

The Church Vs. the Churches

SALVATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH

Salvation by Grace through Faith: The Methodist Church

- ▶ “We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that **we are justified by faith, only**, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.”
(www.umc.org)
- ▶ “We believe we are **never accounted righteous before God through our works** or merit, but that penitent sinners are justified or accounted righteous before God **only by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.**”
(ibid.)

Salvation by Grace through Faith: The Baptist Church

- ▶ “Salvation, according to the Bible, is **solely by grace and faith, not by human effort** or works (Ephesians 2:8-9). While not denying the value of good works, throughout our history Baptists have proclaimed the truth that salvation is only by grace through faith.” (www.baptistdistinctives.org)
- ▶ “Salvation is available **only through faith** in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Some denominations have included such things as baptism, church membership, good works or sacraments as necessary for salvation. Baptists have insisted that salvation comes **only by faith in God’s grace gift of Jesus.**” (Ibid).

Salvation by Grace through Faith: The Presbyterian Church

- ▶ “The best-known verse in the Bible summarizes the required response to this good news: “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). To “believe in” Jesus includes both a wholehearted trust in Him for forgiveness of sins and a decision to forsake one’s sin or to “repent” (www.pcaa.org)
- ▶ “In keeping with the doctrine of Sovereignty, under which God is seen to determine all things, Presbyterians believe that the knowledge of Christ and the acceptance of Christ which leads to Salvation also come from God. **We are saved by faith alone and this faith itself is a gift of God.**” (www.pcahistory.org)

Salvation by Grace through Faith: The Lutheran Church

- ▶ “As you no doubt are aware, the central and consistent teaching of Paul that **we are justified by grace alone through faith alone** on account of Christ is nowhere more beautifully summarized than in Eph. 2:8-9: “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God — not because of works ...” By its very definition **“grace” means that human works do not contribute in any way to a person’s salvation or justification**, as St. Paul says in Rom. 11:6, “But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.” (www.lcms.org)

Salvation by Grace through Faith: The Lutheran Church

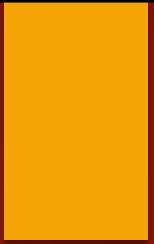
- ▶ “Like any Lutheran Church, the ELCA (the largest Lutheran Denomination in the US – rp) believes that people are justified, or given the right to enter heaven, **by faith in Jesus Christ alone.**” (classroom.synonym.com – an official Lutheran site, r.p.)
- ▶ “The ELCA references the “three alones” of Lutheranism on its website, a concept which is commonly used to explain Lutheran beliefs to outsiders. Lutherans believe that we are saved by **grace** alone, **that grace is attained by faith alone**...For salvation, the first two “alones” are the most important. **God’s grace** is given to people without merit. It cannot be earned, and is **attainable only through faith**, which is defined as a radical trust in God.” (ibid)

Salvation by Grace through Faith: Churches in our Area

- ▶ The River Community Church: “Salvation is a gift from God that is **given to a person upon their belief in Jesus Christ** because of Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross.” (www.therivercc.com/core-values)
- ▶ Life Church: “Man’s only hope – **Believe in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.** Romans 10:9-13, Ephesians 2:8-10, Luke 24:47” (livelife.church/corebeliefs)

General Observations

- ▶ These churches rightfully teach we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus and His redemptive work.
- ▶ Problems arise when it is taught that we are **saved at the point of faith**—by **faith alone**.
 - ▶ Obedience does not mean God owes us salvation.
 - ▶ God has provided all that is needed for our salvation by **grace**, or **unmerited favor**, because we deserve condemnation.
 - ▶ **Problem:** Their description of salvation by grace through faith falls short of what the Bible says this process necessarily includes!



The Lord's Church

DOCTRINE OF SALVATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH

Saved by Grace through Faith

- ▶ Salvation is by God's eternal plan that brought grace to all through Jesus – 2 Tim. 1:9
- ▶ One cannot be saved without faith – Heb. 11:6
- ▶ Our salvation is by God's saving **grace received through faith** – Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 5:1-2

Saved by Faith in God, not Self

- ▶ We must trust in what **God has done**, not in our ability to obey God's law.
- ▶ Before the Law, sinful Abraham was saved by faith, not works – Rom. 4:1-8
- ▶ **Dividing Line:** Salvation by grace through faith is more than **grace plus faith only**.
 - ▶ Faith that justified Abraham was faith that believed strongly enough in God's power to lead him to obey – Heb. 11:17-18
 - ▶ It was not until Abraham **obeyed** that his **faith was completed** and it was accounted to him for righteousness – Jas. 2:21-14; Gen. 22:1-3, 9-12

Faith Accounted as Righteousness...

- ▶ **Begins** with trust in what God has done and can do in Christ – Acts 2:36
- ▶ Must be **completed**, or made saving faith, by **leading one to do what God has commanded.**
- ▶ **Faith must lead us to...**
 - ▶ Openly confess Christ – Rom. 10:10
 - ▶ Repent of our sins – Acts 2:36, 38.
 - ▶ Be baptized to be forgiven our sins and be raised with Christ by God's power – Acts 2:36, 38; Mk. 16:15-16; Col. 2:11-12