

Understanding Biblical Faith

Lesson One: What Is Faith?

Introduction

- Faith is obviously a major component of Christianity.
- It is easily understood superficially, but the theme of Biblical faith goes much deeper.
- Misunderstanding of what Biblical faith is, how it relates to Law, and how it saves us has led to great doctrinal difference.
- Let's first try to understand what exactly Biblical faith is.

1. Faith and Belief Are Interchangeable

- Different connotations in contemporary English
 - Faith has the idea of a belief that is deeper and more trusting.
 - Belief is seen to be simply an understanding in our head.
- There is no such distinction in the Biblical Greek
 - Greek
 - Pistes #4102 = noun form, translated faith, belief, trust
 - Pisteuó #4100 = verb form, translated to believe, to have faith
 - One Greek word
 - “Belief” and “faith” are translated from the same Greek word.
 - The NASB chooses to translate the Greek word into faith when it is in its noun form, and the word believe when it's in its verb form.
 - Just as “belief” and “believe” are different from the same word, and that's how we should see the Greek word that has been rendered as “faith” and “believe”.
- Any differences in what is meant by faith and believing are not derived from the word itself, but rather the context in which the word is used.

2. Personal Faith

- Personal Conviction
 - Faith = conviction
 - What you are personally convinced is true — your personal belief in who Jesus is and what He has commanded and promised.
 - Verses:
 - Heb 11:1: *Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.*
 - I Pet 1:8: *and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory*
 - Faith ≠ blind
 - Signs performed and recorded so we have evidence to believe — Jn 20:30-31: *Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which*

are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

- Without proof we shouldn't believe — Jn 10:37: *If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me*
- Sufficient evidence to overcome our inclination not to — Jn 14:11: *Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves.*
- To the point we can explain to others are defend our faith with reason and evidence — I Pet 3:15: *But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence*
- Evidence doesn't guarantee belief
 - Even if there is sufficient evidence to believe, there are still obstacles in the heart that need be overcome.
 - Jn 12:37: *But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him.*
 - We need to also be willing to accept the conclusions that our faith brings us to in order to believe.
- The attitude behind our actions
 - Abel
 - Heb 11:4: *By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.*
 - Abel's faith doesn't refer to his belief in God's existence, but rather his belief in God's worthiness and trust in His goodness — which is why he was willing to make a better offering.
 - Jews vs. gentiles
 - Rom 9:30-32: *What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith; but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law. Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone.*
 - The Jews were only willing to believe in the things that conformed to their expectations.
 - They weren't willing to trust in the plan that God was revealing to them like the gentiles.
- The Key to Our Salvation
 - What God desires
 - Verses:
 - Heb 11:6: *And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.*
 - Jn 16:27: *for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me and have believed that I came forth from the Father.*
 - Faith pleases God most of all because this is what encompasses everything else we do as Christians.
 - It's all about us recognizing God; who He is, what He has done, and doing what He wants.
 - What God commands
 - Verses:
 - Jn 14:11: *Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me*
 - Mk 11:22: *And Jesus answered saying to them, "Have faith in God.*

- I Jn 3:23: *This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us.*
 - So it is required that we believe and accept what is fact.
- What saves us
 - Jn 6:40: *For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.”*
 - Eph 2:8: *For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God*
 - Gal 2:16: *Nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified*
 - Rom 5:1: *Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*
 - I Tim 1:16: *Yet 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.*
 - Heb 10:39: *But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.*
 - I Jn 5:4: *For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.*
 - Jn 8:24: *Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.*
- Is a Choice
 - God is working to build our faith
 - God goes to great lengths to give us all we need to believe in Him.
 - Without that, no one would have faith.
 - Verses:
 - Jn 6:44-45: *No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught of God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me.*
 - I Cor 12:3: *Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus is accursed”; and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.*
 - Rom 10:14-17: *How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!” However, they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our report?” So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.*
 - Mat 16:17: *And Jesus said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.*
 - II Tim 3:15: *And that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*
 - Jn 12:28-30: *Father, glorify Your name.” Then a voice came out of heaven: “I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.” So the crowd of people who stood by and heard it were saying that it had thundered; others were saying, “An angel has spoken to Him.” Jesus answered and said, “This voice has not come for My sake, but for your sakes.*
 - Jn 14:29: *Now I have told you before it happens, so that when it happens, you may believe.*

- Satan is working to destroy our faith
 - Satan is doing all that he can do keep people from believing in God.
 - Verses:
 - Lk 8:11-12: *Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God. Those beside the road are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they will not believe and be saved.*
 - II Cor 4:4: *the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*
- We decide whether or not to believe
 - Refusal to believe
 - Mk 16:11: *When they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they refused to believe it.*
 - Lk 24:11: *But these words appeared to them as nonsense, and they would not believe them.*
 - II Thes 2:11-12: *For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.*
 - Lk 8:13: *Those on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no firm root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away.*
 - Choosing to believe
 - II Tim 1:12: *For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.*
 - Eph 1:13: *In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise*
 - Jn 4:41-42: *Many more believed because of His word; and they were saying to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world.”*
 - Acts 4:4: *But many of those who had heard the message believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.*
 - Acts 8:12: *But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike.*
- Matters what we believe
 - We must believe the truth about Jesus
 - It’s not sufficient for us to believe that Jesus exists, but we believe in who He really is.
 - Ex: I can believe Melvin exists, and is a liar, but if Melvin is in actuality an honest man, then he won’t appreciate me believing something inaccurate about him.
 - Verses:
 - Mat 16:13-17: *Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” And they said, “Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.” He *said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.*
 - Jn 7:40-43: *Some of the people therefore, when they heard these words, were saying, “This certainly is the Prophet.” Others were saying, “This is the Christ.” Still others were saying, “Surely the Christ is not going to come from Galilee, is He? Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the descendants of David, and from*

Bethlehem, the village where David was?” So a division occurred in the crowd because of Him.

