

LESSON 8

HOW TO EXPLAIN SALVATION BY FAITH

Notes

Background Information for the Teacher

Objectives:

1. The student can, by using a drawing, explain four views of salvation by faith and, using scripture references, can show which one is in harmony with scriptures.

Preparation:

1. Each student should have a Bible to use.
2. Have enough copies of the beginning of the chart to distribute so that each student has a copy and a pencil to work with.
3. Have copies of the quiz over Lesson 7 for students to use.
4. Have access to a chalkboard, markerboard, or overhead projector with a blank transparency so you can lead the way in making the chart.

Theme:

Virtually all in Christendom would agree that salvation is by faith but we need to understand how to show others that the scriptural view of salvation by faith means a faith demonstrated by repentance and baptism.

Lesson Plans for Conducting the Class

Introduction: (about 15 minutes)

1. Call the roll and greet visitors.
2. Sing Jesus is Lord or Trust and Obey.
3. Have a prayer of thanks that God has made salvation possible for us through Jesus Christ and a request that He will help understand what that means and how to share it.
4. Give the quiz from the last lesson. Questions 1, 3, 4, and 5 are worth 10 points each. Question 2 is worth 60 points with each of the characteristics worth 15 points each.
5. Ask the class this question, "Do you believe in salvation by faith?" Some will say yes, some may say no, some will want to qualify their answer. Being able to answer this question clearly is very important for three reasons: (1) if we do not understand "salvation by faith" we could be lost, (2) there is so much difference of opinion on this question, we need to be sure of what the Bible teaches about it, and (3) as we seek to share our faith, the question is sure to



arise. So let's look to the scriptures to find what it means to be "saved by faith."

Learning Experiences: (about 25 minutes)

1. Ask the class if they would agree or disagree with the following quotations from recent books:
 - a. Since salvation is a gift, "we can do nothing toward our own salvation."
 - b. "The gracious God we know in Christ promises to save us without our help."

We will be studying whether these statements are in harmony with scripture.
2. Ask someone to read Romans 4:2-5. **Q:** What person does Paul use as an example? (Abraham) **Q:** How does Paul say he was saved? (by faith) **Q:** How does Paul say he was not saved? (by works)
3. Ask someone to read James 2:20-24. **Q:** What person does James use as an example? (Abraham) **Q:** How does James say he was saved? (by what he did) **Q:** How does James say he was not saved? (not by faith alone)
4. **Q:** Are these two Bible writers in conflict? (No) But we do need to study carefully to see where the truth lies on this issue so we can understand them both and explain it to others.
5. In this lesson we will look at four views about salvation and draw a chart of them as we go. You have been given a sheet of paper with the beginning of the chart. Be prepared to add to this as we go through the lesson. (Teacher: you should draw the chart on the board as the lesson develops to show the students exactly how to be drawing theirs. Write the scriptures on it just as you want them to do that.)
6. Look at the light gray bar at the bottom. On that bar write "Sinful Man" and beside that write "Rom. 3:23." Have someone read that passage. **Q:** How many have sinned? (all). **Q:** Does that include each of us? (Yes) So we all are on this point in the chart--separated from God by our sins.
7. Look at the light gray bar at the top. There write: "God Counts Us as Righteous." Now write "Rom. 4:24" on the upper bar. Have someone read that passage.
8. Now point out that our sins place us at the bottom, separated from God and what we want to do is reach the point where God can count us as righteous and thus can save us. But how do we get from being sinners to being counted as righteous. We will discuss four possible ways.
9. Look at Number 1, on the left. **Q:** What does the direction of the arrow suggest? (The arrow goes up from man to God suggesting that we are trying to reach God by ourselves.)



