

Accepting Christ!

Word Study as Introduction.

Acts 24:3 We accept *it* always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness.

Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall received the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Romans 5:17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which received abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)

Matthew 10:8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received , freely give.

John 1:12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:

Acts 2:41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls.

Romans 5:11 And not only *so*, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

John 1:12 "received"

G2983 λαμβάω νω lambanō

second aorist, active, indicative, third person plural (they) of the verb - lambanow

Thayer Definition:

1) to take

1a) to take with the hand, lay hold of, any person or thing in order to use it

1a1) to take up a thing to be carried

1a2) to take upon one's self

1b) to take in order to carry away

1b1) without the notion of violence, i.e to remove, take away

1c) to take what is one's own, to take to one's self, to make one's own

1c1) to claim, procure, for one's self

1c1a) to associate with one's self as companion, attendant

1c2) of that which when taken is not let go, to seize, to lay hold of, apprehend

1c3) to take by craft (our catch, used of hunters, fisherman, etc.), to circumvent one by fraud

1c4) to take to one's self, lay hold upon, take possession of, i.e. to appropriate to one's self

1c5) catch at, reach after, strive to obtain

1c6) to take a thing due, to collect, gather (tribute)

1d) to take

1d1) to admit, receive

1d2) to receive what is offered

1d3) not to refuse or reject

1d4) to receive a person, give him access to one's self

1d4a) to regard any one's power, rank, external circumstances, and on that account to do some injustice or neglect something

1e) to take, to choose, select

1f) to take beginning, to prove anything, to make a trial of, to experience

2) to receive (what is given), to gain, get, obtain, to get back

Strong's Definition

A prolonged form of a primary verb, which is used only as an alternate in certain tenses; to *take* (in very many applications, literally and figuratively [probably objective or active, to *get hold* of; whereas **G1209** is rather subjective or passive, to *have offered* to one; while **G138** is more violent, to *seize* or *remove*): - accept, + be amazed, assay, attain, bring, X when I call, catch, come on (X unto), + forget, have, hold, obtain, receive (X after), take (away, up).

1. Total Depravity.

Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Eph 4:17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

Ephesians 4:18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

Eph 4:19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

Romans 8:7 Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

The salvation of any sinner is a matter of “the operation of God” (Col. 2:12).

Col 2:12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

The new birth is absolutely imperative, but this is the work of the Spirit of God from the very nature of the case. Birth altogether excludes the idea of any effort or work on the part of the one born, hence it is written “It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing” (John 6:63).

John 6:63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.

“It is no marvel that the natural man needs to be born again, for he is totally depraved, a slave of sin and Satan, devoid of any love to God, any relish for heavenly things, and any ability to perform spiritual acts.” The sinner has been totally “ruined by the fall”, is “without strength” (Rom. 5:6), hence it is written in John 6:44 “No man can come to Me, except the Father which has sent Me draw him.” Only those who have been “made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light” (Col. 1:12) and made holy shall enter Heaven which is a prepared place for a prepared people (John 14:2). “Without holiness no man shall see the Lord” (Heb. 12:14; Matt. 5:8). By his apostasy man lost his holiness, is wholly corrupt and under the dominion of dispositions and lusts which are directly contrary to God. The corruption of man’s being is so great and entire that he will never truly repent unless and until he is supernaturally renewed by the Holy Spirit. In order for any to have Christ as their Saviour they must first have received Him as their ‘Lord’ (Col. 2:6; Acts 2:36), as their King to rule over them, for God saves none in their rebellion against Him: We must cease our rebellion against Him and His authority and give Him the throne of our hearts as our Ruler or He is not our Saviour no matter what our profession.

2. The need of Repentance

To exhort sinners to be saved by “Accepting Christ as their Saviour” without pressing upon them the imperative necessity of repentance is dishonest, and is to falsify God’s terms of salvation, for “Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 17:3) is the Divine dictum. The sinner must either repent or perish, there is no other alternative. And since “All have sinned” (Rom. 3:23) all therefore need to “repent and believe the Gospel” (Mark 1:15) else they will be “punished with everlasting destruction” (2 Thess. 1:9). To delay repentance then is most perilous.

Acts 11:18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

Acts 17:30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:

Peter in Acts 3:19 did not say that all you have to do is to “Accept Christ” as your personal Saviour,” but instead he said “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.”

The sinner in his natural state has no power in himself to accept Christ as his personal Saviour, or to “believe to the saving of his soul”, nor has he any real desire or intention of doing so for the reason that, as stated above, his “carnal mind” is “enmity against God” (Rom. 8:7). He is “the servant (lit. bondsman) of sin” (Rom. 6:20) and must be made

“free from sin” (Rom. 6:22) by the almighty “power of God” (Luke 9:43). That he is utterly helpless to save himself is clearly brought out in Jer. 13:23 where we read “Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?” When he can do that then “may he also do good, that is accustomed to do evil.” The sinner’s spiritual impotency consists in nothing but the depravity of his own heart, and his inveterate hatred of God. He is so helpless and hopeless in himself that he cannot take one step toward Christ for salvation. Hence he is cast upon God “from the womb” (Psa. 22:10) if ever he is to be saved, so to intimate to sinners that they can come to Christ whenever they agree to accept Christ as their personal Saviour is to deceive and bolster them up in a false “way of salvation.” This is an exceedingly serious matter. They need to “Seek the Lord while he is to be found, and call upon Him while He is near” (Isa. 55:6).

3. The Defence.

Yet in preaching the Gospel we call attention to one work of the Saviour instead of to the Person Himself who does that wonderful work. Let us see how the Scripture reads. Do we find in John 1:12, ‘But as many as received Him, as their Saviour, to them gave He power to become the sons of God?’ No, the words ‘as their Saviour’ are not found in the verse. Do we read in John 3:16, ‘that whosoever believeth in Him as his own personal Saviour?’ No, we do not. These words are not found in the verse. Nor are they found in I John 5:12, Matt. 11:28, etc. In fact, the expression never occurs, for the Holy Spirit does not attract the sinner’s attention to one particular work, but always to that wonderful and precious Person who did, and who does the work.

November 22 2005
1222090222P-RPG