

The Human Side in Salvation

John Isaac Edwards

God has done His part and requires that man do his part to complete the process of salvation. The human side in salvation consists of:

Hearing the Gospel. The transfiguration scene finds God saying of Jesus, “...This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him” (Matthew 17:5). Romans 10:17 teaches us that hearing the word produces faith. Faith is not zapped into one’s heart mysteriously.

Faith in Christ. Jesus said, “...for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:24). Some teach that man is saved by faith alone, but the New Testament does not teach that faith or anything else by itself will save us. James declared, “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only” (James 2:24). The faith that saves is the type of faith like Noah and Abraham had - one which leads to obedience.

Repentance of Sins. Paul preached, “And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30). An example of repentance is found in Matthew 21:28-30, when the boy “repented, and went.” He had been told by his father to go work in his vineyard. He answered, “I will not,” but he repented. What did he do when he repented? He changed his mind and he changed his action. Thus, repentance

is a two-fold action which requires a change in one’s mind and results in a change in one’s practice. We must quit doing the things which are contrary to the Lord’s will and start doing that which is pleasing in the Lord’s sight. Jesus taught, “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3).

The Confession. Jesus stated, “Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 10:32). Paul wrote the Romans, “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved” (Romans 10:9-10). There is an example of the confession being made in Acts 8:36-38 when the man of Ethiopia confessed, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God” (v. 37). This is the bedrock truth upon which the church is built (Matthew 16:13-18).

Baptism. The Lord taught, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved...” (Mark 16:16). Peter said, “The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us...” (1 Peter 3:21). The purpose of baptism is to “wash away” sin (Acts 22:16), or “for the remission of” sins (Acts 2:38). This is why a person should want to be baptized. Baptism is not just “an outward sign of an inward grace,” but is an act of obedience re-

quired by God in order to become a Christian. Baptism is a burial, or immersion in water; not a sprinkling or pouring. The word “baptism” itself means immersion. Paul asked, “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death...” (Romans 6:3-4). Notice in Acts 8:36-38 that Philip and the eunuch came unto a certain water, they both went down into the water, the baptism took place, and they came up out of the water. Here is a vivid description of baptism. It is at this point that the blood of Jesus washes away one’s sins and he gets into Christ (Galatians 3:27), where salvation is (2 Timothy 2:10). Baptism is clearly essential to salvation.

Faithfulness. When one obeys the gos-

pel, he is added to the church by the Lord (Acts 2:47). As a Christian and member of the Lord’s church, one must remain faithful in worshipping God, purity of life, and working for the Lord. The Lord promised, “...be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life” (Revelation 2:10). Many Christians are not faithful. They sin and slip back into the world. Their condition is described as “...fallen from grace” (Galatians 5:5), for they did not continue to obey the Lord (Colossians 1:23). When a Christian sins, God requires that he repent and pray to God for forgiveness (Acts 8:13-22).

This is not our plan, but rather God’s plan for all mankind. Since salvation belongs to the Lord (Psalm 3:8), we have no right to change the plan He gave to save us. We need to simply believe and obey it today.

Salvation and the Church

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Many fail to appreciate the real value of the church. We see the importance of the church when we realize that salvation and the church are connected.

One cannot be saved outside of the church. Jesus is the “...saviour of the body” (Ephesians

5:23). Luke records, “...and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2:47). To be in the church is the same as being in Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23), where salvation is (2 Timothy 2:10).

Won’t you be added to the church today?

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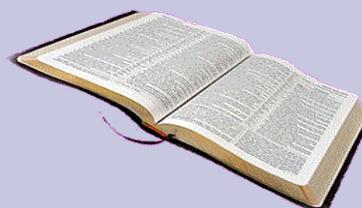
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Is Our
Only Guide!**