Now write on that arrow the words, "By works--earn it.)" This view says that I can be good enough to work my way to heaven. Martin Luther accused the Catholics of his day of teaching salvation by works because they were selling the "rights" to commit sin in order to raise money. These "rights" were called "indulgences." The Catholics also imposed on people certain penalties for sins that required them to crawl a certain distance or hurt their bodies in certain ways. Such caused Luther to say the Catholic Church taught salvation by works. Today, there are those who say, "I think I'm good enough to go to heaven because I am good to my family, pay my bills, and do good in my community. I think God will take care of me." These think they are earning their way to heaven with their good works. **Q:** Can any of you think of a Bible verse that would speak to this issue? (Ephesians 2:8-9 or Galatians 2:16.) Read both of those and have the students write them beneath column Number 1. Discuss the part especially that says, "not by works that no one should boast" and point out that this teaches we cannot earn our way to heaven. Once I have a sin on my record, no number of good deeds can take that sin away. Only perfection would get me to heaven this way.

10. Now go to column Number 2 on the right. **Q:** What does the direction of this arrow suggest about how we might be saved? (It is all from God to man suggesting that everything is up to God.) In this arrow write, "By Faith, God gives the Faith." According to this view, salvation is by faith and God decides to whom He will give the faith and to whom He will not give the faith. This is the view of John Calvin--predestination and election. Without consideration of anything they have done or have not done, God arbitrarily picks some to be saved and some to be lost. Have someone read Ephesians 1:4. Does this verse seem to suggest this view? (Yes). So some say, there is nothing we can do about our own salvation. Now have someone read Ephesians 1:13. This verse, in the same chapter, says that those who hear and believe (make their own choice) will be included in Christ, that is saved. Have someone read Acts 10:34. **Q:** What would this verse suggest about God choosing some to be saved and some to be lost? Have someone read 1 Timothy 2:6. **Q:** For how many did Christ die? If Christ died for all, then how could the Father choose some to get no benefit for Christ's death? Have someone read 2 Peter 3:9. **Q:** How many does God want saved? (all) So how could he arbitrarily condemn many to being lost? Write these scriptures below column Number 2. So,



- like column Number 1, this one also is not in harmony with scripture. While God chose before the world began how He would deal with the group who was in Christ (Ephesians 1:4), He did not decide in advance what individuals would be in that group. We still don't yet have the scriptural view of salvation by faith.
11. Now look at column No. 3. Have someone read again Ephesians 2:8-9. In the upper portion coming down from God write the words "God's Grace." And in the lower arrow going up, write Faith. This column represents the view that we are saved entirely "by grace" because the grace part comes all the way from God to man. But this view also suggests that we have to do something to get into God's grace. Have someone read Romans 5:1-2. **Q:** How does this passage say we get into the grace of God? (By faith) So the drawing shows grace coming from God to us and our getting into grace by faith. That all sounds very much like the verses. But to make this arrow represent the view of many, we must write another word it. Beneath "faith" write the word "undemonstrated." That is, this column now represents the view that God counts us as righteous the moment we have faith in Christ. Thus, according to this view, if you are in a bar, watching a religious TV show and decide that you want to accept Jesus (believe on Him), you are saved that instant. Nothing further is required on your part. Have someone read Galatians 3:26 and another Acts 16:31. **Q:** What is the only thing these verses mention that one must do to be saved? (Believe)
 12. **Q:** So, does that end the matter? Are there other passages that have additional information about being saved that we should also take into account? (Yes) Now have someone read James 2:24. **Q:** What does this verse say about salvation by faith before that faith is demonstrated? (James says that faith with no deeds to demonstrate it is a dead, useless faith.) Now have someone read Galatians 3:26 and 27. **Q:** What demonstration of faith is mentioned here before one is put into Christ (Saved)? (baptism) Now have someone read Acts 16:31-33. **Q:** Do the first words about "believe and you will be saved" include all Paul taught the jailor and his family? (He obviously taught them more including baptism.)
 13. So we are getting closer to the Bible teaching on salvation by faith but we need a fourth column. It is similar to the third one--God's grace comes all the way down to man. The upward arrow says faith but now with the word "demonstrated." We are saved by grace through faith--but the faith must be demonstrated before God rewards it.



