

BIBLE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

By Robert C. Veil, Jr.

Question: Why do you place so much emphasis upon works? Don't you realize the Bible teaches that we are saved by faith only?

Answer: This question betrays a gross and dangerous misunderstanding of what the Bible actually says. Contrary to some popular opinions, the Bible nowhere teaches that we can be saved by faith *only*. In fact, the only place in the New Testament where the words "faith only" appear is in James 2:24, "You see then that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."

Works of obedience are commanded and expected by God. It is a fatal mistake to assume that a person can be saved by merely acknowledging, mentally, that Jesus is the Christ. James taught that "even the demons" do that, (James 2:19). Jesus said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven," (Mt. 7:21).

Acknowledging the reality of Christ as the Son of God is crucial, but it is only the beginning of our salvation. That acknowledgement must lead to a true, obedient faith. A saving faith is not hollow, or devoid of works. On the contrary, if we truly believe in Jesus as the Christ, we will be diligent workers in his kingdom.

The 11th chapter of Hebrews is known as the great faith chapter, or the "gallery of the faithful" because it itemizes numerous Old Testament characters

who were “faithful” to God. But a careful reading of that chapter shows that in every case, they *acted in obedience* to God. Abel “offered.” Noah “prepared an ark.” Abraham “obeyed” and “went out,” etc. All of the faithful followers of God *demonstrated* their faith, rather than merely giving lip service to it.

Don’t fall for the lie that you can be saved by simply “believing” on Jesus, or by *faith only*. Jesus demands that our belief in him be active, working and obedient. Faith and works do not cancel or contradict one another, they go together.

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