



THE CURRENCY OF GOD'S KINGDOM

How do you get God's approval? By being more good than bad? By keeping the Ten Commandments? By promising to be perfect? By being religious and going to church? The Bible says there's only one way to get God's approval: *"Without faith it is impossible to please God."* (**Heb. 11:6**) The only way you can get God's approval is by faith in Jesus Christ. You may be a great person, but without faith it's impossible to please God. You may do all kinds of great things in your life, but without faith it's not possible to satisfy God.

Faith is the currency of God's Kingdom. Jesus said, *"According to your faith it will be done to you."* How much God blesses your life depends on how much faith you have in Him. You decide how your prayers are answered by your faith. You choose how much God will use you in His plan for the world by your faith. Jesus says, "If you've got a lot of faith, we'll get a lot done in your life. If you've got a little faith, we'll get a little done in your life. If you've got no faith, you get nothing done in your life."

The Bible says that we receive salvation by believing in Jesus (**Rom. 3:25**). God accepts sinners by faith alone. Faith stands alone, excluding any type of accomplishment or merit, prior or subsequent to the believer's acceptance by God. Sinners are declared "not guilty" on the basis of the finished work of Christ, which demonstrated God's grace and satisfied His justice. This basis excludes any human contribution, good deeds or law-keeping. Sinners receive this "not guilty" verdict by believing in the finished work of Christ.

The Protestant Reformation began when Martin Luther rediscovered the doctrine of Justification by Faith. He declared, *"Justification by faith is this, that we are pronounced righteous and are saved solely by faith in Christ, and without works . . . By faith alone in Christ, without works, are we declared just and saved."* Justification by Faith is a foundational element of the doctrine of salvation by grace.

The problem for most of us is salvation by grace is just too good to be true. Even after we realize that our works are unacceptable, we still ask, "What can I do?" We still look for a list of things we can do to earn salvation. We say to God, "Show us something that we can do for which we will be

rewarded." But God does not say to us, "Pray more, give more money, or live like this, or do that work." He says to us, "Believe, have faith." (**John 6:28-29**)

Why? Because we are incapable of satisfactory work. But faith, that's different. Faith is not something that we do, it is not something that we generate. Faith, like love has an object. It is born out of a relationship with someone. You cannot have faith by yourself. You need Jesus in order to have faith.

God's Word states, *"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith."* (**Heb. 12:2**) Jesus is initiator and finisher of this relationship. Saving faith is the result of Jesus revealing Himself to you as being worthy of your trust. You respond by trusting Him.

God revealed Himself through His Son, Jesus. He came into human history as a man to live, die and rise again for us. If you accept His revelation of God and receive Him as your Savior and Lord, your life will be a life of dependence upon Him and obedience to His will.

We are saved by faith, we will live by faith. True Christianity is faith from beginning to end. Faith means we abandon our destiny in God's hands. Faith means that we unconditionally receive God as ruler of our lives as He has unconditionally received us as His royal children.

Yes, the Good News sounds too good to be true. It is just too much for many of us. Here is our difficulty: We are stubborn rebels. We are proud and egocentric; we are not willing to admit that we are unable to do something that is acceptable to God. We want to give something to God so He can accept us for that thing! We're looking for a human hook to hang our salvation on. But there's none.

Still, we don't want to admit that our best is nothing but filthy rags. We are shocked to learn that we are acceptable to God not because we keep the law, not because we go to church every week, not because we take communion regularly, not because we give our tithes and offerings, and certainly not because we don't eat this or drink that.

We are saved by grace through faith alone and not of our own works. We will live by faith. There will never be a time when we will not need faith in our life with Christ. Faith is the currency of the Kingdom of Heaven! So, keep looking to Jesus – the Author and Finisher of our faith.