- We must believe true doctrine, “the faith”
 - There is doctrinal truth out there, and we need to believe *that*.
 - We can’t just believe whatever we want, we have to believe in the true gospel teaching in order for it to save us.
 - We are saved by the truth, not a lie.
 - Verses:
 - Gal 1:6-7: *I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.*
 - Tit 1:1-14: *This testimony is true. For this reason reprove them severely so that they may be sound in the faith, not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth.*
 - I Tim 6:10: *For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.*
 - I Tim 6:20-21: *O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly and empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called “knowledge”— which some have professed and thus gone astray from the faith.*
- Is not, “yes” or “no”, but “how much”
 - Different degrees of faith
 - Mk 9:24: *Immediately the boy’s father cried out and said, “I do believe; help my unbelief.”*
 - Mat 14:31: *Immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him, and said to him, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?”*
 - Lk 17:5: *The apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith!”*
 - Rom 4:20: *Yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God*
 - I Thes 3:10: *As we night and day keep praying most earnestly that we may see your face, and may complete what is lacking in your faith?*
 - Something we can maintain or abandon
 - We need to continue in our faith
 - Acts 14:22: *Strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, “Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.”*
 - I Cor 16:13: *Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.*
 - II Tim 4:7: *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day*
 - Col 2:6-7: *Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude.*
 - Rom 5:1-2: *Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.*
 - Col 1:22-23: *Yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach— if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard*
 - This implies the possibility of abandoning our faith, which is also stated explicitly
 - Rom 11:17-24: *But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you. You will*

say then, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.” Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear; for if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you, either. Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God’s kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off. And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree?

- I Cor 15:1-2: *Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.*
- I Tim 4:1: *But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith*
- James 5:19-20: *My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.*

- Is action
 - Faith works
 - Jn 6:29: *Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.”*
 - I Thes 1:3: *constantly bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope*
 - Col 5:6: *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.*
 - Faith obeys
 - Rom 1:5: *through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name’s sake*
 - Rom 16:26: *but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith*
 - Faith is perfected by works — incomplete without works
 - Jms 2:14-16: *You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected*
 - II Cor 5:7: *for we walk by faith, not by sight*
 - I Tim 5:8: *But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

3. Impersonal Faith

- Apart from our own personal belief, is God’s given truth that He is calling us to believe.
- This is true whether or not we believe it.
- It includes all of the claims and commandments that God’s children are supposed to accept.
- The impersonal “faith” is essentially the true religion.
- Verses:
 - Acts 6:7: *The word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith.*
 - Acts 13:8: *But Elymas the magician (for so his name is translated) was opposing them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith.*

- Gal 3:23: *But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed*
- Phi 1:25: *I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the faith*
- Jd 1:3: *I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.*

Lesson Two: Salvation by Faith Was Always God's Plan

Introduction

- We are saved by faith in Christ
 - We are saved by faith — Eph 2:8: *For by grace you have been saved through faith*
 - We are saved by Christ — Jn 14:6: *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*
 - Salvation by faith and salvation by Christ become synonymous —
 - Rom 5:1: *Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*
 - Jn 3:16: *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*
- Confusion about salvation by faith in Christ
 - The timeline
 - Noah and Abraham lived before the Law of Moses — 6,000 years ago
 - Then the Law of Moses came — 4,000 years ago
 - And Later still the gospel of faith in Christ came — 2,000 years ago
 - And yet, in spite of having come much later, the Bible presents that faith in Christ is the only means by which man can be saved
 - As opposed to the Law of Moses — Gal 2:16: *nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.*
 - As opposed to any other means — Acts 4:12: *And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.*
 - Confusion
 - How can something that came so much later be the only means of salvation?
 - What about everybody who lived under the Law of Moses?
 - What about everybody who lived even before the Law of Moses?
- To begin to better understand this we must first see that the Bible has presented that salvation by faith in Christ was always the solution from long before the Law of Moses, and even creation itself.

Before Creation, God determined to Save Us by Faith in Christ

- NT Scriptural evidence
 - Passage #1:

- Tit 1:1-2: *Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago.*
- Even though Christ appeared in these last days, God had promised from long before that eternal life would come through Jesus.
- How long ago?
- Passage #2
 - Eph 1:4-6: *[God] chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself ... In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses*
 - Before God made the world, He had already determined that He would make us blameless adopted sons by redeeming us from sin through the blood of Christ.
- Passage #3
 - II Tim 1:9: *[God] has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity*
 - Since eternity, God had determined to save us by His holy calling in Christ.
- Passage #4
 - Eph 3:11: This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord
 - Since eternity, God had determined to save us by His holy calling in Christ.
- Summary
 - God created the world with the full knowledge that He would need to redeem man from sin.
 - And He already had the solution in mind — the redeeming sacrifice of His Son, Jesus.
 - This means He already determined that we would be saved by our faith in Christ since before creation.

