

Doctrine



*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path...
The entrance of Your words gives light;
it gives understanding to the simple. Psalm 119:105,130*

The Free Gift of Salvation

Thus says the Lord: "Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; then you will find rest for your souls." Jeremiah 6:16

THEOLOGY

Calvary Old Path Believes in Salvation by Grace alone, through Faith alone.

DOCTRINE

Calvary Old Path believes that salvation comes only through our faith in the sacrifice of Jesus and not by our own efforts. It is a free gift given by God and anyone can choose to either accept or reject His gift. We believe the evidence of

Salvation is the saving of mankind from God's judgement of sin. The penalty of sin is death. God sent His Only Begotten Son to die in our place. By His life, death and resurrection we can be saved.

Reconciliation means restoration to favor or harmony. Our relationship with God was broken (due to mankind's original sin). We were reconciled back to God due to His love, grace and forgiveness. The purpose of reconciliation is Imputed righteousness or justification, so that each believer may have fellowship with God through Jesus Christ.

Two Latin Phrases that help define true biblical Christianity. It is absolutely necessary to understand these two basic elements.

Sola gratia - grace alone - The Bible teaches that our salvation is a gift of grace. Grace cannot be earned. It is the free and unmerited favor of God.

Sola fide - faith alone - The Bible teaches that we are declared righteous by God (justified) on the basis of our faith alone and not by works. We are justified, declared righteous, at the moment of salvation.

To explain in more depth our beliefs regarding salvation through grace and faith alone, we will be covering these areas.

1. Mankind's Free Will
2. God's Free Gift (Not By Works)
3. Good Works.

Mankind's Free Will

When Adam and Eve were created, they had free will to make their own **choices**. When mankind fell away from God's favor, due to both of their **decisions** to disobey, sin and death were the result *Genesis 3; Romans 5:12*.

Only by God's mercy and grace was mankind reconciled back to God *2 Corinthians 5: 17-19*. A perfect sacrifice was required to cover mankind's guilt. God sent His Only Begotten Son to pay for our sins. He was perfect, without sin. By His death, our salvation was made possible and we can now come back into favor with God. All we have to do is **choose** to believe and then **choose** to ask for forgiveness.

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

2 Corinthians 7:10 "For Godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation..."

Mark 10:45 "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

This is a **decision** every human being will have to make. God has given us all a free will. We have a **choice** to accept God's free gift of salvation or to rejected it. These **choices** have eternal consequences. One leads to life, while the other leads to eternal separation from God.

*Joshua 24:15 "And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, **choose** for yourselves this day whom you will serve..."*

Matthew 12:30 "He who is not with Me is against Me..."

Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The Word of God has made it very clear that He has given everyone a **free choice** in the matter of salvation.

God's Free Gift (Not By Works)

God has given us the free gift of salvation. *In Ephesians 2:8-9* we read "*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourself; it is the **gift** of God, **not of works**, lest anyone should boast.*"

The Greek translation of the word **gift** in the above scriptures is **charisma** meaning “a gift of grace” or “a favor freely given.” Grace cannot be earned. The fact that grace is a gift means that nothing is owed in return.

Romans 11:6 *“And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.”*

No human effort such as good works, law observance, wealth, rank etc. is able to do what God in His grace has made possible.

In *1 John 5:13* we are told that we can **know** that we are saved. *“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may **know** that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.”* It does not say that if you do this or that, then you will have eternal life.

The gift of salvation did not cost us anything. Jesus paid the price.

Ephesians 1:7 “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace...”

The apostle Paul makes it very clear:

Galatians 2:21 “I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.”

In *John 19:30* we read Jesus’s last words before He died:

*“So, when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “**It is finished!**” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.”*

The Greek word translated “it is finished” is **tetelestai**. It is an accounting term and means “paid in full.” Our debt owed to God was paid in full! There is nothing anyone can do to add to what was accomplished on the cross.

Good Works

It is interesting to note that other religions have work-based requirements to earn their way into Heaven, Paradise, Valhalla, Nirvana or any afterlife. Christianity stands out as not work-based. We believe that salvation comes only through our faith in the sacrifice of Jesus and not by our own efforts.

One might then ask, “**What part do good works play in a Christian’s life?**” Good works are important in the lives of believers, but they do not provide salvation. They are proof that salvation has already taken place.

What about *James 2:26*? “*For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*”

The lack of works reveals an unchanged life, a **dead faith**. Faith is demonstrated by the works we do. How we live should show what we believe. If we profess to be a Christian, our lives should reflect a **living faith**. Works are not the reason for our salvation; works are the evidence of our salvation.

2 Corinthians 5:17 “*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*”

Matthew 7:20 “*Therefore by their fruits you will know them.*”

Faith without works is dead because it reveals a heart that has not been transformed by God.

We need to remember this truth: “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, **thoroughly equipped for every good work.***” *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

True believers trust in the Word of God and continually change as they pray and put their **faith** in God’s free gift of salvation.

Hebrews 11:1 “*Now **faith** is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*”

In summary, it is clear that we cannot earn our own salvation. It is a free gift from God that assures salvation to all who come to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Why the Different Views?

The different opinions regarding the relationship of faith and works come from not understanding what the Bible teaches about salvation: That it is a free gift from God and cannot be earned. People want to find a way out of the penalty of sin by their own efforts. Below are a couple of scriptures that some use to validate their belief in work-based salvation.

First, we need to realize that James is addressing Jews who formed the first Christian church *James 1:1*.

In *James 1: 2-4* it is clear he is talking to believers.

James 2:14-17 “What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, “depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.”

James is not raising the question about whether one is saved by faith alone. He is dealing with the question of what is genuine faith or a saving faith. Talking about doing good and actually doing good are two different things. Our works do not save us, but they do show we have a genuine saving faith. Again, as Paul puts it in *Galatians 2:20-21*:

“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.”

It is easy to claim to be a Christian. Do our actions align with our beliefs?

By the work of the Holy Spirit, our lives will change as we strive to be more like Christ.

Galatians 5:22-23 “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control...”

Also, *Matthew 5:16* tells us “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

See “How We Are Saved Part 3 of 3” for a more detailed analysis.



On the Path Discernment Ministry

Discernment is always mentioned in scripture in a favorable light. Discernment was promoted as a way to avoid error and cause the believer to continually be seeking and watching with vigilance. Accordingly, these materials are provided for you in order to assist you in growing in your knowledge and understanding of God's Word. We have taken great care to give a thorough and expansive explanation of the positions of the church.

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These booklets are provided to explain Old Path's teachings on topics of theology and doctrine. Should you have questions on doctrinal matters or would like further clarity on these positions, you can email us and we will assist you by researching the needed matters. However, we do not provide these booklets with the intention of debating.