

## CHAT WITH THE CHAPLAIN

How about we do a little Christianity 101 --- a little back to basics so to speak? Now before you start yawning and going back to ESPN, let's remember that we base our beliefs on details and thankfully, God has shown forth His Promises to us in great detail. In among all His promises to us, the big headline grabber has to be that of Salvation. Mr. Webster says that salvation is "a saving or being saved; preservation from destruction; rescue". And in theology, Webster says it is, "Spiritual rescue from sin and death through the atonement of Jesus; redemption". Now I know that just sitting here and batting a bunch of words around can get old real quick, but as Rush Limbaugh has said a time or two, words mean something. What we're considering here is the sure promise of personal salvation shown to us through God's Word. As a side note, I think that it's worth remembering that among a host of other titles, Jesus is identified as 'The Word', and 'The Word of God', in both the books of John and Revelation.

Let's take a gander at some things that God's Word tells us about our 'condition' and our need for a Savior in order to gain salvation. Romans 3:23 says "For all have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God". What this is saying first is that 'all' are sinners in the eyes of God. 'All' means everyone; you, me, Billy Graham, and even Mother Theresa. And, no one can come close to God's Glory. Let's just say that there's some folks standing on a pier in Bellingham, and they're all about betting on which one can make the jump to the San Juan Islands. "Well" someone says, "That's impossible, it can't be done!" Well, they're going to play the game anyway. Stranger things have happened when there's money involved. One or the other may jump the farthest, but of course nobody makes it and everybody gets good and wet for their troubles. The Glory of God is the San Juans and you and I can't jump there in our own power.

In Romans 6:23 it says "For the wages of sin is death; but the Gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ Our Lord". If someone makes the decision (Free will) to remain in a sinful lifestyle, then the devil becomes his chief disbursement officer, or, paymaster if you will, and he will issue the man a check with 'death' written all over it. However, the free gift of God is eternal life, and you receive that gift through faith in Jesus and what He did for you and me on the cross. You don't have to 'do' anything; just believe and receive.

In Romans 5 : 8 it says "But God demonstrates His own love for us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us". I think it's safe to say that it would be hard to find someone who would willingly die for a righteous person, let alone for someone of questionable character.

In Romans 10:9 it says "That if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved (salvation)". Now, just to be clear, a public confession of faith is not what Paul is saying here. What he is saying is that a man (or woman ) needs to bring into agreement his confession and his life. The mouth and the heart should be like a song: harmonizing and in complete agreement. Your heart is your complete being, your total personality. If then your mouth and heart are singing that song, then God's Word says "You shall be saved". I don't see any 'maybe' here.

There's much more of course, but we'll take up here next time.

Jesus --- He doesn't just tell us how to live, but gives us the power to do it.

Jesus --- Picture a dad catching a bee in his hand, knowing that he'll get stung, to save his young Daughter. He's got a stinger in his hand. What does Jesus have in His hands?

Jesus --- He likes to have an empty container to fill ( water to wine, etc. ) , except the tomb --- It's still empty.

Jesus --- He received something He didn't deserve, so we could have something we don't deserve.

WANTED --- More bikers in heaven!!

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