OT Evidence That Christ Was Always the Promised Solution

- Prophecy
 - Passage #1
 - Verses — Gen 3:15: *And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel.*
 - Commentary
 - The serpent brought all the problems of sin into creation by tempting woman.
 - Part of God’s curse against the serpent is that a descendant of the woman would overcome the serpent after a long conflict.
 - Salvation wouldn’t come from the Law or anything else — but a savior born of woman.
 - Fulfillment
 - Rom 16:20: *The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.*
 - Because Jesus died and resurrected, He removed sin and conquered death, thus overcoming Satan on our behalf.
 - Passage #2
 - Verses — Gen 5:29: *Now he called his name Noah, saying, “This one will give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands arising from the ground which the Lord has cursed.”*

- Commentary
 - God cursed the earth because of sin.
 - A descendant of Noah was going to lift the curse of sin for mankind.
- Fulfillment
 - Gal 3:10, 13: *For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT ABIDE BY ALL THINGS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO PERFORM THEM." ... Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE"*
 - Sin curses us to die, thus sins committed under the Law of Moses bring us under the rightful justice and punishment.
 - But Christ suffered the curse on our behalf that we would be spared.
- Passage #3
 - Verse — Gen 12:3: *And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.*
 - Commentary
 - God promised to bless the entire world through the descendants of Abraham?
 - What descendant? What blessing?
 - Fulfillment
 - Acts 3:25-26: *It is you who are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' For you first, God raised up His Servant and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways."*
 - Jesus blesses the Jews **first** by turning them from their wickedness.
 - Gal 3:8, 14: *The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "All the nations will be blessed in you ... in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*
 - The promise of the blessing is called the gospel.
 - The gospel is that all creation, even the gentiles, would receive the Holy Spirit sent by Jesus through faith.
- Summary
 - Before the Law, God prophesied that salvation would come from the descendant of Eve, Noah, and Abraham.
 - This descendant would vindicate man, lift the curse, and bless all nations.
- Foreshadowing
 - Introductory statements
 - Not only did God prophesy that blessings would come from the descendants of Abraham...
 - But God also provides information on how the blessing would come and what the blessing will be through foreshadowing.
 - We are going to see that it all foreshadows how Jesus will bless us with salvation by dying on the cross
 - The sacrifice of Isaac — How the blessing will come
 - Text — Gen 22:1-19
 - God commands Abraham to offer Isaac as a sacrifice.
 - Abraham obeys, and God responds by reaffirming the promises.
 - Messianic significance
 - "Only Son"

- Abraham was told to offer his only begotten son (Heb 11:17) which is curious because Isaac wasn't Abraham's only begotten son.
 - This however is more fitting of the Lord offering His only begotten Son (Jn 3:16) in which is foreshadowed by these events.
- Moriah
 - Abraham was told to go to a specific location that was a three-day journey away.
 - This means that particular location must be of significance.
 - II Chron 3:1 reveals to us that this is the mountain on which the temple would be built and where our Lord Himself would be sacrificed.
- "We will return"
 - For three days, Abraham saw his son as dead, but believed he could be resurrected (Heb 11:17-19).
 - This foreshadows Jesus being dead for three days until His resurrection.
- Isaac carried the wood
 - Isaac carried the wood on which he would be burned up the mountain.
 - This foreshadows Jesus carrying His own cross up the hill on which He would be sacrificed (Jn 19:17).
- "God will provide"
 - Though initially Isaac represents the Jesus, there is a shift when Isaac now is the one saved from death by the substitute sacrifice being provided.
 - This foreshadows the theological concept of us being saved from death by a substitute sacrifice taking our place.
- Summary — God was foreshadowing how the blessing of Abraham would come: by God offering His only Son as a sacrifice.
- Jacob's dream
 - Text — Gen 28:10-17:
 - There is a ladder connecting heaven and earth.
 - Angels are freely traveling back and forth between these two places.
 - This dream foreshadows what the blessing will be
 - Access back to God.
 - It was sin that removed man from God, so man being able to return to God implies a removal of sin.
 - Sin is the sacrifice that removed man's sin so that our access to God would be restored.
 - Jn 1:51: *And He *said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."*

Conclusion

- These promises, prophecy, and foreshadowing all come from the very beginning, from before the Law of Moses.
- God's plan has always been to save us by the sacrifice of Jesus.
- So His plan has always been to save us by our *faith* in Jesus.
- Gal 3:8: *The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles BY FAITH, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "All the nations will be blessed in you."*

Lesson Three: What Is the Purpose of the Law?

Introduction

- If God's plan from the beginning was to save us by faith in Christ, then why did He also give us the Law?
- What true purpose does the Law fulfill?

The Law Was Never Meant to Save

- The Law of Moses is parenthetical
 - The timeline
 - A. God has plan to save us from sin by faith in Christ — Eph 1:4-6
 - B. Man's sin brings problems that need to be solved
 1. Death
 2. Knowledge of Sin
 3. Separation from God
 - C. God prophecies the solution, the seed of woman — Gen 3:15
 - D. God promises the solution, the descendant of Abraham — Gen 12:3
 - E. God fulfills His prophecies and promises and solves the problems through Jesus, the seed of woman and descendant of Abraham
 - How the Law of Moses fits in the timeline
 - The Law of Moses was given in between God promising to save us in Christ and fulfilling His promise to save us in Christ.
 - So it serves as a pitstop on the way to the intended solution.
- The Law was never meant to be the solution
 - Promise of salvation given to those not under the Law
 - Rom 4:9-12: *Is this blessing then on the circumcised, or on the uncircumcised also? For we say, "Faith was credited to Abraham as righteousness." How then was it credited? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised; and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be credited to them, and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised.*
 - The promise of salvation was given to Abraham before the Law.
 - Abraham was made righteous by faith before circumcision/the Law.
 - This was to signify that salvation would come to all by faith apart from the Law.
 - The Law is a temporary measure
 - Gal 3:19: *Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed would come to whom the promise had been made*
 - The Law was meant to be temporary.
 - Not a solution, but a temporary measure until God's promised solution comes.
 - The Law doesn't negate the previously made promise
 - Rom 4:13-15: *For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified; for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there also is no violation.*

- God had already promised to solve the problem through the seed of Abraham.
- So if the Law comes and solves the problem, then it would nullify or negate His previously made promise.
- But God always fulfills His promises.
- So the Law takes the back seat to the promise, and not vice versa.
- Rather than the Law saving us, it only brings wrath.

