

Readings: Luke 18:9-14 & James 2  
Singing: 420:5 – 362:1-3 – 143:1-4 – 191:4-7

Lord's Day 7.21

## The Definition of Saving Faith (2)

Intro: The Spirit-filled faith (Acts 2) soon declined into formal faith (James 2)

A. James' epistle majors on faith as a 'saving faith'

1. His letter is sharp and searching
2. His letter calls attention to faith that is *not-saving*

B. Most common non-saving faith: *historical faith* (James 2; Matt 13:22)

1. Defined: *intellectual faith – mainly takes hold of our mind*
  - a. it doesn't define or incline your feelings or will
  - b. it is a valuable or good faith but not saving
2. Evidences of *when 'certain knowledge you hold for truth' is saving*

C. Less common non-saving faith: *temporary faith* (Matt. 13:20)

1. Defined: *feeling-filled & driven faith*
  - a. moves one to certain actions
  - b. marks that identify a *temporary faith* vs. *saving faith*

D. Least common non-saving faith: *miraculous faith* (Luke 17:17)

1. Defined: *strong conviction regarding a miracle*

E. Saving (or true or justifying) faith

1. The faith that involves the whole heart:
  - a. faith that **knows** God's plan for salvation in Christ (**mind**)
  - b. faith that **longs** to partake in & **rejoices** in God's salvation (**feeling**)
  - c. faith that **submits** to God's plan of salvation (**will**)

### The Publican's Exercise of Saving Faith

#### I. What he knew? II How he felt? III. What He did?

##### I. What he knew?

A. Publican knew 4 truths he held for truth in his mind!

1. that he was an unworthy sinner
2. that he could not undo any of his sins
3. that God is a merciful Being
4. that there is mercy with God for him

B. Saving faith leans on matters of **truth you know** as true

1. Saving faith is a matter of the head: *Now we have received ... the spirit which is of God; that we might **know the things** that are freely given us of God* (1 Cor. 2:12)

## II. How he felt?

A. His body language tells how he felt (Luke 18:13-14)

1. God is not listening to our phrases or cliches but to our heart!

B. Saving faith is a matter of your emotions: *conviction – fear – long – pine – mourn – delight*

## III. What he did?

A. As fruit of Spirit's work, He made various conscious choices (Ps. 110:3)

1. He came to temple (vs. 11): *a choice of will overstepping his feelings*
2. He prayed to God (vs. 13): *a conscious deed of faith overcoming his fears*
  - a. He knew direct communication with God was impossible (vs. 13a)
3. He pleaded for mercy (vs. 13): *willing to submit to God's way of peace*
  - a. He knew and made use of the only way of approach: *the sacrifice* (10)

B. Saving faith is also a matter of the will

1. As fruit of *new birth*, our will is made willing and able to choose (Ps. 110:3)
  - a. before regeneration: *we choose death* (Eph. 2:3)
  - b. after regeneration: *we not only know, desire but also will: 'For it is God which worketh in you both **to will and to do** of (according) his good pleasure' (Phil. 2:13*

2. Saving faith is *founded on knowledge (mind)* that affects our *feelings & will*
  - a. Rom. 10:8-9 *But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach: 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. For with the heart [mind, affections, will] man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed.*

Close: Are you a believer like the publican? the Pharisee? or neither?