



Scriptures and Doctrine :: fair share

fair share - posted by imnowhere, on: 2009/8/28 16:43

If my decision makes the difference.
 If Christ's death accomplishes nothing without my vote.
 If my obedience is necessary to save myself.
 If Christ died the same for many in hell.
 If Christ hoped for all to be saved, but it's in our hands.
 If the only difference between me and those in hell is what I did...

How is the credit for salvation realistically divided between us and God? How can I really say all the glory is God's like I hear people say? Is it all God's? How does one define being saved by grace? Does it matter to us? To God?

Re: fair share - posted by twayneb (), on: 2009/8/28 17:19

Maybe this will help.

Obviously I am not originally going to Hell simply because of the wrong that I personally have committed. I was going to Hell because I was born into sin because of Adam's original transgression. (Romans 5) I did not become a sinner because I sinned. I sinned because I was originally a sinner. I (meaning mankind) was absolutely incapable of saving myself. There is simply no hope outside of accepting what Christ did for me, submitting my life to Him, and being born again.

Jesus atoned for my sins and offered me right relationship with God through Him. He offers this salvation, this restoration of right relationship with God, as a free gift. I did not have to do anything to earn it. (Romans 5)

That is why I would give God all the glory and reserve none unto myself. Sure, I acknowledge that had I not decided to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and surrender myself to His Lordship, I would not be saved. It is like I was offered a priceless gift and then thought I could accept the glory and the credit simply because I received it.

I already alluded to it, but there is no other way to be saved except by grace. God offers me the gift of right relationship with Him through the sacrifice of His Son. I cannot earn it. The fact that I can have it at all is an act of His grace.

I do think it matters immensely to us. It is the difference between religiosity and true Christianity. If I am trusting in what I have done, thinking that because I have kept a certain set of rules or rites or sacraments or whatever it may be, that I am somehow now pleasing to God, I am still lost. Religion wraps itself in imagery and exercise and then says, "Is it enough now God. Have I earned anything from you yet?" It is bondage. If, however, I have given up on ever being able to earn it myself, and have thrown myself upon the work of Christ as my only hope, then I can be truly born again and God can begin to work His glory in me from the inside out.

It is heartbreaking that so many people have had the price paid for their salvation and yet have refused to receive it. God is totally just in allowing people to go to Hell as He gave them the gift of His grace and it was refused. I am not sure but I think this heartbreak over the lost will be some of the tears that He will wipe away from our eyes in the end.

Hope that helped. God bless you!

Re: - posted by imnowhere, on: 2009/8/28 19:25

Thanks for the answer. You'll have to clarify though...

Quote:
 -----Obviously I am not originally going to Hell simply because of the wrong that I personally have committed. I was going to Hell because I was born into sin because of Adam's original transgression. (Romans 5)

So mankind won't give account for their sins, but rather Adam's? (if we're guilty already because of Adam's transgression, then our own are redundant)

Quote:
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If Jesus atoned for your sins, why wouldn't they be paid for whether you believed it or not? (If they're actually atoned for). If your buddy pays off your credit card debt, it's paid whether you believe it or not.

You said that you give God all the glory and reserve none to yourself, then you state that you made the difference and that at your faith and receiving the gift is what actually saved you (because you believe Jesus died for the person in hell as well, hence His death didn't accomplish anything apart from what you add).

This is the hard part to understand. Is the glory all God's or half and half? If you say it's all God's, but then say that it's your decision that is the difference between heaven and hell, that's quite a major contribution, right? From your answer, it would seem that God would have at least somewhat of a 'thank you' for you in heaven.

Maybe you could explain...

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2009/8/28 22:40

From your further questions, it seems to me that I see a couple of key things that might help. First, it seems like you are focused on individual actions of sin as the thing that we need to be "saved from", which leads to much confusion. Actually, it is probably one key thing, the second being a byproduct. Let me see if this helps.

It is not your individual acts of sin that are the problem. They are only the symptom of the problem. The problem is that we were born into sin. When Adam sinned, he not only experienced death physically, but his spirit, which was once alive to God, became dead toward God. In John 4:20-24 the woman asks Jesus what the correct physical location was to worship. She thought that to please God she had to be in the right geographical location. Jesus said that true worshipers worship in spirit and truth. It is only a spirit that is alive unto God, born again, that can truly worship God. In John 3, Nicodemus had the same problem. Jesus told him that it was his SPIRIT that had to be born again, not his physical being. That is what I meant when I said that we did not become sinners because we sinned, we sinned because we were sinners from birth.