* If there was no Law of Moses, there would still be salvation from sin.

Establish Need for Greater Salvation

- Establishes standard for sin
 - Much of right and wrong was already understood since the garden.
 - However the written Law of Moses helped to:
 - Clarify sins that we already understood
 - Ex 20:17: *thou shall not covet*
 - Rom 7:7: *What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, "YOU SHALL NOT COVET."*
 - Instruct what we necessarily be understood otherwise
 - Prohibiting eating blood
 - Instruction about divorce
 - Prescribe punishment so that the gravity of sin would be understood.
 - Ex 21:17: *He who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death.*
 - Ex 22:20: *He who sacrifices to any god, other than to the LORD alone, shall be utterly destroyed.*

* There is now a clear and undeniable standard about what is sin, and how serious it is.

- Establishes that we are sinners
 - We are violators — Rom 4:15: *for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there also is no violation.*
 - We are guilty of the transgressors of the whole Law as a whole, regardless severity of frequency of the infraction — Jms 2:10-11: *For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all. For He who said, "DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY," also said, "DO NOT COMMIT MURDER." Now if you do not commit adultery, but do commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.*
 - We can't argue our innocence — Rom 3:19-20: *Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God; because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.*
- Establishes need for greater Salvation
 - By proving that we are sinners, the Law shows that we need salvation
 - But the Law also proves that we need a salvation greater than what the Law can provide
 - How the Law saves
 - You need to do all that the Law commands — Rom 2:13: *for it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified.*
 - If you do right, then you have earned righteousness is as your reward — Rom 4:2, 4: *For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about ... Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due.*

- So if we have obeyed all of the Law, then the written Law defends our righteousness — Rom 2:15: *the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them*
- Why the Law doesn't save us
 - The Law doesn't save because it demands that we obey each command perfectly in order to be declared righteous — Gal 3:11, 12: *Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident ... "HE WHO PRACTICES THEM SHALL LIVE BY THEM."*
 - But we haven't obeyed the Law perfectly — Rom 3:23: *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*
 - So those who don't keep all the laws are cursed, not saved — Gal 3:10: *For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT ABIDE BY ALL THINGS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO PERFORM THEM."*
- Establishes we need something greater than the Law to save us
 - The Law is weak
 - Rom 8:34: *For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us*
 - The Law's power to save is only as strong as our flesh's ability to obey = weak.
 - So what we couldn't accomplish through obedience of the Law, God accomplished through His Son.
 - The Law can't give life
 - Gal 3:21-22: *For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law. But the Scripture has shut up everyone under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.*
 - Because the law can't make us righteous, it can't give us life/salvation.
 - So instead, it held us accountable before God until He fulfilled His promise to save us from sin through Jesus.
 - The Law doesn't set free
 - Acts 13:39: *and through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses.*
 - The Law couldn't set us free from sin.
 - It held us bondage.
 - God's salvation in Christ is able to set us free.
- * Salvation by Law is dependent on our own ability to keep the Law perfectly
 - If we can do that, then the Law declares us to be righteous.
 - We've accomplished this without God's help — we deserve the righteousness that we earned on our own.
 - However ... the Law of Moses makes it clear that every man is a sinner ... no man can call himself righteous on the basis of his obedience.
 - So therefore, we need some other way a greater way to be made righteous and saved from sin.
 - Jesus is that something greater than God had planned and promised to do long before the Law of Moses.

Foreshadows the Greater Salvation

- The Law leads us to salvation by faith in Christ

- Gal 3:23-27: *But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed. Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.*
 - Before our salvation by faith in Christ was realized, we were in custody of the Law — accountable for our sin.
 - The Law also taught us about and led us to our salvation by faith in Christ.
 - Many aspects of the Law foreshadow salvation by faith in Christ, so that when it came, we were able to recognize it and understand it.
- How the Law foreshadows the solutions to the problems of sin
 1. The Ten Commandments — Knowledge of Good and Evil
 - How it addresses the problem
 - Provides teaching of right and wrong.
 - This would help them to be more obedient.
 - And remove anyones ability to argue their innocence.
 - How it fails to resolve the problem
 - There is no forgiveness when man breaks the Law, only clearer condemnation.
 - James 2:10: *For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.*
 - How Christ resolves the problem
 - Superior teaching and full forgiveness
 - I Jn 1:9: *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
 2. The Priesthood & Sacrifices
 - How it addresses the problem
 - The priests would mediate to reconcile man back to God by offering up animal sacrifices.
 - A man's sins would be transferred to the animal who would then suffer the penalty of sin in his place.
 - Lev 1:3-5: *[he shall offer his] burnt offering from the herd... a male without defect; he shall offer it at the doorway of the tent of meeting, that he may be accepted before the LORD. He shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, that it may be accepted for him to make atonement on his behalf. He shall slay the young bull before the LORD*
 - How it fails to resolve the problem
 - The life of an animal isn't sufficient payment to truly redeem a man from His sin.
 - Heb 10:1-4: *the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year [can never] make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins? But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year. For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.*
 - How Christ resolves the problem
 - One sacrifice sufficient to redeem us from death forever
 - Heb 10:12: *but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time*
 3. The tabernacle
 - How it addresses the problem
 - This is a building where God would dwell so that He could camp among His people.

