

Repentance and Faith

Is faith in Jesus Christ enough for salvation? It is definitely required, but is it all that is required? In Acts 20:21, Paul tells us he went “testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”

He speaks of two things: repentance toward God and faith in Christ. We can acknowledge that Christ is our lord and Savior, but this is not the end of it.

Romans 6:11-14 tells us to “Likewise reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that you should obey its lusts. Neither yield yourselves as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and yourselves as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for you are not under the law, but under grace.”

Those under the Law of Moses did not have the grace available for them to be lifted out of concupiscence or the law of sin, which is our tendency toward sinning. Faith in Jesus Christ is required for this; then, repentance toward God requires us to yield to God to receive grace from Him through Christ in order to be lifted from the law of sin: “For when we were yet without strength, at the set time, Christ died for the ungodly” (Romans 5:6).

In Romans 6:19, 22 Paul says: “I speak after the manner of men because of the weakness of your flesh: for as you have yielded yourselves servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield yourselves servants to righteousness unto holiness...But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto holiness,

and the end everlasting life.” Holiness comes from being God’s servants by yielding to Him. Paul tells us to “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14). Holiness is required for everlasting life.

Paul also says: “Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if you live after the flesh, you shall die: but if you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God” (Romans 8:12-14); and in Galatians 5:16, 24: “Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh...And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” The Spirit enables us to avoid sinning, and not our own efforts at righteous living, without strength from God.

Trying to obey religious law for righteousness, as was required under the Law of Moses, doesn’t enable us to avoid sinning, because the law of sin remains in us. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 6:12 and Roman 4:8: “All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient; all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any...Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.” All things are lawful because sinning is not imputed or legally charged as it was under the Law of Moses; but Paul asks in Romans 6:15-16: “What then? Will we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know you not that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are whom you obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?”

The Christian motivation for not sinning is that “Whosoever commits sin is the servant of sin” (John 8:34). Continued sinning will enslave us.

Email comments to aiello235@. If this link does not work, please submit your comment to this email address through your

personal email provider.

Click here: for my free online book on Biblical Higher Power Spirituality for Inner Peace and Strength.