Too often churches teach that we need to be forgiven of our sins, and that if we will just come to Jesus and get our sins forgiven we will be saved. This is a very incomplete idea of salvation. I think the reason you are having the confusion might be because you see your sin as a collection of wrong deeds you're you did that were paid for. If that were the case, then I can see how you would wonder why anything is required of you, since paid for means just that. This is not a complete picture of what salvation consists of. Salvation is the regeneration or rebirth of the spirit. We become aware, not that we committed some sins (that was no news to us), but that we are sinners by our very nature and separated from relationship with God because of it. To be in right relationship, our spirits must be born again. This rebirth is only possible because of the price paid by Jesus Christ, but is not automatic. We must believe on what Christ did and make Jesus the Lord of our lives. This means putting Him in the driver's seat. He paid the price for sin. He became sin for us so that we might be righteous. He did not become individual actions of sin. He became sin. It is sin (the original condition of the spirit) that separates us from God, not sins (the recent actions that were just symptoms of what was really on the inside).

I know that without this way to right relationship being opened up for me, I would have no hope. So, although I did ultimately decide to make Jesus my Lord, to surrender my whole life to Him, and accept the gift offered to me, I cannot take credit for the work that was done in me.

Does that help clarify or does it introduce new questions?

Re: - posted by Miccah (), on: 2009/8/29 0:07

twayneb wrote:

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Very well written.

Re: fair share - posted by Leo_Grace, on: 2009/8/29 13:05

Quote:
-----by imnowhere on 2009/8/28 13:43:08 If my decision makes the difference. If Christ's death accomplishes nothing without my vote. If my obedience is necessary to save myself. If Christ died the same for many in hell. If Christ hoped for all to be saved, but it's in our hands. If the only difference between me and those in hell is what I did... How is the credit for salvation realistically divided between us and God? How can I really say all the glory is God's like I hear people say? Is it all God's? How does one define being saved by grace? Does it matter to us? To God?

Understanding the grace of God must start with the fact that all men are sinners and all are deserving of the eternal fires of hell. Without God's intervention, no amount of repentance, penance, obedience, decisions for God, sacrifice, pleading, absolutions --- nothing you can do can save you from your just reward: an eternity in hell.

God is (most of all) loving, holy and just. His holiness requires that only those who are spotless or blameless may be near him. His justice demands that all sins must be paid for. God's grace came to us because of his love --- he sent his only son to die as the atoning sacrifice for all our sins (justice), and to present us as spotless before the Father (holiness) through his Lordship over our lives, which we must choose to accept.

So you can see here, the glory is ALL God's. The gift of eternal life was purchased for us at a very steep price --- the life of God's only son. And out of his love, God offers that gift to all of us. But it only becomes ours if we in turn accept that gift (through faith that is validated by repentance, obedience, and love). Who then deserves to be praised and glorified for that great gift? Should it be the generous and loving giver or the undeserving recipient? Should man puff himself up and claim personal honor and glory for accepting a gift he did not deserve? Should he not rather recognize the greatness of God's grace and love, and give God the glory? Should he not humble himself even more, and repent even more of his sin?

ns, and strive to the best of his ability to never ever again grieve God who loves him so?

If a rich man gave a \$100 bill to a beggar out of a sense of charity, should the beggar say "Thank you"? Or should he say "Thank me"? Or "Thanks to both of us, otherwise this deal would not have pushed through"?

Re: - posted by imnowhere, on: 2009/8/30 0:30

So you're saying it's all of grace except the obeying and believing part, which in fact makes our salvation effectual, and without it God is unable to save us? Or is our believing and obeying grace as well? Or is our believing and obeying part of the good works ordained from the beginning for us that only come after we are saved? The natural man can't please God, so I'm wondering how he can exercise saving faith and repentance in the natural state, for surely those things are pleasing to God?

Re: - posted by Leo_Grace, on: 2009/8/30 1:19

You are right in saying that without the believing part (faith), God is unable to save us.

Heb 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Faith in God is the starting point of our redemption and salvation.

Jn 3:16-18 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son."

Only through our faith in God can the Holy Spirit come and lead us further into salvation and rebirth.

Jn 3:3 In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."
Jn 3:6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.

Re: fair share, on: 2009/8/30 7:09

That's a very interesting post, and poem, and questions that you pose. I mean that.