- His cloud presence would dwell in the Holy Holy Place and He would meet them over the ark of the covenant.
- Verses:
 - Ex 25:22: *There I will meet with you; and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel.*
 - Ex 40:34-35: *Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.*
- How it fails to resolve the problem
 - Of all the world, only one nation had the tabernacle.
 - Of all that nation only the Levites could work with the tabernacle.
 - Of all the Levites only the sons of Aaron could be priests to enter in the temple.
 - Of all the sons of Aaron, only one man could be high priest.
 - And that one high priest could only enter into the Holy Holy Place once a year.
 - Still great separation between God and man.
- How Christ resolves the problem
 - With sin removed, nothing separates us from the presence of God.
 - Veil torn — Mk 15:38: *And the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.*
 - Heb 10:19-22: *Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith.*

Sets Forth the Requirements for Our Salvation

- The Law makes it clear what the requirements of our salvation from sin would be.
 - Justice
 - Mercy
 - Forgiveness
 - Substitute sacrifice
 - Mediation
 - Etc.
- These requirements are fulfilled by Christ
 - Mat 5:17-18: *“Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.”*
 - Jesus didn’t abolish the Law — throw away everything it stood for.
 - He fulfilled that Law — met the requirements set forth by the Law for our salvation.
 - Having fulfilled the requirements, we now cling to Christ.
 - The Law simply remains to help us understand how and why the death of Christ saves us.

Lesson Four: Why Does God Choose to Save Us By Faith?

Introduction

- Review
 - Salvation by faith has always been God's plan
 - He promised, prophesied, and foreshadowed this plan of salvation from the very beginning.
 - He did this before and through the Law of Moses.
 - The purpose of the Law of Moses is to demonstrate our need for a greater salvation
 - The Law of Moses was never meant to be the solution
 - God promised salvation to those who were not under the Law of Moses.
 - The Law was temporary.
 - The Law demonstrated that we needed a greater salvation that comes from God.
 - Proved we are sinners needing salvation.
 - Proved that we aren't saved by obeying the Law.
 - Foreshadowed how God would save us by faith in Christ.
- The question for today — why is faith the means by which we are saved?
 - God could have chosen for us to do any variety of thing for salvation, so why does He want us to be saved by our faith?
 - How does salvation by faith correspond with and accomplish God's plans?
 - Answering this question will:
 - Help us understand *how* faith saves us.
 - And understand how that relates to the role of *works* in our salvation.

Two Systems of Salvation

- There are two systems of salvation
 - “Works of the Law” and “faith in Christ” are presented as two separate systems that can potentially justify - save.
 - Verses:
 - Rom 3:21-22: *But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe*
 - Phi 3:9: *[that I] may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith*
 - God is providing us two different means by which we can arrive at justification, so we are able to choose which system or mechanism we want.
- Two systems explained
 - The Law of Moses
 - How the Law saves
 - Fueled by our obedience.
 - We are justified by means of completely abstaining from all sin.
 - We merit our place with God by our own obedience, so therefore we deserve the credit.
 - Can your obedience get you across the bridge?
 - The result of the Law of Moses
 - We instead sin.
 - Thus eliminating any hope of justification by our works.
 - And cutting off any opportunity to be in God's presence.

- Salvation by faith in Christ
 - Fueled by Jesus' blood.
 - When we believe, we are justified/made innocent by God's forgiveness made available by Jesus' sacrifice.
 - Can the blood of Jesus get you across the bridge?
 - Thus we are found in God's presence by His grace, therefore He deserves the credit.

- Verse — Gal 2:16: *knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.*

- Why two systems of salvation?
 1. The first was ineffective
 - If God had never enacted the second system of salvation, we would never be justified.
 - But if God knew the Law of Moses was ineffective, then why didn't He just start with salvation by faith to begin with?

 2. The first further emphasizes the greatness of the second
 - One of the best ways to fully appreciate something is by comparing it to something else.
 - EX: infomercial, the bad product in black and white
 - God shows us how much we need salvation from Him by presenting us with the option of trying to save ourselves.
 - As we said before, the purpose of the Law of Moses was to demonstrate that we need a greater salvation that comes from God.

 3. The second solves the problem
 - For us to be saved, God had to enact the only means by which we can effectively be justified.
 - God resolves the problem of sin Himself, and now we can be saved.

Why Does God Want to Save Us By a System of Faith?

1. The purpose of our existence is to praise the glory of God's grace
 - God's plan of salvation is to result in the praise of God's glorious grace.
 - Everything about our salvation is so that God's grace would be glorified
 - Eph 1:5-6: *He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.*
 - Eph 1:11-12: *Also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory*
 - Eph 1:13-14: *In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation —having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.*

2. If salvation were of the Law, then we would deserve the glory
 - If we were able to save ourselves, that would mean we would be deserving of the credit and praise.
 - This is clearly counterproductive to God's plans for His own glory.

