

### **TEACHING GOAL**

To understand the nature of saving faith.

### **DOCTRINAL STANDARDS**

Q. What is faith in Jesus Christ?

A. Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation, as He is freely offered to us in the gospel.

S.C. 86, L.C. 72, W.C. of F. XIV, Savoy 14, Young 57

### **SCRIPTURAL BASIS**

**Study Passage:** Galatians 2

**Support Passages:** Isaiah 26:1-4; John 1:12-13; Romans 10:14,17; Ephesians 2:1-10, 3:8-11; Hebrews 10:32-39

### **BIBLE STORY**

Luke 2:36-50; The woman who anointed the feet of Jesus came to Him at great cost and deep anguish of soul.

### **MEMORY ASSIGNMENT**

"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9, ESV)

### **APPLICATION**

To be saved we must possess a basic knowledge of our need for the Saviour, Jesus Christ, and He alone must be the object of our complete hope and trust. It is of the essence that we actually receive Him and rest in Him alone.

## SUMMARY

Faith, according to Webster, is unquestioning belief. It is complete trust, confidence or reliance. It is fidelity, loyalty or allegiance. The faith considered in this lesson concerns Jesus Christ and matters pertaining to our salvation so it is very important to us because the Scriptures inform us that without faith in Christ there is no possibility of salvation and we cannot live. "But the righteous will live by his faith".<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, saving faith is certainly not unquestioning faith in the sense that it is a blind leap. It is an informed faith, informed by the Word of God such that Paul writes, "-- I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me."<sup>2</sup>

We must have some knowledge of certain things to order to have saving faith. We must know that we have a great need and we must know about God's gracious provision in Christ. The woman who came to Jesus, according to Luke 7:36-50, knew that she was a sinner and her tears testify to it. She was, in fact a sinner<sup>3</sup> and the Pharisees who saw themselves as righteous, constantly reminded her that she was immoral.<sup>4</sup> She must have known that Jesus was the Messiah and the Savior for she came to Him willingly, braving the embarrassment of gaining entrance to the home of a self-righteous Pharisee. She must have been convinced of this because she came to Jesus at great cost in terms of the social stigma but also in terms of the gift she bestowed upon Him. It was only to Jesus that she came, "--, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment."<sup>5</sup> Such anguish of soul! Such strength of conviction that Jesus was her Savior! Surely this was saving faith and Jesus absolved her of her sin and guilt and pronounced her saved saying, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace".<sup>6</sup>

We do not have our faith in a vacuum nor does it come from thin air, "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ."<sup>7</sup> Paul preached the gospel everywhere he went so that God's people might come to repentance and be saved. Paul visited the Galatian cities, Lystra, Derbe, Iconium and Antioch on each of his three journeys into Asia Minor. He did not receive the gospel that he preached there from man but from God as he indicates in Galatians 1:12 so that what he preached was the truth. The faith of the believers, according to Galatians chapter 2, was informed by the truth of the gospel<sup>8</sup> which is the Word of God such that they were justified not by works of the Law

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<sup>1</sup> Habakkuk 2:4, Romans 1:17, etc.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Timothy 1:12, ESV

<sup>3</sup> Luke 7:37

<sup>4</sup> ibid verse 39

<sup>5</sup> ibid. verse 38, ESV

<sup>6</sup> ibid. verse 47-50

<sup>7</sup> Romans 10:17

<sup>8</sup> Galatians 2:14

but through faith in Christ Jesus.<sup>9</sup> He goes on to say that no one can be justified by keeping the Law. No one can receive pardon for sin and the imputation of Christ's righteousness apart from faith in Christ. Therefore he writes, "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." (verse 20 ESV)

According to Ephesians 2:8-9 we are saved through faith in Jesus Christ but this faith, this ability to believe in Christ for salvation, did not come from within ourselves. It came to us as a gift from God. It came to us as the result of God's free grace and it is not simply that salvation is the gift of God's grace but our personal ability to believe in Christ is a gift from God. Paul writes, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."<sup>10</sup> We have seen then, that saving faith consists of trusting and resting in Christ alone for our salvation. Furthermore we have seen that both the object of our faith and our ability to believe are of God and from God. There is salvation in no one else but Jesus Christ so let us come to Him quickly and trust Him completely for pardon from sin. Let us rest in Jesus who will certainly help us and keep us until the day of redemption.

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<sup>9</sup> ibid. verse 16

<sup>10</sup> Ephesians 2:10, ESV