Do you know what really grieves me about the witness of the "evangelical church"? (and to preface, I mean no insult towards anyone, or any grouping of God honoring folk) here's what grieves me: there is this great emphasis on, "accept Christ so you don't go to hell"...there is such a great emphasis on hell, who is going there, who is not, what must be done, so one doesn't go to hell, the things or sins that one can commit to wind up in hell, the list is endless, the dialogue unremitting, and I believe that this fixation, on hell bound or not is just missing the mark.

Wasn't It Jesus Messiah Himself, who kept referencing during the Gospel accounts, "The Kingdom of Heaven is near you"....or the Kingdom of God is near you"....and every place He said that, it was in reference to serving God. (at this point a lot of posters would be putting up Scriptural references to buttress the point they just made, that's not this poster, for I would be robbing you of your joy, and your fun, and I would never do that, because searching the Word of God is joy, look up what I speak of and see if I'm right)

Co-laborer's. That's what God desires. Not fearful wimps who do religious STUFF or "amen" at all the right places just to juice themselves out of hell. That is so weak-kneed and selfish it makes me sick, it's just "religion", and religion kills, Jesus saves. But "saves" for what?

To Co-labor with Him, and if folks believe that the meaning of "colaboring" is to try and "talk" someone into "making a decision" to confess Jesus as Messiah, it's my conviction, that they are off the mark.

a question, would people serve God just for the joy and love OF serving God, or do they serve God for an "incentive", said "incentive" being, "whew, I'm not going to hell when I die".

What if you knew that even though, you serve God, love Jesus, co-labor with God, and at the end of your life, you're cast into hell?

you'd say (not YOU, this is an example) you'd say, "what a minute, that's absurd, me and God had a "deal", I made a decision that I'm going to accept Jesus as my personal Messiah, my Saviour, and when I die, I'm going to Heaven!"

a deal's a deal...right?

wrong, one doesn't make "deals" with God. You either love God, or you don't, you either fear God or you don't, you either believe God or you don't. Its "either.... or". Either you are a son of the Light, or son of the darkness, and once you in the depths of your heart and soul, believe love fear God, then the Knowledge that Jesus is Messiah doesn't even require a decision or that damnable "sinner's prayer"...you just know the Truth that Jesus is the Son of God, crucified on the tree, as the last Pascal Lamb, the last atoning sacrifice for the sins of humankind and was resurrected on the third day, and as I type this Jesus has the most wonderful intercessory prayer ministry going on right this second, and God has sent His Comforter, God the Holy Ghost, to bring us into all Truth and Love, which is sanctifying all those who are sons and daughters of the Light, and that Light is Jesus Christ.

Its supernatural, its imparted, its imputed, and once we start to sup off this reality, we grow in this Knowledge, and once we grow, we WANT to feast on His Word, we WANT to live holy, we want to love others as ourselves, our lives become a perpetual dialogue, a perpetual prayer up to God, our lives become the witness of the Good News, the Gospel of Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Oh yes, we can testify to others what God did in our lives, but our very lives become an example to others who do not know love fear believe God, and then we let God the Holy Ghost deal with them.

God forbid we don't muck it by trying to manipulate others with our fleshly, albeit well intentioned fear based "you're going to hell" palaver that calls itself "witnessing". God have mercy on some of these "open air preachers", who have stumbled many and shut the door of the Kingdom of God in many people's faces. (I'm not speaking of ALL open air preachers, just the ones who are doing harm to the ministry of reconciliation, who are they? God knows) Would to God, He make their tongues cleave solidly to the roofs of their mouths, amen.

Now, how do I "know" all this? Only by what happened to me, and I tell you this; no human man preached one word to me, to bring me to the Confession of Messiah. Briefly told, I was in a bad place, and a person dear to me told me this, "neil, when you get scared, just ask God this, "God please be with me"....and brother, or sister, I leaned on that prayer like you wouldn't believe, like a drowning man clings to a rope, and if you remember correctly, the Hebrew Name "Immanuel" means "God is with us", and that precious bit of Scripture in Isaiah 7:14 prophesies the coming of Messiah, and I tell you Messiah came into my life, Praise the Mercy of a loving God! Within two weeks, I found myself in a New Testament Church confessing that Jesus is Lord.....because I had to, I couldn't do anything else, my hand wasn't on the rudder of my life anymore, **thank God**

Now, does that mean everything is perfect in my life?.....no. Does that mean I don't sometimes stumble fall and fail God? Oh yes I do. But what that does all mean, is that I lean on Him, I lean on His faith, and not on my fear, and I endeavour to co-labor with Him, Jesus the One I love.