- So for that reason He meticulously demonstrates by the Law that we cannot save ourselves.

✱ Salvation by works of the Law is contrary to God's purpose for our existence

3. God saves by His mighty work

- He is the one who does the work of saving by sacrificing His only Son in our place.
- This means He is the one who deserves the credit.
- His grace is glorified by salvation in Jesus.

4. Salvation by faith glorifies God

- God's plan to save us Himself glorifies His grace
 - Eph 2:4-7: *But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.*
 - Rom 3:23-24: *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.*
- So we glorify God for saving us by His mighty deeds, not our own.
 - I Cor 1:30-31: *But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, so that, just as it is written, "LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD"*
 - Rom 3:27: *Where then is boasting? It is excluded.*
 - I Cor 15:10: *But by the grace of God I am what I am*
 - Gal 6:14: *But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*
- Our faith is all about acknowledging that we can only be saved by Him
 - We acknowledge that we are helpless sinners unable to save themselves — Eph 2:12: *remember that you were at that time separate from Christ ... having no hope and without God in the world.*
 - We believe that God wants to save us based on His goodness, not our own — Eph 2:8-9: *For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.*
 - We believe that we are made righteous by what He has done
 - We believe that nothing we did or can do will ever earn or merit our salvation
 - We didn't do anything to deserve God wanting to save us in the first place.
 - Nothing we did was sufficient to be righteous before God.

Conclusion

- Faith is the condition of admitting that GOD is the one who saved you by his great Deed so that you will glorify him, and not yourself.
- John 3:16-18: *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.*

Lesson Five: Conditional Salvation Does Not Contradict Salvation By Faith

Introduction

- Conditional salvation?
 - Society has the tendency to reject the concept of conditional salvation because “conditional” just seems like a bad word.
 - But upon further investigation, we will find
 1. Our salvation by faith is conditional
 2. Salvation being conditional is not a contradiction with our salvation by faith
- What does “conditional” mean?
 - Definition:
 - A state of affairs that must exist or be brought about before something else is permitted.
 - A premise upon which the fulfillment of an agreement depends.
 - Stipulation — covenant.
 - EX: Conditions for staying in a shelter are to be drug free and nonviolent.
 - By contrast, what is unconditional?
 - This means something is available and given automatically regardless of any kind of response or action.
 - God’s love
 - I Jn 4:10: *In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*
 - God just loves us because He does — we didn’t do anything to make Him love us.
 - Salvation was offered unconditionally — we didn’t have to do anything in order for God to sacrifice His Son for us; He just did.
- What about our salvation?
 - Are we saved unconditionally? Just like God loves us and offered His salvation unconditionally, are we then saved automatically apart from us having done anything?
 - Or are there conditions that need to be met in order for us to be saved?

Is Salvation Conditional?

- Examples of conditional salvation in the Old Testament
 - Physical salvation
 - Rahab
 - Josh 2:17-18: *The men said to her, “We shall be free from this oath to you which you have made us swear, unless, when we come into the land, you tie this cord of scarlet thread in the window through which you let us down, and gather to yourself into the house your father and your mother and your brothers and all your father’s household.*
 - The condition for her salvation was to tie a cord to signify which house was hers, and for her household to remain inside.
 - Passover
 - Ex 12:7, 13: *Moreover, they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it ... The blood shall be a sign for you on*

the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

- The condition for Israel's salvation was to put the blood on the doorpost.
- Naaman
 - II Kings 5:10: *Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh will be restored to you and you will be clean."*
 - The condition for Naaman's healing was to bathe in the Jordan seven times.

* Imposed essential conditions that don't glorify the person being saved.

- Conditions were imposed by savior.
- Conditions required person to do something — essential.
- The conditions on their own don't save — not saving self.
- Meeting conditions doesn't glorify person being saved, but the savior.
- Yet, not meeting the conditions results in perishing.
- So the conditions are essential, and yet the person isn't saving themselves, but being saved, so glory goes to the savior not the person being saved.

• Spiritual salvation

- They needed to offer an animal sacrifice to atone for sin.
- Lev 1:2-3: *When any man of you brings an offering to the LORD, you shall bring your offering of animals from the herd or the flock. If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall offer it, a male without defect; he shall offer it at the doorway of the tent of meeting, that he may be accepted before the LORD.*
- There needed to be justice and payment for sin, so if they didn't offer the animal to make the required payment, they wouldn't receive forgiveness.
- Yet, does the act of killing an animal alone, though required by God, really remove sin?
- This is a condition met so that God will forgive.
- We see that this payment wasn't sufficient, but rather foreshadowed the awesome saving sacrifice of Jesus.

• Is salvation by faith in Christ conditional?

- Conditions in order to save — what does God have to do to save us?
 - God has self-imposed conditions based on His own character.
 - He is merciful and wants to forgive, but He is also a righteous judge that is unwilling to tolerate sin — He must bring justice if He is to be just.
 - So God needed to meet the condition of justice to attain the moral right to forgive.
 - Rom 3:24-26: *being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.*
 - The most important conditions of our salvation were fulfilled by the awesome sacrifice of God.
 - Who should receive glory for this salvation?

• Conditions in order to be saved — what do we have to do to be saved?

- God's offering of salvation is unconditional
 - As we mentioned before, God offered His salvation to all peoples unconditionally apart from us having done anything
 - If you exist, salvation is available to you.

