

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

Vol. XXIX

August 4, 2019

No.31

How do I know I am saved?

(Michael Baker)

The apostle Paul says that salvation is the gift of God, given “*by grace through faith*” *Ephesians 2:8-9*. Today we have a wide variety of teachings of how men can be saved. But do we realize salvation will not be gained by heeding the doctrines of men? We can be deceived into thinking we are saved when the Scriptures tell us otherwise! Saul of Tarsus is an example of one who had a pivotal moment when he realized he was saved. Paul tells that he was a pattern of God’s mercy since Jesus came to save “sinners, of whom I am chief,” that we all can gain everlasting life in *1 Timothy 1:15-16*. Let us compare what happens in the life of Saul, with that of what certain doctrines of men today teach regarding salvation.

A lot of people today believe they are saved when they pray the sinner's prayer and feel saved. But in *Acts 9*, Saul fasted for 3 days because of how miserable he felt as he became aware of his sin. After those 3 days, Saul was baptized and then ate. By him eating after being baptized, we can recognize he no longer felt miserable because his sins had been washed away.

Many folks trust in their own thoughts and ideas. Just

because we have a thought in our mind of what we should do, that doesn't mean it's the right thing to do. The Proverb writer warns against these traps that our own mind can set for ourselves. *Proverbs 16:25* tells us some ways may seem right, but they can lead to death. The wise writer says in *Proverbs 28:26* that it is foolish to trust in your heart. Even if I feel emotions that make me feel like “I am saved, we cannot trust in our feelings alone. The truth of God’s word will produce the right kind of emotions within me.

Our conscience may not be an efficient guide if our knowledge is not in tune with God’s word. Did you know there was a time when Saul thought the right thing to do involved persecuting, arresting, and executing Christians? In *Acts 26:9* he says “*I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.*” He also says in *Acts 23:1*, “*Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience until this day.*” But when Saul was informed of His sin by Jesus Himself, did his clear conscience remain? No! We today do not have the Son of God come to us personally and implore us to change our ways. Our sins, exposed by God’s Law, remove that secure feeling of a clear

conscience, for we have sinned against God, just as Saul did.

We have folks today who believe they are saved because they are religiously active. They may not believe it matters what the church they attend teaches or practices, but as long as they attend and feel close to God they are confident in their salvation. Saul was very zealous and religiously active. In *Acts 22:3* we read that he was “*taught according to the strictness of our fathers’ law,*” since he was a Jew. He followed the law, even though he was incorrect. Saul was without Christ and active in his Jewish faith, however, it does not mean he was right in the sight of God.

So, how do I know I am saved? Well, when did Saul know that he was saved? *Acts 9* reveals that Saul was blinded after speaking to the son of God. Saul wasn't saved while he was being led blindly to Damascus. He wasn't saved when he was praying and fasting for 3 days. He knew he was saved after he was baptized and his sins were washed away, *Acts 22:16*. We cannot rely on the belief systems of the world and our feelings. Rather, we must always establish ourselves on God’s Word which reveals how we can be pleasing in His sight.