Grace Peace Courage and Strength in Jesus Christ be with you, neil

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2009/8/30 10:16

Quote:
-----So you're saying it's all of grace except the obeying and believing part, which in fact makes our salvation effectual, and without it God is unable to save us? Or is our believing and obeying grace as well? Or is our believing and obeying part of the good works ordained from the beginning for us that only come after we are saved? The natural man can't please God, so I'm wondering how he can exercise saving faith and repentance in the natural state, for surely those things are pleasing to God?

Not going to be totally dogmatic, but look at this scripture closely. Ephesians 2:8. The interlinear Bible says it this way, For by grace ye are saved through faith; and this not of yourselves... I believe the "this" talked about is the faith necessary to believe for salvation. I would back this up by using Romans 3:22 which says that our righteousness is by the faith of Jesus Christ and by Gal. 2:16 which says it as well. What is implied, I think, is that I did not have within my own self even the faith necessary to be born again, but that I needed an impartation of faith from God to believe.

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2009/8/30 17:49

Also Gal 2:20 says it is no longer I who live, but Christ liveth in me and the life I now live I live by the Faith of the Son of God.

If we are saved by faith and I only need faith of the size of a mustard seed to move mountains, since I cannot move mountains, my faith must be non-existent and I need a complete faith, new in Christ to believe unto salvation that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Peter tried to give this answer, but Christ was not fooled and knew that that faith to believe that, Jesus Christ is the Son of God, came from His Father.

In Christ, born again by the Faith of the Son of God and the incorruptable Seed of the Father birthed in me:

Phillip

Re: - posted by imnowhere, on: 2009/8/30 23:35

Leo Grace...

Quote:

-----You are right in saying that without the believing part (faith), God is unable to save us.

Now, as scripture tells us faith is a gift (Phil 1:29), how is it that God can't save us without OUR faith, yet saving faith is a gift from God?

For all the posts that point out that I'm confused, I'm sure getting a lot of mixed signals in the answers here.

It seems anyone that taught that it's Jesus plus nothing that saves us would have a hard sell here. Or maybe I'm not hearing right.

If we can't please God in the flesh or natural state, how can God need 'our' faith to save us?

I don't believe He does. It's a gift, just like repentance. We walk in them once we've been saved. Faith and repentance it seems from the word, are evidence of our salvation, not the power of it; for that is Christ himself and his righteousness, not mine.

And as Paul says in Romans 11:5,6 if I'm saved by grace, it's not by anything that I've done. I show fruit of my salvation, not fruit unto salvation.

Re: - posted by Leo_Grace, on: 2009/8/31 0:10

Quote:

-----If we can't please God in the flesh or natural state, how can God need 'our' faith to save us?

Dear imnowhere,

I'm sorry if I'm the source of your confusion. Let me try to explain again here. First of all, I never said God needed our faith.

1. God is complete in himself. He does not need us at all, he does not need anything from us, and he does not need to save us. The separation of man from God is man's fault, because of man's sin. We could all disappear in a flash and God would still be God.

2. It is out of his love for man that God provided a way for man to be redeemed from his sin (God's grace), so we could gain draw near to him for our sake, not his.

3. God does not need our faith to save us. It is we who need our own faith to obtain the gift of salvation provided by God. God has already offered the gift. It is up to each one of us to take that gift or not.

You must choose to be saved by believing in God (Jn 3:16) and God will send the Holy Spirit to guide you unto salvation . God does not need you to believe, but he does want you to believe.

To summarize: God's gift of salvation is ready and available to those who would believe in Jesus Christ.

1Co 15:2 By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

Ro 10:10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

I hope this helps.

Re: - posted by imnowhere, on: 2009/8/31 12:19

Thinking of Phil 1:29 and 2 Tim 2:25-26, would you say faith and repentance are gifts from God or something we do on our own?

I agree that without faith and repentance we won't be saved, but where do they originate, a gift from God or our own free will?

Re: - posted by agnostic, on: 2009/8/31 15:22

Imnowhere,

I was reading this and I thought it seemed to relate to what you are asking...

home page
Regeneration Precedes Faith
By R. C. Sproul

One of the most dramatic moments in my life for the shaping of my theology took place in a seminary classroom. One of my professors went to the blackboard and wrote these words in bold letters: "Regeneration Precedes Faith."