- Jn 3:16: *For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son*
- Yet, not all are saved
 - Mat 22:14: *For many are called, but few are chosen.*
 - In spite of the fact that salvation is offered to all, we see that not all are actually saved.
- If salvation is unconditional
 - This would mean God is only choosing to save certain people, for whatever reason — if you're not saved, too bad for you, there's nothing you can do about it.
 - But God wants all to be saved — I Tim 2:4: *who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth*
 - If His salvation is unconditional and He wants all to be saved, then He would just save *all* unconditionally.
- If salvation is conditional
 - Instead it means that God wants to save all, but has imposed certain conditions that only certain people desire to fulfill.
 - There is something that God wants us to do in order to receive His salvation that He offers to all.
 - What is the condition?

Faith Is the Condition for Our Salvation

- Faith in Jesus
 - Acts 10:43: *Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins."*
 - Jn 8:24: *Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.*
 - Mk 16:16: *He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.*
 - Jn 3:16: *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.*
 - Rom 3:22: *even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction*
 - Rom 10:9-10: *that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.*
- Faithfulness to Jesus
 - Col 1:23: *If indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven*
 - I Pet 1:5: *who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*
 - I Tim 6:12: *Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called*
 - Acts 14:22: *encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."*
 - Rev 2:10: *Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.*
 - II Tim 4:7-9: *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.*
- What happens if you don't meet the condition?
 - Examples of not meeting the condition of faith
 - You don't believe in Jesus

- You will never be saved — you won't be forgiven of sins.
- Jn 8:24: *Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.*
- II Thes 2:10-12: *and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.*
- You aren't faithful to Jesus
 - Losing / abandoning faith
 - Gal 1:6: *I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel*
 - II Tim 1:19: *keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith.*
 - II Tim 2:18: *men who have gone astray from the truth saying that the resurrection has already taken place, and they upset the faith of some.*
 - I Tim 4:1: *But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons*
 - I Tim 6:21: *which some have professed and thus gone astray from the faith.*
 - Living faithlessly
 - I Tim 6:10: *For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith*
 - I Tim 5:8: *But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*
- Lose access to salvation
 - Heb 10:38-39: *BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM. But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.*
 - Rom 11:20: *For if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you, either. Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off.*
 - I Cor 15:1-2: *Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.*
 - Gal 5:4: *You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.*
- Is it appropriate for God to make salvation conditioned upon faith?
 - Faith is acknowledging that God saves by grace through Jesus.
 - Does it make sense for God to save someone who doesn't acknowledge that God is saving them?
 - I Cor 1:21: *For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.*
 - God is pleased that the cross naturally drives away those who don't admit that they are in need of a Savior and that the death of their creator is what can save them.

Fulfilling Conditions Does Not Invalidate Salvation by Faith

- Salvation by faith ≠ do nothing
 - Misconception — salvation by "faith alone"
 - Eph 2:8: *For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.*

- Salvation by faith, not by works = salvation by faith alone.
- We are saved by the belief in our heads, with no regard to any act or deed whatsoever.
- Any act or deed is a work, and because we are not saved by faith, not by works, then our salvation can't have anything to do with or depend upon any act or deed whatsoever.
- This is why people believe that baptism is not for salvation.

- Faith alone doesn't save
 - The only mention of "faith alone" is in James 2.
 - What James says about "faith alone"
 - Doesn't save — Jms 2:14: *What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him?*
 - Dead — Jms 2:17: *Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.*
 - Demonic — Jms 2:19: *You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.*
 - Useless — Jms 2:20: *But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless?*
 - Doesn't justify — Jms 2:24: *You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone.*

- Faith is doing something
 - We hear
 - Rom 10:17: *So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.*
 - Rev 3:20: *Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.*
 - Believing is a command we obey —
 - Jn 14:1: *Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.*
 - Acts 16:30-31: *and after he brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."*
 - Faith works
 - Jn 6:29: *Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent."*
 - Gal 5:6: *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.*
 - Faith is perfected by works — Jms 2:22: *You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected.*

- Salvation is conditioned upon doing something
 - If the condition for our salvation is faith.
 - And faith is something that we do; a work.
 - Then our faith is conditioned up what we do.
 - So doesn't that mean we're being saved by our works?

- The difference between salvation by faith and salvation by works
 - Salvation by works
 - What it is
 - This is the idea of earning our salvation by being righteous by our own actions apart from any help from God — therefore we get the credit.
 - The idea is these actions alone would save apart from God's mercy or forgiveness.
 - Rom 4:4: *Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due.*

- Examples:
 - By righteousness
 - Never sin — Gal 5:3: *And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole Law.*
 - Great act of righteousness to compensate — Mic 6:7: *Shall I present my firstborn for my rebellious acts, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?*
 - By payment
 - Asceticism — Col 2:18, 23: *Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement... These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence.*
 - Indulgences
 - “A way to reduce the amount of punishment one has to undergo for sins...”
 - “A remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven.”
 - “The recipient of an indulgence must perform an action to receive it. This is most often the saying (once, or many times) of a specified prayer, but may also include the visiting of a particular place, or the performance of specific good works.”
 - By ritual
 - Simply the right actions performed in the right way apart from genuine Biblical faith.
 - This would be like vain sacrifices in the OT — I Sam 15:22: *Has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams.*
 - Infant baptism — a proper ritual performed for faithless ignorant child.
 - Vain communion — I Cor 11:20-21: *Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper, for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk.*
 - Vain prayer — Mat 6:7: *And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words.*
 - This is reducing the truth of the gospel to paganism and witchcraft; i.e. holy water, crosses and charms, etc..
- Conclusion: if salvation by works were possible, then we could do these things and be righteous and saved by these acts alone apart from any help from God — therefore we have earned our own salvation and can boast in ourselves.
- Salvation by faith
 - What it is
 - We are not saved by “faith alone”, instead we are saved by faith.
 - This is the idea that we receive our salvation from God as a gift upon fulfilling certain conditions.
 - The fulfillment of these conditions alone doesn't save, thus even though we are fulfilling them, God is still the one saving us — He deserves credit.
 - EX: homeless person receiving housing as long as he abstains from drugs and violence.
 - The role of conditions in our salvation
 - Fulfilling conditions ≠ saving self

