

Wednesday Night Bible Study

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Main Study

What is biblical faith?

Faith

- Rule of First Use
 - To understand any word in Scripture, look for the place you see it first.
 - For example, the word Love.
 - Genesis 22, with Abraham and Isaac
 - Worship
 - Genesis 22 (again!)
 - God introduces both Love and Worship through the sacrifice of a son by a father.
- So where is Faith first mentioned in the Bible?
 - Exodus 17:12
 - Hebrew word for faith/faithful is *Emunah*
 - We see this word here, but usually translated “steady” in English.
 - So *faith* is not just intellectual acceptance of facts. It always manifests itself in action.
 - James 2:18. He is wrestling in this passage with what faith is.
 - His point here is that true faith works.
 - Hebrews 11 offers a commentary on faith in the Old Testament

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- "Faith" is perhaps better expressed as "faithfulness"
 - Another useful concept is "allegiance." Allegiance is a constant surrender to a bigger kingdom than just yourself.

Is salvation a process? Or is it a point in time?

- The answer is yes. There is a time when you move from death to life. You can't just say "I've always been saved." There is a moment when you decide to follow Jesus.
- Salvation is also the process where God moves you to a place of surrender through repentance and faith.
- Paul: Salvation is something that happened in the past, something that happens in the present, and something that will happen in the future.
 - **Were Saved**
 - Titus 3:4-5
 - **Being Saved (present)**
 - 2 Corinthians 2:15
 - Philippians 2:12
 - 1 John 1:7
 - **Be Saved (future)**
 - Romans 5:9-10
 - Note that Paul doesn't say we'll be saved by His death, but by His *life*.
 - Romans 13:11
 - Matthew 25:46
- The Bible uses these same phrases in different perspectives. You have to read it with two hands.

Grace

- Grace is not just for forgiveness of sins. It's more for the saint than the sinner.
- Which is more important to God: the work we do or the worker?
 - The worker. Because the work we do is from God--it isn't ours in the first place.
 - The things we do *for* God flow out of the time we spend *with* God.
- Are these things that *we/they* do, or are they things that God does:
 - Philippians 2:12-13
 - Colossians 1:28
 - Ephesians 2:8-10
 - Ephesians 3:20
 - 2 Corinthians 4:7-11
 - Galatians 2:20
 - 1 Corinthians 15:10
 - 2 Peter 3:18
 - How in the world can a person *grow in grace*?
 - Grace is not reserved for salvation. Every one of these passages--God working in us to work through us--is a picture of grace.
 - Grace is God accomplishing in you what you cannot accomplish by human effort alone.
- Dallas Willard about Grace: "Grace is always against earning, never against effort."
- Practicing spiritual disciplines are a fantastic way to experience God's grace in our lives today.

Rabbit Trails

John 3:16

- “His one and **only** Son...”
 - This is a callback to Genesis 22:2, with Abraham sacrificing Isaac

The Gospel we preach leads to the disciples we make

- If what you’re telling people about salvation is that it saves them some time in the future to go to Heaven, they’re only getting half of the story. They miss the entire life God has for them today.
- How many people do you think would say, “You know what? I don’t have an abundant life.” God wants to live in you *today*.
- If it was all about heaven, why did Paul spend so much time talking to people about living *today*?