These words were a shock to my system. I had entered seminary believing that the key work of man to effect rebirth was faith. I thought that we first had to believe in Christ in order to be born again. I use the words in order here for a reason. I was thinking in terms of steps that must be taken in a certain sequence. I had put faith at the beginning. The order looked something like this:

"Faith - rebirth -justification."

I hadn't thought that matter through very carefully. Nor had I listened carefully to Jesus' words to Nicodemus. I assumed that even though I was a sinner, a person born of the flesh and living in the flesh, I still had a little island of righteousness, a tiny deposit of spiritual power left within my soul to enable me to respond to the Gospel on my own. Perhaps I had been confused by the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. Rome, and many other branches of Christendom, had taught that regeneration is gracious; it cannot happen apart from the help of God.

No man has the power to raise himself from spiritual death. Divine assistance is necessary. This grace, according to Rome, comes in the form of what is called prevenient grace. "Prevenient" means that which comes from something else. Rome adds to this prevenient grace the requirement that we must "cooperate with it and assent to it" before it can take hold in our hearts.

This concept of cooperation is at best a half-truth. Yes, the faith we exercise is our faith. God does not do the believing for us. When I respond to Christ, it is my response, my faith, my trust that is being exercised. The issue, however, goes deeper. The question still remains: "Do I cooperate with God's grace before I am born again, or does the cooperation occur after?" Another way of asking this question is to ask if regeneration is monergistic or synergistic. Is it operative or cooperative? Is it effectual or dependent? Some of these words are theological terms that require further explanation.

A monergistic work is a work produced singly, by one person. The prefix mono means one. The word erg refers to a unit of work. Words like energy are built upon this root. A synergistic work is one that involves cooperation between two or more persons or things. The prefix syn -

means "together with." I labor this distinction for a reason. The debate between Rome and Luther hung on this single point. At issue was this: Is regeneration a monergistic work of God or a synergistic work that requires cooperation between man and God? When my professor wrote "Regeneration precedes faith" on the blackboard, he was clearly siding with the monergistic answer. After a person is regenerated, that person cooperates by exercising faith and trust. But the first step is the work of God and of God alone.

The reason we do not cooperate with regenerating grace before it acts upon us and in us is because we cannot. We cannot because we are spiritually dead. We can no more assist the Holy Spirit in the quickening of our souls to spiritual life than Lazarus could help Jesus raise him for the dead.

When I began to wrestle with the Professor's argument, I was surprised to learn that his strange-sounding teaching was not novel. Augustine, Martin Luther, John Calvin, Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield - even the great medieval theologian Thomas Aquinas taught this doctrine. Thomas Aquinas is the Doctor Angelicus of the Roman Catholic Church. For centuries his theological teaching was accepted as official dogma by most Catholics. So he was the last person I expected to hold such a view of regeneration. Yet Aquinas insisted that regenerating grace is operative grace, not cooperative grace. Aquinas spoke of prevenient grace, but he spoke of a grace that comes before faith, which is regeneration.

These giants of Christian history derived their view from Holy Scripture. The key phrase in Paul's Letter to the Ephesians is this: "...even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace have you been saved)" (Eph. 2:5). Here Paul locates the time when regeneration occurs. It takes place 'when we were dead.' With one thunderbolt of apostolic revelation all attempts to give the initiative in regeneration to man are smashed. Again, dead men do not cooperate with grace. Unless regeneration takes place first, there is no possibility of faith.

This says nothing different from what Jesus said to Nicodemus. Unless a man is born again first, he cannot possibly see or enter the kingdom of God. If we believe that faith precedes regeneration, then we set our thinking and therefore ourselves in direct opposition not only to giants of Christian history but also to the teaching of Paul and of our Lord Himself.

(from the book, *The Mystery of the Holy Spirit*, Tyndale House, 1990)

For more on this topic see:

The New Genesis by R.C. Sproul
Monergism vs. Synergism by John Hendryx
A Defense of Monergistic Regeneration by Gannon Murphy
Regeneration by Asahel Nettleton

My Comment:

Another passages in the Bible clearly teaches that regeneration precedes faith see:

1 John 5:1 - "everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God", John 1:13, Rom 9:16

John 6:63,65 "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life... Therefore have I told you that no man can come to me, unless it be given to him by my Father."

