

If – 24/07/2016

“If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; ¹⁰ for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, “WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.” (Romans 10:9-11)

Beloved in the Lord,

Many things in life are conditional upon something, be it a law of nature or a law of man. For example, when God created the world He placed certain universal laws into place, such as the law of gravity. We all know and understand, the law of gravity. If you step off a third floor balcony with no support then the trip down will be rapid.

There are man-made laws that govern the way we live. They are usually in place to protect us such as traffic laws. There are laws that tell us how fast we can go, which side of the road to drive on, who has the right of way and so forth. If everyone adheres to the rules then there is order. If you do not then there is chaos and if you are caught there is an ensuing penalty for breaking the law. If you obey the rules and laws all is well, if you disobey then there are penalties.

Everything boils down to “If”. This little word “if” is a powerful one in that it is a pivotal point in so many decisions we make daily. Purely out of curiosity I checked how many times “if” appears in the Bible. Depending upon the translation the figure is around 1800. In the New Testament alone “if” appears around about 600 times.

Why am I telling you this? To simply highlight the fact that so many things God tells us and promises us, are conditional. Many of God’s promises are conditional upon whether we do or believe certain things or not. It is important that we comprehend this truth, because our well-being depends upon it. Today we will look at a few conditional promises.

The first one is our text for today:

“If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; ¹⁰ for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, “WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.” (Romans 10:9-11)

Paul is clearly outlining the way of salvation. If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. When Jesus shed His Blood on the cross, He paid our sin debt in full. He paid the sin debt of all mankind with His Blood. Salvation is provided for all, but not all are saved. The ones who are saved are those who believe. The promise of salvation is a conditional one. It begins with an “if”.

July 24, 2016

IF

“If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;

This means that the opposite is also true. If you do not confess and do not believe then you remain lost.

We find this principle all throughout The Bible. God promises us so very much, He offers so much, and He will give us what He says, if we meet His requirements. If we believe; if we receive; if we surrender our will to Him.

God makes a very powerful statement in the Old Testament:

¹² Then the LORD appeared to Solomon at night and said to him, “I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice. ¹³ If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people, ¹⁴ and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land. ¹⁵ Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to the prayer offered in this place. (2.Chron.7:12-15)

God is clearly saying that if the people respond in the prescribed manner then He will act as He had promised. If not, then He will not heal their land and it will not bode well for them.

All throughout Scripture we find that God is gracious and merciful and loving. Every time a person or nation turns to Him, humbly and in repentance, He listens, saves, heals and blesses. If they do not repent then punishment follows.

Probably the most powerful “if” Scripture in the New Testament is found in 1 John:

⁵ This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; ⁷ but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. ⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us. My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; ² and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world. (1 John 1:5-2:2)

John tells us that these Words are given to us that we may not fall into sin. God has given us His Word to protect us, to keep us close to Him, because He loves us so very much. God desires for us to understand this.

Sin always has dire consequences. Thankfully we have a way out. We can be clean, sanctified, without spot and blemish. We can be justified before Holy God and be declared guilt and sin free – IF-

If we repent. If we confess our sin and repent of it, then we have this promise that Jesus is faithful and righteous and forgives all of our sins and cleanses us from all unrighteousness. This is so simple and also logical.

We can use the shower as an illustration. Say you have been working in the garden and you come in all dirty and sweaty. You can become clean again by taking a shower. You have a shower at home but if you do not utilise it, you will not be clean. If you do use the shower you are washed clean.

The cross of Jesus is like a shower in one sense. You are marred, blackened by sin. If you come to Jesus and place your trust in Him alone, then His Blood washes away all your sin and you are made pure and holy. If you do not come to Him, if you do not trust nor believe in Him you remain in your filth.

The passage says: ⁹ ***If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1.John 1:9)***

God has done all He is going to do. Out of His amazing grace and love He has provided the way to be free of sin and its horrible consequences. We need to come to Him.

Our foundation text today contains this wonderful truth: ***“WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.” (Romans 10:11)***

We can come to Him confidently knowing that He loves us. He wants to bless us. Jesus wants to wash away all our sin. He wants the very best for our life. God is our Heavenly Father, and He loves His children with an everlasting love.

He has created us so that we would live in loving fellowship with Him. He has created us to live in the Light here and in eternity.

If we come before Him humbly, He never pushes us away. So great is His love and grace. His mercies are new every morning. Great is His faithfulness.

That is why David writes:

“O taste and see that the LORD is good; How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him! “ (Psalm 34:8)

If we do not taste, if we do not come we are losers. But if we come Oh what joy divine. You see it all comes down to “IF”! May God give us the sense to come to Him now and always. Amen.

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All Bible quotations taken from New American Standard Bible.***