- That is the point James makes--faith with no deeds to demonstrate it has never been God's plan. Abraham had to demonstrate his faith and so did all those listed in Hebrews 11. Have someone read Acts 2:37-38. **Q:** What indication is there as to whether the people have believed Peter's sermon? (They were cut to the heart and asked what to do.) **Q:** What demonstrations of this faith does the Apostle Peter tell them to do prior to their being forgiven of their sins? (Repent and be baptized.) **Q:** Would these actions be an attempt on their part to earn their salvation by works? (No, there is no work of merit in repenting and submitting to baptism. These are merely deeds God requires as demonstrations of faith before He promises to forgive our sins.)
14. Now a quick review of the chart. **Q:** Where do we all begin? (As sinners separated from God.) **Q:** Where do we want to go? (To where God will count us as righteous.) **Q:** Can we earn our way to being counted righteous by good works? (No.) **Q:** How do we know we cannot earn our way? (Eph. 2:8-9.) **Q:** Can we earn part of the way? (No. It is all by grace. None of our salvation is by the "works plan." It is all by the "faith plan." **Q:** Then if salvation is by faith, does God select those to whom He will give faith? (No.) **Q:** What Bible verses would tell us whether this is true? (2 Peter 3:9; Acts 10:34, etc.) **Q:** Then how about plan three--salvation is by grace through faith without a demonstration? Is that the scriptural view? (No.) **Q:** But what about Romans 5:1-2? It says we are saved by faith. (But that does not match James 2:24 and the verses that tell us we have to demonstrate our faith before God rewards it.) So we are down to column 4. This view includes grace through faith but shows that we must demonstrate our faith with repentance and baptism before God gives us forgiveness of sins. This view gives all the verses their proper place.

Applications: (about 5 minutes)

1. Because there is so much misunderstanding on the matter of salvation by faith, you have a great responsibility now that you can explain it by the scriptures.
2. Salvation by grace is a wonderful blessing and we should thank God for His abounding love to us.
3. Do you know of a friend whom you could help to a clearer understanding of this issue? Share the lesson this week.

Assignment: (about 1 minute)

1. Draw this chart and explain it to someone in your family. This will help you to learn it and be of benefit to the other

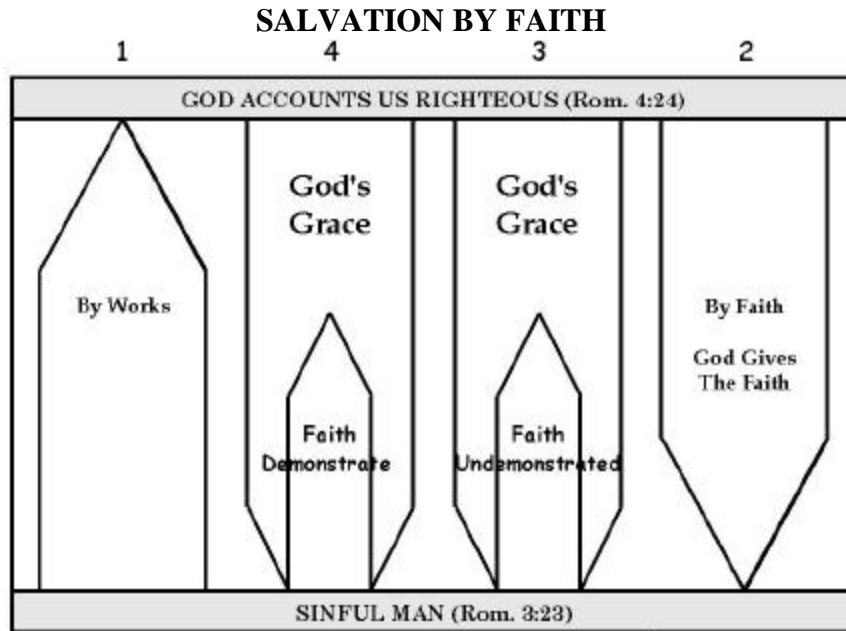


person as well.

2. Review your notes on this class so you can draw this chart at the beginning of class next week.

Evaluation: (next class meeting)

1. Quiz next Sunday over this lesson.



SALVATION BY FAITH

1

4

3

2

