



## BULLEEN BAPTIST CHURCH

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### BUILDING BLOCKS OF FAITH PART 4 : "Understanding Reconciliation"

### July 24, 2005 Study 11 : "Saving Faith"

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#### INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES

"Building Blocks of Faith" is a Series of basic Christian beliefs. The studies will be kept as simple as possible. Those who are considering following Jesus will have the main issues of the Christian Faith explained. New Christians will gain an insight into what God has done in their life ... and why. Older Christians need to revisit the basics from time to time in order to check that what they are building is consistent with the blueprints! Part 1 of the Series; "Three Little Words" - Grace, Mercy and Peace. Part 2 - Two Studies on "Understanding God;" Part 3, three Studies on "Understanding Man."

So far in Part 4 (Understanding Reconciliation) the studies have been "The Death of Jesus" and "Repentance."

#### INTRODUCTION TO TODAY'S STUDY

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through him. He who believes in him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. John 3:16-18

What do we mean by "faith?" What, specifically, does it mean to "believe in the name of the only begotten Son of God.?"

"Therefore I say to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am he, you will die in your sins." John 8:23

Whatever it is, this "believing" has some serious implications! Today's Study sets out to define the nature of "saving faith" ..... a check for those who "believe" that they are believing the right thing, and a challenge to those who need to "believe."

We are going to examine three "Encounters with Jesus" - three interactions between Jesus and others that will help us understand the nature of this saving faith.

#### A. JESUS AND A ROMAN SOLDIER. Matthew 8 : 5 -13

.... the centurion said, "Lord, I am not worthy for you to come under my roof, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed ... And Jesus said to the centurion, "Go; it shall be done for you as you have believed."

#### Saving Faith is TRUST in Jesus' AUTHORITY and WORD

The Centurion did not approach Jesus in a vacuum. He had heard about, or possibly even seen, Jesus teach and heal. Based on what he knew to be true, he approached Jesus to heal his servant.

#### Saving Faith is not a BLIND leap in the dark but a CONVICTION based on what is known.

By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered him faithful who had promised. Heb11:11

By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son; it was he to whom it was said, "In Isaac your descendants shall be called." He considered that God is able to raise people even from the dead. Heb11:18-19

*"Belief is not faith without evidence, but commitment without reservation."*

.... Leighton Ford

## **B. JESUS AND A WEALTHY YOUNG MAN. Luke 18 : 18 - 25**

One thing you still lack; sell all that you possess and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me. But when he had heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich.

The problem? The young man trusted in his own resources to maintain his life. He refuses to rely on God. He would maintain his own ability to supply all his needs.

**Saving Faith is faith in GOD himself, not in ourselves ....**

.... or our standard of MORALITY "I'm good enough to pass"  
.... or our system of THEOLOGY (however orthodox it may be)

## **C. JESUS AND A GRIEVING WOMAN. John 11 : 23 - 27**

Jesus said to Martha, "Your brother will rise again." She replied, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God."

Martha's first response is to make a declaration about a then hotly debated piece of abstract theology. Jesus asked her to change focus from a belief in a theological principle to a trust in PARTICULAR truths about himself.

**Saving Faith has a specific CONTENT about Jesus.**

And that content is

1. Jesus' DIED because of our sin and ROSE again
2. We are JUSTIFIED before God and stand FORGIVEN

.... and being fully assured that what God had promised, he was able also to perform. Therefore it was also credited to Abraham as righteousness. Not for his sake only was it written that it was credited to him, but for our sake also, to whom it will be credited, as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, he who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification.

Rom 4:21 - 25 (see also Rom10:9)

I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you .... For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, & that He was raised on the third day.  
1Cor15:1-4

It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost. For this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate his perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life. 1Tm1:16

The phrase "believe in him" has a specific meaning .....

**Saving Faith is trust in Jesus; on what he ACCOMPLISHED on the cross for us.**

**This saving faith has to be PERSONALLY owned by each of us.**

Justifying faith implies, not only a conviction that 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself,' but a sure trust and confidence that Christ died for my sins, that he loved me, and gave himself for me. ... John Wesley