

Psa 22:9,10 ADULTS BALK, CHILDREN BELIEVE

PRELIMS. Following on from this morning.....

LITTLE CHILDREN & SALVATION

I find it so **encouraging** that Jesus said about **little** children: “*of such is the kingdom of God*” (x 3 times - Mat/Mar/Luk)! In Luke the word is '*brephos*' new-born, **embryo**, **foetus**!! The Bible teaches you can be born again from the womb. Salvation is **all** of grace. God is **not dependent** on us having understanding of Him and His ways, before He will bestow His **grace** on us! Grace is grace! God **gives** it!

Friends, we are saved because of God's **grace** - although we must believe/trust in God, it is **not because** we believed that God saved us. While it is **through** faith, it is **not 'because'** of faith! There is **no merit** in faith – there is only merit in Jesus Christ. Faith is the **means** God uses in saving us and giving us forgiveness. The cause of our salvation is God's mercy and love! **That** is what **caused** God to work faith and salvation in us.

I believe an infant **can** have very simple faith even in the womb, as some **psychologists** are now telling us! David told us long ago that on his mother's **breast** he was trusting in God – because “*You made me trust You at my mother's breast*” [9] *This does not mean that David was not born a sinner – he was and he tells us he was born in sin and **shapen** in **iniquity**. But just as in **adults**, sin and grace are not mutually exclusive! They can **both reside** in the one heart!

I once spoke on some theological point re children to a well known theologian after a conference. He rebuked me saying, ‘Donald, the Bible insists it's the **adults** that have to become **like children** in faith and understanding, not children like adults – that's what Jesus said!

EASIER for CHILDREN

There **are** many places in Bible, where saving faith **seems very easy** – a **child** can do it! In many places the Bible does **not** represent faith in Jesus as a difficult thing. Its **Xians** that can **make it complicated**!

We must distinguish between ‘faith’ and **philosophy**! Satan has managed to **confuse** Xians by making them think about faith in the

same way as people think about philosophy! **Descartes**, said ‘I think, therefore I am’! He worked hard at discovering whether he was alive and an entity or just an imagined phantom! Some reformed Xians are like that with faith in Christ! They are **not satisfied** with simply believing – they must examine further – ‘Do I really really believe? **How** do I **know** that I believe?’ and such questions, and what they are doing is entering into the realm of philosophy! And it is possible to think this is being **holy**! But all it has achieved is made ‘weak’ Xians **doubt** their salvation. We don’t find such reasoning in Bible.

Jesus is telling us **plainly** that **children** have the **right attitude**? They just believe. It seems to me that it is **much easier** to become a Xian when very young, than when you are an adult! As you grow older, it becomes **more difficult**. You become set in a **groove**, change is more **threatening** and **uncomfortable** - even to think of, and the **practical task** of **re-discipline** is much harder. And - over the years, Satan will **also** have **corrupted** your **mind**!

Look at David here: “*“**You made me trust You at my mother's breasts**”!* It was **when** he was an adult that he **realised** he had been trusting in God as an infant! **Faith** is a **mystery**. Many Xns **cannot tell** about their conversion! Because it was when they were so young they did not comprehend what was happening! Some Xn Churches demand an ‘experience’ and a date which **confirms** their being born again! I am not sure that is right. Demanding a date and an experience **limits** God in giving grace **only** to those who are adults and to those who can give a clear testimony and a clear explanation about it. Such demands **deny** that God can give His grace to whomever He pleases at whatever age and stage they are in life! God’s grace is exactly that - grace - unmerited, unearned.

God can give His grace very **slowly**, simply **imperceptibly**. **Fruit** is the **only confirmation** of our conversion! Did the Apostle John, Peter, Andrew, James, Bartholomew, Thomas, etc have **dramatic** conversions? No account given of it! They all came **gradually** to believe and trust in the Lord – recognising Him as the Messiah! Most Xns see the light in the same way as **daylight** comes – slowly!