[home page](#)

Re: - posted by Leo_Grace, on: 2009/8/31 16:29

Dear imnowhere,

Let me begin by responding to your last question, with particular emphasis on the two verses you mentioned. I included some of their accompanying verses below, in order to clarify their meanings.

ABOUT REPENTANCE:

Quote:
-----2Ti 2:24 And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. g 2Ti 2:25 Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, h 2Ti 2:26 and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, i who has taken them captive to do his will.

Also:
Ac 5:31 God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.

Repentance is of God, and is one of the marks of a true believer. It comes through the Holy Spirit, who enables the believer to realize the greatness and holiness of God as compared to his own sinfulness (and much more), thus leading the believer into repentance.

ABOUT FAITH:

Quote:
-----Phil 1:27-30 "Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God. For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him, since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have."

In this passage, Paul is speaking to Philippian believers and the subject of the 29th verse is not believing (because they are already believers in Christ) but suffering for Christ, a calling they share with Paul, and which is re-emphasized in the last part of the sentence. One cannot deduce from this that the act of believing in God is not of man's free will.

There is an abundance of verses in the Bible that clearly indicate that faith (believing) in God is initially a freewill act of man. However, once the door to a man's heart is opened through his faith, God, through the Holy Spirit, can move in him to strengthen that faith. I have listed some of these verses below.

Rev 3:20 Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone HEARS my voice and OPENS the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.

Gal 2:16 know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have PUT OUR FAITH in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.

Jn 6:28-29 Then they asked him, "WHAT MUST WE DO to do the works God requires?" Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: TO BELIEVE in the one he has sent."

Jn 12:44 Then Jesus cried out, "WHEN A MAN BELIEVES IN ME, he does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me.

Ac 16:30-31 He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, WHAT MUST I DO to be saved?" They replied, "BELIEVE IN THE LORD JESUS, and you will be saved—you and your household."

1Jn 3:23 And this is his command: TO BELIEVE IN THE NAME OF HIS SON, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us.

Jn 3:16-18 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that WHOEVER BELIEVES in him shall not

perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. WHOEVER BELIEVES in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son."

RESPONSE TO OTHER POSTS IN THIS THREAD:

There are a few other posts in this thread that seem to promote the idea that man cannot believe in God of his own free will. I think this is an erroneous concept, and very dangerous and possibly disabling to those who have yet to believe in God. For, although God wants us to believe, and will work things so that we are led to believe, we must understand that the decision to believe and accept his gift of grace remains ours. They referred to some Bible verses, and in responding I quote those same verses from the New International Version (NIV).

Eph 2:8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.

Comment: The thing that is "not from yourselves" is the grace of salvation, not the faith through which it was accepted. The "through faith" qualifying phrase makes it clear that the grace of salvation requires your faith for that gift to be yours. Note that the meaning of the word grace is "the freely given, unmerited favor and love of God", which ties in with the word gift in the latter part of the verse.

Ro 3:22 "This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe."

Gal 2:16 "know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified."

Gal 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

Comments: This comment pertains to the last three verses quoted, because the misunderstanding seems to arise from the same problem. In all of them, the phrase "faith IN Jesus" or "faith IN the Son of God" in NIV, is written as "faith OF Jesus" in the KJV, thus creating confusion as to the source of such faith.

It is not my desire to argue for or against different Bible translations, but it seems unavoidable here in order to clarify the meaning of God's word. So I apologize beforehand to those who love the KJV for any grief this may cause.

The King James Version (KJV) of the Bible has been around for a long time, thus many are accustomed to it and attached to its charming and archaic vocabulary and phrasing. However, an objective review of its history will reveal that the KJV was not translated directly from the ancient texts written in Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek and Latin, which are considered the most accurate copies of God's inspired word. The KJV was written in 17th century English, translated mainly from the Bishop's Bible, which was produced by the Church of England in the 16th century. The Bishop's Bible borrowed heavily from the "Great Bible" of 1539, which then was the only authorized version for Anglican worship. The "Great Bible" was not taken directly from the more ancient texts, but mainly from the Latin Vulgate. Thus we see that there are two areas of concern with the KJV:

- 1) The language itself is about 300 years old and very different from modern day English. Word meanings, the use of prepositions, and sentence construction can be very different, leading to possible misinterpretation by today's readers.
- 2) Possible inaccuracies in content due to the intervening translations between the KJV and the ancient manuscripts (Latin Vulgate, Great Bible, Bishop's Bible).

