

Assurance Of Salvation



Foundations (Day 88)
by Derek Prince

The same mistake which was made by Israel in Paul's day is being made today by millions of professing Christians around the world.

There are countless sincere, well-meaning people in Christian churches everywhere who feel that they must do something to help earn their salvation. They devote themselves to such things as prayer, penance, fasting, charity, self-denial, the careful observance of church ordinances, but all in vain! They never obtain true peace of heart and assurance of salvation because – like Israel of old – they seek it not by faith but by works.

Such people go about to establish their own righteousness, and in this way they fail to submit to the righteousness of God, which is by faith in Christ alone.

Paul emphasises the same truth when he tells Christian believers:

> "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast." (Eph. 2:8-9)

Notice the tense that Paul uses: "You have been [already] saved." This proves that it is possible to be saved in this present life and to know it. Salvation is not something for which we have to wait until the next life. We can be saved here and now.

How can this present assurance of salvation be received? It is the gift of God's grace – that is, God's free, unmerited favour toward the sinful and undeserving. This gift is received through faith – "not of works, lest anyone should boast." If a man could do anything whatever to earn his own salvation, then he could boast of what he himself had done. He would not owe his salvation entirely to God, but would owe it, in part at least, to his own good works, his own efforts. But when a man receives salvation as a free gift of God, simply through faith, he has nothing whatever to boast of.

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> "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law." (Rom. 3:27-28)

In Romans 6:23 Paul again presents the total contrast between that which we earn by our works and that which we receive solely by faith, for he says:

> "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

There is a deliberate contrast between the two words wages and gift. The word wages denotes what we have earned by what we have done. On the other hand, the word translated "gift" – in Greek charisma – is directly related to the Greek word for "grace," charis. Hence, the word denotes explicitly a free, unmerited gift of God's grace or favour.

Thus, each of us is confronted with a choice. On the one hand, we may choose to take our wages; that is, the due reward for our works. But because our own works are sinful and unpleasing to God, the wages due to us for them is death – not merely physical death but also eternal banishment from the presence of God.

On the other hand, we may choose to receive by faith God's free gift. This gift is eternal life, and it is in Jesus Christ. When we receive Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour, in Him we receive the gift of eternal life.

Devotional

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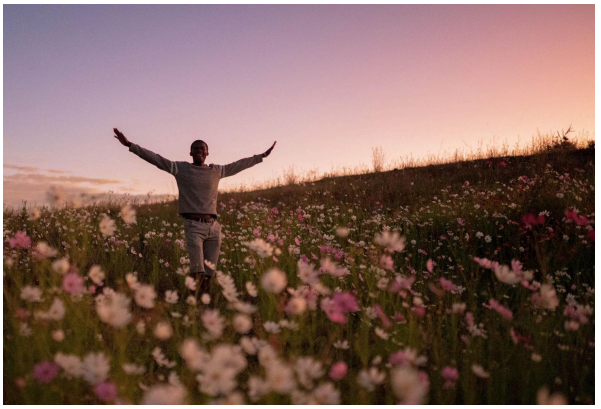

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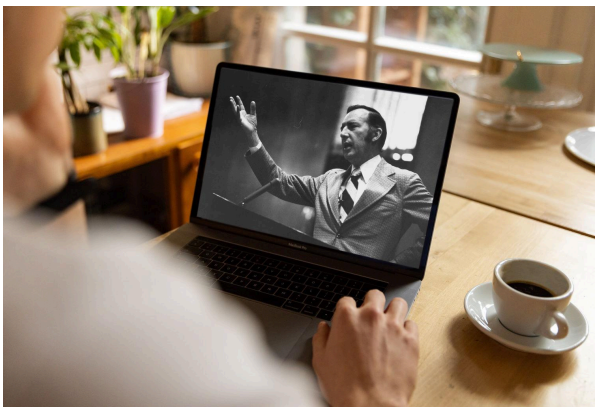

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