- Simply fulfilling the conditions alone would not save anyone apart from God's divine help.
- EX: blood on the door, Naaman.
- Simply believing and obeying or being baptized doesn't make anyone free from sin. It requires God to be merciful and grant pardon.
- Fulfilling conditions ≠ glorify self
 - Because the part we do doesn't save, we are not saving ourselves.
 - Therefore God still gets the credit for being our Savior.
- Fulfilling conditions ≠ earning salvation
 - The condition of faith that God sets forth does in itself make someone righteous.
 - Example:
 - II Sam 12:13-14: *Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has taken away your sin; you shall not die.*
 - Rom 4:6-8: *just as David also speaks of the blessing on the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: "BLESSED ARE THOSE WHOSE LAWLESS DEEDS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN, AND WHOSE SINS HAVE BEEN COVERED. "BLESSED IS THE MAN WHOSE SIN THE LORD WILL NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT."*
 - Was David a righteous person just because he admitted he was wrong and believed in God? God had to forgive Him to make him righteous.
 - Instead faith is all about admitting that we are not righteous, and we need someone to forgive us.
- Fulfilling conditions is how God chooses to give His grace to
 - God wants all to be saved — I Tim 2:4: *who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*
 - But only saves those who answer the call of Jesus — Jn 10:4, 9: *The sheep follow him because they know his voice ... I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.*
 - Jn 1:12: *But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name*
 - Jms 4:6: *But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE."*

- * A condition can be essential, and yet fulfilling that condition doesn't mean you earn your salvation.
 - All this shows that God can require fulfilling a condition to receive salvation as a gift.
 - So it's essential to fulfill the condition.
 - But fulfilling the condition still means you need to receive your salvation as a gift, not as what is due.
 - So it's not a contradiction to salvation by grace through faith that we fulfill God's conditions.
 - Unlike salvation by works, where theoretically the acts themselves would save apart from God's divine help.

Other Conditions for Salvation

- Can there be other conditions?
 - If we've seen that our salvation is conditioned upon faith.

- Is it possible that there are other things we will need to do that don't inherently save, but are under the umbrella of what is considered faith, and are therefore essential for salvation as well?
- If faith is an essential thing that we do for salvation, then there can be other things as well.
- Confession
 - Rom 10:9-10: *if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.*
 - This is something we do, but it's an expression of our faith - publicly, but also by means of how we live our lives.
 - This isn't about saying the correct magic words that require God to save you.
 - This is about genuine belief in the Son of God and readiness to submit to Him as Lord.
 - Is this very different from what we already understand salvation by faith to be?
- Repentance
 - Verses:
 - Mk 1:15: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."
 - Lk 24:47: And that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations.
 - Acts 2:38: Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 - Acts 3:19: Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.
 - Acts 8:22: Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray the Lord that, if possible, the intention of your heart may be forgiven you.
 - Acts 11:18: "Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life."
 - Heb 6:4-6: For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance.
 - Rev 2:16: Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.
 - Rev 2:21-22: I gave her time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her immorality. Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds.
 - Rev 3:3: So remember what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. Therefore if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you.
 - We understand that a faith that has no desire to obey Jesus is not really faith at all, so this falls under the umbrella of salvation by faith.
 - However, saying that it's required to change and be a better person sounds like you're trying to deserve to be saved by being good.
 - Repentance being an essential condition does not invalidate salvation by faith, because our repentance alone doesn't save.
 - Initial repentance
 - An initial commitment to change — this is part of our confession of Jesus as Lord.
 - But you are now worthy of being forgiven just because you want to change? Does that take away your sin?

- EX:
 - Someone murders your brother and says sorry, so now they deserve to be called a good innocent person?
 - David and Bathsheba
- Ongoing repentance
 - We need to not just commit to repent, but actually bear fruits of repentance daily — Mat 3:8, 10: *Therefore bear fruit in keeping with repentance ... The axe is already laid at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.*
 - But our ongoing repentance alone doesn't save us, because we are very bad at it — we continue to sin.
 - If even though by faith we are working to change daily, we never stop needing God's forgiveness, so our salvation will never be earned by our repentance.
 - In order for someone to earn their salvation by repentance, they would need to never sin ever again after that first initial forgiveness. Then they could say that they've maintained their own righteousness by repentance rather than the grace of God.
- Baptism
 - Verses
 - Mk 16:16: *He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.*
 - Acts 2:38: *Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*
 - Acts 22:16: *Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.'*
 - Gal 3:22: *But the Scripture has shut up everyone under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.*
 - Col 2:12: *Having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.*
 - I Pet 3:21: *Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*
 - Baptism alone doesn't save
 - There's nothing special about being dipped in water.
 - It doesn't matter who dips you, the nature of the water or anything else.
 - All that matters is your faith and God's grace that applies the blood of Jesus.
 - So being baptized is an essential act of faith that is the means by which we receive salvation.
 - EX: Signing a check