On the other hand, the NIV was written in modern English, making misinterpretation less likely for today's readers. The NIV was completed around 1980. It was produced by an international group of known Biblical scholars and translators from six countries and more than 20 different denominations. It was sourced directly from the ancient texts in order to be as accurate as possible.

Thus, for the last three verses on faith quoted above, I believe the NIV version to be the more accurate translation.

Re: - posted by imnowhere, on: 2009/8/31 18:42

So even though Phil 1:29 says the faith has been given to us, it doesn't mean that.

I'd also double check your sources re Eph 2:8-9, where free-will adherents whose expertise is language, disagree with you and admit that the 'not of yourselves' is pertaining to the 'faith' and not the 'grace' which would be a double statement and lack sense.

Thirdly, having spent 7 years reading on bible translations, I'd have to question some of your conclusions.

But I hear your point. You believe God's hands are tied, that he wants to save us but can't, and that it's up to us. We're the captains of our souls.

I wonder what Jesus really meant when he said he came to save sinners?

But I admit you did a good job replying and have spent considerable time studying and aren't just answering whimsically. We'll have to just disagree to agree. Thanks for the replies. And thanks to Agnostic for the Sproul page.

Re: - posted by Leo_Grace, on: 2009/8/31 22:46

Dear imnowhere,

Quote:
-----But I hear your point. You believe God's hands are tied, that he wants to save us but can't, and that it's up to us. We're the captains of our souls.

This is totally out of line with all that I have said, and I don't appreciate your attempt to put words in my mouth. I did try my best to answer your questions sincerely, but I realize now that your "questions" and seeming confusion are all pretense. You are playing a dangerous game and have no interest in understanding my responses at all. I'm done with this charade.

Re: - posted by imnowhere, on: 2009/8/31 23:49

which part of that quote is out of line with what you said?

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2009/9/2 1:51

If you are very careful with the Greek you will see there are no prepositions in Gal 2:16 or 2:20 pertaining to faith, it is simply faith Christ.

Writing backwards from Hebrew, it would be Christ faith.

There is no in or of, but most language experts will allow "of" not in. That is why the new translations of the bible are trying to take away the in Christ position of the believer when it comes to salvation and the faith it takes to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God as Peter did and Jesus Christ told Peter that was not of himself but His Father in Heaven had revealed it to Peter, this is the Faith it takes to believe unto salvation, not ours, as I have said before, I don't even have the faith of a mustard seed which is the smallest of seed that produces a great bush the birds land in. So if I have faith to believe the sun will rise, I believe it because I have seen it and been told it will always rise in the east every morning, this is earthly faith programmed into our soul/mind and we believe in the natural. We cannot see the supernatural and cannot believe in the One we have not seen, unless faith is given to our soul/mind by the Spirit. This is that faith it takes to believe into salvation, given by God by the Holy Spirit through Christ Faith.

Acts 3:15-16 And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

Who's faith gave this man perfect soundness?

Acts 6:8 And Stephen , full of faith and power , did great wonders and miracles among the people .

This is not Stephen's faith, as this power cannot come from Stephen. These great wonders were not of Stephen, and certainly no miracle is of man, so who filled Stephen with Faith, power, wonders, miracles?

Acts 14:27 And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.

Who opened the door, (portal and entrance) of Faith?

Acts 15:8-9 And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us ; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

Who's faith purified their hearts?

Acts 26:15-18 And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

He says He is Jesus and sanctifies us by faith that is in Him.

That is (in); 1519. eis

Search for G1519 in KJVSL

eiV eis ice

a primary preposition; to or into (indicating the point reached or entered), of place, time, or (figuratively) purpose (result, etc.);

Him.

Faith Christ our Christ Faith.

Romans 3:3-4 For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

The faith of God is always effective and justifies us in our sayings even unto salvation and Judgement, "no condemnation for those that are in Christ Jesus".

Romans 3:22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe : for there is no difference :

Here it is again and even more, "upon all them that believe, again even without the preposition "of" it still imparts Christ's Faith to us to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and be saved.

On and On and On, but what good unless God gives the faith to believe it and reveal it to us that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, as to Peter.

In Christ by the Faith of the Son of God, revealed by the Father, for no man knows the Son except the Father and no man knows the Father unless the Son reveals Him to us.

Phillip