Look at **Moses**! Exactly **when** was he converted? As a baby in the

basket “*they saw he was a **proper child***” [Ex 2:2AV]! He believed as soon as he understood about God - but the seed was there before he recognised his calling from God + Look at **Samson** – “*the child shall be a Nazarite **to God from the womb***” [Jud 13:5]. + Look at **Jeremiah** “*before you were **born** I sanctified you. **Before** you were **born** I consecrated you*” [Jer 1:5]. + John Baptist “*He shall be **filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb***” [Luke 1:15]. Plus David here make **six** in Holy Scripture! Do **we** believe it?

I believe that **still happens!** No reason why not! God is the same yesterday, today and for ever. It is **God** who does it. I know people who cannot tell a time in their lives when they did not love Jesus! They were ‘brought up to love Him; they were **told** how lovely Jesus was, and they found it easy to believe. The ‘**picture**’ their parents painted of Jesus was beautiful, and they were **drawn** to Him. It is **wrong** for parents to paint a picture to covenant children of God as **severe** and austere and scrutinising our lives to find a flaw, so that he can punish us! God is **always** presented to covenant children in Bible as **merciful** and **waiting** to be **gracious!**

Look at **Abraham** – what was he doing when God called him? **Sinning** – **pagan worship** in Ur! What did God say to him when He first came to Abram? Did God say ‘You are corrupt, you are perverted’? No, not at all! Rather He said ‘Abram, come here – see the stars, see the hills way yonder in the distance – well I’m going to bless you and **give** you children more than the stars, and give you property and goods far greater than your eye can see’! Ie, God **only** gave him lovely **promises** of blessing! **No reference** to his **sins!** That **came later!** Encourage your covenant child to get a **beautiful picture** of the **love** of God!

REASONS WHY CHILDREN BELIEVE EASIER

One, God has made this **special promise** “*those who **seek Me early** will find Me*” [Pro 8:17]. I think that means 'early in life'! Isn't that encouraging? + The “*promise is to you and your **children***” ie, everything I will do for you, I will do for your family also! (If you love me, love my dog!) “*I will pour out My Spirit on your **descendants** and My blessing on your **offspring***” [Isa 44:3]. “*He*

seeks Godly offspring” [Mal 2:15]! God loves covenant children.

“*God heard the voice of the boy*” [Gen 21:17] Cry of pagan lad who **was circumcised** – son of **Egyptian Hagar**!! Look at **Samuel** in the Temple – God spoke to him as a child (by-passing Eli!) + “*I did not said to the offspring of Jacob, 'Seek me in vain.'*” [Isa 45:19] Isn't that wonderful – God is **not** making a **fool** of us when He says “*you will find Him (God) if you look search after Him with all your heart and with all your soul*” [Deu 4:29]

Two, children, constitutionally, have **no mental hang-ups**, they are **not suspicious** they believe what you tell them! Parents never forget this: your children **will believe you!** They **trust their parents!** God has ordered society and **constituted** human nature so that little children **will** believe what their parents tell them! That's why God works through the **covenant!** Children are ‘born’ with an understanding that ‘mummy and daddy’ are right!!

Children are **innocent** – and they want to **know more**, so they **ask!** But children are **vulnerable** – that is why it is **so important** that **parents capitalise** on the situation and teach their children the Truth - **before** the **institutions** of this world corrupt them! Before the errors of our State schools and Universities and the BBC, fill their minds with myths and erroneous philosophies.

Three, children don't have to go thru the **trauma** (and trauma it is) of **radical change!** Adults have **formed** opinions, beliefs, and a **lifestyle** of **habits** which they have **chosen** and become ‘used to’ and enjoy and derive comfort. When adults are **challenged** to give up their sinful lifestyle, it can be very very difficult to change! Not so the child who has not **developed a bad habit!** Children can be **prevented** from starting bad habits by good counsel and instruction and by good **example!**

Four, when the home is a ‘Xian home’ and the parents are truly loving and caring, and the gospel is explained in loving terms, that **environment is conducive** to faith! A godly home is conducive to faith! We are, to a large degree, influenced by our environment. Again, that is why God works through the covenant!