

# The Brown Street Beacon

*"...Shine out among them like beacon lights,*

*holding out to them the Word of Life" (Phil 2:15-16)*



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## Does Faith Alone Save?

**G**rowing up, before someone led me to search the scriptures more carefully, I thought that as long as I believed in Jesus, heaven is where I would end up after I died. Sadly, there are still many people who believe this to be true. They assume that living a life in accordance with the will of God as revealed in the Bible really doesn't matter. It is concluded by many that as long as they believe in Jesus, any kind of behavior is permissible. "So what if I engage in sex outside of marriage. So what if I get drunk every now and then. So what if I curse from time to time. I don't hurt anybody by my actions, and anyway, Jesus loves me enough to save me in spite of how I live. After all, I believe in Him."

The bad thing about this kind of thinking is that it is legitimized by popular preachers who are more interested in receiving a check from some of these lost people than they are in teaching the truth. Furthermore, the idea that just believing in Jesus is enough is further validated by well meaning pastors and preachers who aren't trying to scam anyone but are just wrong in their belief. The result is people living in sin, opening and unabashedly, and yet considering themselves faithful people of God because they believe that Jesus is the Son of God.

Here's the truth! Whether your life is characterized by good morals or immorality, or whether you have a good heart or a wicked heart, faith alone will not save you. I used to think it would, but then I read the Bible and it told me it wouldn't, and the Bible is always right. So, what does the Bible say about faith alone? Listen to James, the author of the New Testament book that bears his name.

*"Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and **not by faith only**" (James 2:24).*

Now, the works James is referring to are not meritorious works. He is not saying, in other words, that we must earn our way to heaven. The Bible teaches that it is impossible to do that because we have all sinned and fallen short of God's glory (Romans 3:23). James is instead referring to the kind of works demonstrated by Abraham, that is, works of faith and obedience (James 2:21). Obedience is required by God, and it always has been. I would challenge any denominational teacher, preacher, pastor or pupil to show just one passage in the Bible that indicates that a person can be saved while disobeying the commandments of God. You see, how one lives is important. You simply cannot go to heaven if you do not live an obedient life before God. Listen to the word of God on this:

### Hebrews 5:8-10

Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. 9 And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him,

### **Matt 7:21**

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

### **1 John 1:7**

7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

These passages (and they are just a few of the many) teach conclusively that how you live matters. Just believing is not enough to be saved, in spite of what some are teaching. No one is saved by faith alone. Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God? If so, that's great, but as James said, "the devils also believe, and tremble (James 2:19). If you want to be saved and go to heaven, you must obey God. You must obey the gospel by repenting and being baptized (Acts 2:38), and then by living faithfully, according to God's will, until death (Revelation 2:10). If you are not doing this, determine to do so before it is too late.

*Don*

## **The New Testament God's FINAL Revelation**

By J.T. Smith

**G**od says some very definitive things in His word the Bible. He makes it very clear that the New Testament is His final revelation. John 16:13 "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will shew you things to come." II Peter 1:3 "According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue." II Timothy 3:16-17 "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (underlining mine for emphasis - jts) Notice what the above verses affirm. The truth (which is absolute) given by God through the Holy Spirit to the New Testament apostles and prophets: (1) provides us with all truth; (2) gives us all things that pertain to life and godliness. (3) completely furnishes us unto every good work. Jude said in verse 3, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." (bold type mine for emphasis - jts). The New Testament was written in Greek and has been transited into English. The word "once" is from the Greek word hapax (hapax) and means (according to Strong's Lexicon # 530, "one (or a single) time (numerically or conclusively).") Thus "the faith" (New Testament) has one time for all times been delivered to us. God has not given, nor will He give us, another revelation. The New Testament is man's ONLY standard of authority today.