

Salvation

What does salvation mean? We tend to answer that question with some degree of glibness. To speak glibly means to have a ready fluency, but often with a lack of genuine thought. 'What is salvation?' We reply, "It is the act of God's grace whereby our sins are forgiven through the death of Christ." We may not use the exact words I have chosen, but we tend to respond with a similar set of words. It is a somewhat glib response. Why? It is fluent. It is factual. However, it is also capable of grave misunderstanding. When defining terms like 'salvation' our slickness in reply does not sufficiently convey the comprehensiveness of what the Bible teaches.

Salvation in the Bible is not only the act of God's grace whereby He forgives our sins through the death of Christ. Salvation in the Bible is also the act of our gratitude (in response to God's grace) whereby we turn – repent - of our sins, and follow Christ in obedience. Salvation means 'being saved' from the consequence of sin (rescued from eternal judgement in hell). But it also means striving to live a holy life that is pleasing to Christ. We are saved from sin to live a life in obedience to Christ's commands. Jesus said, "You are my friends if you do what I command you".

Salvation is not merely a matter of '**deciding**' to accept God's grace in Christ; it is '**doing**' what Christ's commands! In the day of judgement which we will all face, the New Testament makes very clear that Jesus will not ask us about our 'decision', He will ask us about our 'doing'! If we are 'doing' what He says, there will be no need to ask the previous question. Why? Because it will be obvious that we have made the 'decision'! That is the point. True faith in Christ is 'seen' in a life of devoted, diligent and determined obedience.

Pastor J. Lowe