

TESTING WHAT YOU BELIEVE

1 Thessalonians 5:21, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

If you were to poll 100 people today, how many different opinions would you hear concerning the subject of eternal salvation? I would suspect your findings would be much like mine or any other person. Some would answer that it requires a response to the gospel message to go to heaven when you die; Some would say that it requires an immersion in water (baptism); Some might add that it requires a continual life of holiness; and even others might say it requires you to accept Jesus Christ into your heart as your personal Savior. You may even find a person who believes in Salvation by Grace and Grace alone who would say that his or her heavenly home is by the Grace of God without any works on their part. But, which is correct? It is impossible for every opinion to be correct. It is impossible to have many truths, for there is only one truth!

In the 3rd chapter of the Book of Romans Paul teaches us how to test what we believe about eternal salvation. According to Paul, the truth about eternal salvation:

(1) Will not leave room for the boasting of man (Rom 3:27, "Where is boasting then? It is excluded.")!

If there were a work for us to do, a commandment for us to keep, or a bar that we must overcome in order to go to heaven, there would be room for some to boast of what they had done. From verse 9 through verse 18 of the third chapter of Romans, Paul eliminates every area where one may boast of their works for eternal salvation. In the carnal nature inherited from Adam, there is none that understandeth; none that seeketh after God; none in the right way; none that does good; none righteous; none that knows the way of peace, and none that does righteousness. Conclusion? Where is there room for boasting? The glory of eternal salvation is not yours and God's, but completely and wholly the Lord's. It is the Lord who is just and the justifier of the child of grace (Romans 3:26).

(2) Will teach everyone which are saved, is saved the same way (Romans 3:30, "Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith.") Paul affirms that the Jew is eternally saved the same way the Gentile is saved, by/through the faithful obedience of Jesus Christ.

If the Jew of the old Testament is eternally saved by his/her keeping of the law, how was the Gentile, who had not the service of the law, saved? It would be impossible! If the Gentile in the New Testament is eternally saved by his/her obedience to the Gospel, how is the Jew saved who was separated from the Gospel (because of disobedience, Romans 11:7, Romans 11:20)? The Bible declares clearly that the Lord has a people in every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation (Revelation 5:9), not just where the service of the law was known or where the gospel was/is preached. The Lord eternally saves all His children the same way, by Grace! Whatever we teach about eternal salvation, it must have the deceased infant, the old man, the Jew and the Gentile saved the same way (every person in heaven, in heaven the same way), otherwise, it will not pass Paul's test.

(3) Will uphold the law of God (Romans 3:31, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.") When the Lord Jesus Christ died for His children on the Cross of Calvary, He satisfied the Eternal Judgment seat of the Father for their sins. Jesus Christ, as the representative of His children, kept the law perfectly and gave His righteousness to them so that they themselves now stand legally/positionally (in Christ) before the Father in perfect accordance to the law. The Father receives everyone of the elect in heaven, not sweeping their sins under a rug as an unjust judge, but with the law perfectly upheld by the faithful obedience of the Eternal Son. There

is no marring of the law, but a satisfaction of the law. According to Paul, eternal salvation is not at the expense of the law, but by the fulfilling of the law of God.

In the end, there is only one doctrine that will pass every test. Salvation by grace and grace alone! The salvation by works system simply will not pass the test brothers and sisters. It is my hope that every student of God's Holy Word will test what they believe about this glorious subject and conclude the same as Paul, All Glory Belongs to Jesus Christ the Savior, Redeemer, and Reconciler. It is He who has ransomed us from the eternal damnation we rightfully deserve by His perfect shed blood on the Cross. Praise be to Jesus! Amen!

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