

Studies on Saving Faith

Part 2

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Part 2 – SAVING FAITH

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). These are the words of Christ, the risen Christ, and

are the last that He uttered ere He left this earth. None more important were ever spoken to the sons of men. They call for our most diligent attention. They are of the greatest possible consequence, for in them are set forth the terms of eternal happiness or misery; life and death, and the conditions of both. Faith is the principal saving grace, and unbelief the chief damning sin. The law, which threatens death for every sin, has already passed sentence of condemnation upon all, because all have sinned. This sentence is so peremptory that it admits of but one exception—all shall be executed if they believe not.

The condition of life as made known by Christ in Mark 16:16 is double: the principal one, faith; the accessory one, baptism; accessory, we term it, because it is not absolutely necessary to life, as faith is. Proof of this is found in the fact of the omission in the second half of the verse: it is not "he that is not baptized shall be damned," but "he that believeth not." Faith is so indispensable that, though one be baptized, yet believeth not, he shall be damned. As we have said above, the sinner is already condemned: the sword of Divine justice is drawn even now and waits only to strike the fatal blow. Nothing can divert it but saving faith in Christ. My reader, continuance in unbelief makes Hell as certain as though you were already in it. While you remain in unbelief, you are "having no hope, and without God in the world" (Ephesians 2:12).

Now if believing be so necessary, and unbelief so dangerous and fatal, it deeply concerns us to know what it is to believe. It behooves each one of us to make the most diligent and thorough inquiry as to the nature of saving faith. The more so, because all faith does not save; yea, all faith in Christ does not save. Multitudes are deceived upon this vital matter. Thousands of those who sincerely believe that they have received Christ as their personal Savior and are resting on His finished work, are building upon a foundation of sand. Vast numbers who have not a doubt but that God has accepted them in the Beloved, and are eternally secure in Christ, will only be awakened from their pleasant dreamings when the cold hand of death lays hold of them; and then it will be too late. Unspeakably solemn is this. Reader, will that be your fate? Others just as sure they were saved as you are, are now in Hell.

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