the "faith only" theory of salvation rely much on the gospel of John to sustain them in their false doctrine. They read all the passages in this book on faith, and conclude that faith is the only thing that is either necessary or even important. For instance, Jesus said, *"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up. That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"* (John 3:14-16).

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And again, “*He that believeth on him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God*” (verse 18). The same chapter tells us, “*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life and he that believeth not on the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him*” (verse 36).

Denominational preachers gather these passages (and many others like them) together, and declare that salvation is by faith only. But let us emphasize that there is not one word in a single one of these passages that hints of salvation by faith only. All of them speak of salvation by faith—but none of salvation by faith only.

### **“Hath Everlasting Life”**

Men stress the fact that the scripture says the “*believer hath everlasting life*” (John 3:36). They declare that it is “hath” and not “will have”; but they fail to take into consideration that Biblical language speaks of things that are prospective as though they were present. Both present tense and past tense are often used to depict future things.

As an illustration of this truth, recall that Isaiah predicted the Galilean ministry of the Messiah in these words, “*The land of Zebulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up*” [Mat. 4:15-16 referencing Isa. 9:1-2]. Had the light already shined on them when Isaiah wrote?

Why, that statement was made 700 years before Christ was born!

But what, we are asked, is the condition of the believer now? Does not the Bible say of him that he “*hath eternal life*”; “*shall not come into condemnation*”; and “*will not come into judg-*

ment”? Since one is a believer before he is baptized, then all of these statements describe his condition before he is baptized! Thus the advocates of the “faith only” doctrine would think to clinch their argument.

But the answer to that is for every passage which presents the believer as “saved” we can present another passage which presents the believer as “unsaved”. There must be some explanation. And there is. The solution is found in the kind of a believer. What kind of a believer is contemplated in the passages which speak of the believer as saved; and what kind of believer is contemplated in the passages which speak of the believer as unsaved? There lies the key to the whole matter.

### **The Power To Become Sons**

John records of Christ that, *“He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become sons of God, even to them that believe on his name”* (John 1:11-12). That passage is far from saying that the believers are already sons of God. It emphasizes the very opposite, they are not sons of God, but may become sons of God. Believers are the only ones who can become sons of God; certainly unbelievers cannot. But God grants to the believer the privilege of putting his belief to work in obeying the gospel, and thus becoming a son of God. If he were already a son as soon as he believed, then Christ would not have spoken of the *“power to become”* a son. It is very evident that not every believer exercises the power God gives him; not every believer takes advantage of the privilege extended to him. For there are thousands of believers who are not children of God, and who are not heirs of the kingdom of heaven.

### **“Believed, And Turned Unto The Lord”**

*“Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen traveled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only. And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene,*

*which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord”* (Acts 11:19-21). Were these people saved as soon as they believed? If so, they were saved before they ever turned to the Lord! The passage affirms two things of these people: (1) they believed, and (2) they turned to the Lord. And the turning to the Lord came after the believing. Turning to the Lord must always follow belief. No unbeliever will turn to the Lord; only the believer will so act.

### **“Believed. . . . But Did Not Confess”**

*“Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God”* (John 12:42, 43). Now some advocates of “faith only” try to evade the force of this passage by saying that the belief of these chief rulers was merely belief “about” Christ, but that they did not truly believe in him, did not truly trust him, did not truly rely on him. Well, the record says they did believe “on” Christ. They did not merely believe something “about” him—they believed on him. But they would not confess him. Words cannot be any plainer than those used by Jesus, *“Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven”* (Mat. 10:32). These chief rulers simply did not have the courage to make their confession of faith in Christ; they were too cowardly; they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

These cowardly rulers clearly came under the condemnation of Christ, believers though they were. Their faith could not save them. Faith alone is not enough. The only faith that will save is the faith that obeys.

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Submitted by J. D. McDonald

## SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. Which baby was named after his mother's laughter?
2. In which book of prophecy do we read about the valley of dry bones?
3. What did Jonah do while he waited to see Nineveh's fate?
4. How long had the infirm man lain at the pool of Bethesda?
5. What relation was Annas to Caiaphas?

...and remember last month's questions?

1. The Lord said that Jacob and Esau were two what in the womb?   NATIONS (Gen. 25:23)
2. What was the name of Solomon's son who succeeded him as king?   REHOBOAM (1 Ki. 11:43)
3. The king's wrath is as "the roaring" of what?   A LION (Pro. 19:12)
4. To the beauty of which plant did Jesus compare to King Solomon?   LILIES (OF THE FIELD) (Luke 12:27)
5. What did Paul ask Philemon to have ready for him? A ROOM (Phm. 1:22)

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## WASHED

Picture in your mind that you are wearing a white shirt or blouse with a pocket in front. You put a pen in that pocket. But the pen leaks and produces a dark stain on the front of the shirt or blouse. Picture that you also ate some kind of juicy fruit and the juice squirted out of the fruit and landed on the front of your shirt or blouse. You had other food to eat but that also landed on the front of you. Later, you worked on your motorcycle and got grease on you. Your once clean, white shirt or blouse is now stained with many stains. What are you going to do with it?

Your sins that you commit before God are stains upon your spiritual clothes. They are deep stains that you cannot remove with any amount of good works.

*But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; (Isa. 64:6a)*

*For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord GOD. (Jer. 2:22)*

But God has made it possible for you to have your spiritual clothes clean and without spot once again.

*Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. (Isa. 1:18)*

Jesus Christ died upon the cross and shed his blood for you so that your sin stains might be cleansed.

*Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. (Eph. 5:25-27)*

Jesus loved you so much that He gave Himself to cleanse you from your sin stains so that you can be a part of His glorious church, without spot or wrinkle or blemish. It is the blood of Jesus that cleanses you.

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*But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. (1 John 1:7)*

*And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. (Rev. 1:5-6)*

In 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, the apostle Paul lists some of the sins that could stain your spiritual clothes.

*Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.*

This is not a complete list of sins. But whatever the sin stain, Jesus is the only one to cleanse you from your stains. The apostle Paul continues in verse 11,

*And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. (1 Cor. 6:11)*

Ananias told Saul in Acts 22:16, “*And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.*” Your baptism was when your sins were washed away.

What a wonderful analogy, that you can see yourself first covered with stains from sin, but now washed clean in the blood of Jesus. The stains are gone. You don’t have to feel guilty of the things of your past. Those sins have all been washed away. Though your sins were as scarlet, you are now washed as white as snow. But, you cannot go back to your old way of

## GOSPEL MEETINGS

DATES	PLACE	SPEAKER
Dec. 8 - 10	Freefield Stateline, MS	Tim Eldridge, Mike Kirby, & Joe Hill

living, and be filled with sin stains again.

*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. (2 Pet. 1:5-9)*

You must be diligent to grow spiritually and not forget that you were cleansed from your old sins. Perhaps the next time you drink the cup at the Lord's Supper, you can be reminded that the fruit of the vine that you drink is to you the blood of Jesus that cleanses you from your sins.

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**“Let the words of my mouth,  
and the meditation of my heart,  
be acceptable in thy sight,  
O LORD, my strength,  
and my redeemer.”**

**Psalms 19:14**