

Acts 16, 18; Lord's Day 7

TRUE SAVING FAITH

- I. Faith as a power.
 - A. The Bible teaches that the Mediator died only for the elect who are gathered from all over the world.
 1. The Bible rejects universalism: that God loves every man and that Jesus died for everyone.
 2. The Bible teaches limited or definite atonement (Matt. 1:21 John 6:37-40; 10:14,15,26).
 - B. Salvation is by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8,9), so faith is the means God has chosen for salvation.
 1. The ability to believe is not given to all men (I Cor. 2:14), but only to the elect (Acts 13:48).
 2. Those given faith respond to gospel preaching positively.
 - C. Thus, Scripture speaks of faith as a graft which connects two (making them one) in a living connection.
- II. True saving faith is an ability (active) - faith without works is dead (James 2:17,20,26).
 - A. The first activity of faith is the ability to know what God has revealed in His Word – centrally: Jesus is God.
 1. Faith has substance, i.e., it holds objective truth, revealed realities.
 2. Central to the Scriptures is the revelation that Jesus is God and that He is the only Savior.
 - B. The second activity of faith is the ability to rest on or trust in Christ and His wisdom and care.
- III. Bound together with Christ, Christians are assured of their salvation.
 - A. What believers know makes them confident and sure.
 1. The more we know the nature of our Father and the content of the gospel, the more assured we are of salvation.
 2. Confidence is a part of friendship and is rooted in the knowledge that we are unchangeably loved.
 - B. The activity of faith is like anything living, namely, it either develops or it wanes.
 1. Peter could walk confidently on water when he kept his eye on Christ, but not when he looked away from Him.
 2. The Spirit works the activity of faith through the means of the Word, the means of grace.