

“Of Saving Faith” part 8, WCF 14.2.9, Faith’s Principal Acts

2021.04.25 Sabbath School Lesson

Hopewell ARPC, Culleoka, TN

for audio of this lesson visit [bit.ly/210425wcf14](https://bit.ly/210425wcf14) (or scan the QR code to the right)



WCF 14.2 (TPH p927)

*II. By this faith, a Christian believeth to be true whatsoever is revealed in the Word, for the authority of God Himself speaking therein;(e) and acteth differently upon that which each particular passage thereof containeth; yielding obedience to the commands,(f) trembling at the threatenings,(g) and embracing the promises of God for this life, and that which is to come.(h) **But the principal acts of saving faith are accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace.(i)***

*(e) John 4:42; I Thess. 2:13; I John 5:10; Acts 24:14.*

*(f) Rom. 16:26.*

*(g) Isa. 66:2.*

*(h) Heb. 11:13; I Tim. 4:8.*

*(i) John 1:12; Acts 16:31; Gal. 2:20; Acts 15:11.*

John 1:9 **That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.**

<sup>10</sup> **He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. <sup>11</sup> He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.**

<sup>12</sup> **But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name**

Who is Jesus and what had He done (v9–10)?

To whom did He come (v11)? In what (two) way(s) were they His own? What didn’t they do?

What does He give to those who do the opposite (v12)? How does the second part of this verse describe this “receiving” Him?

Acts 16:29 **Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. <sup>30</sup> And he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” <sup>31</sup> So they said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.” <sup>32</sup> Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. <sup>33</sup> And he took them the same hour of the night and washed *their* stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized. <sup>34</sup> Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.**

What question does the Jailer have for himself (v30)?

What do they say for him to do (v31)? Whom else will receive benefits?

What benefit do they all receive in v32? What benefit do they all receive in v33? What benefit do they all receive in v34? How many have believed in v34 (use Greek or some language help to discover the number of the verb)?

What further/future benefits are implied in the benefits that they have received thus far? Unto what purpose would they hope God will use these benefits?

---

**(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)**

---

And in this particular paragraph of the chapter on saving faith, we've been seeing that saving faith is not this leap that a lot of people like to talk about when they talk about the word faith this actually. Taking the best evidence there can be of anything God's own words and responding to them as the gods and words and yet God's word especially reveals the way of his salvation if we were to go back to chapter one and look at how the Bible evidences itself to be the word of God the revealing of the gospel in the way of man salvation is the crown jewel among the many evidence.

Of these that chapter one lists and so it's not surprising that if saving is a response to God's word taking it as the actual words of God receiving Jesus Christ accepting receiving and resting upon Christ to learn for justification sanctification and eternal life a virtue of the covenant of grace that that would be the principle act of saving faith, so let's pray our father in heaven we thank you that the way we come into this faith.

Is not by our bloodline or by our own we're able to be able to believe or someone else on earth's will for us to be able to believe but your will your pleasure to give us this faith by which you save through your son and we pray that your Holy Spirit who is the one who gives that birth who is the one who gives that faith who is the one who carries out your pleasure father?

That he would be acting upon us now and helping us as we read your word and think about it teach it and receive teaching that you would help us onto your glory for we ask it through Jesus amen.

So but the principle acts of saving faith. Accepting receiving and resting upon Christ alone. For justification sanctification and eternal life by virtue of the covenant of grace and the passages that we have we've taken each of those four verses at the bottom and letter I and we've set them in their context, they're kind of follow the flower of.

This ending part ending clause or sentence rather of the of the second paragraph, so we'll see that the principal acts first are accepting receiving and resting components and then. In the act 16 and votions to passages we're really going to hit that alone that it's Christ alone and not only Christ alone for justification, but also Christ to learn for scientification and all our eternal life.

And then that too but especially in acts 15 by virtue of the covenant of grace by virtue of the covenant of grace and we'll see the covenantal aspect of the benefits that come to a household when just the head of the household believes there in acts 15 and since that I think is is an area that is sometimes foggy for Presbyterians and doesn't even exist for back.

Stage and then full-fledged Baptists were we'll park there for a while we may end up spending the entire class next week on that. So John chapter 1 verse 9, he has been talking about the word who is God from only terminate is already God at the beginning and who became flesh and dwelt among us actually he's going to say that in verse 14.

He's talking about the Lord Jesus he's he we're just coming out and as we come into verse 9 of John's testimony John was a man that set over against the word who had to become man, he doesn't tell us about the Lord Jesus becoming flesh really until verse 14 and so the fact that John is a mere man already disqualifies him verse 6, if you got bottles open only listed from verse 9.

This clarifies him from being the one about whom God has been talking in the first five verses always been talking about someone who has God from all eternity and saying he says a man sent from God named John we already have a clue and he bears witness to the light and he is not that light that brings us to verse 9, so if we could have four readers for these four verses very quickly you just read verse 9 and then whoever has it has it as we proceed from there.

He was in the world and the world was made through him and the world did not know him he came to his home and his own did not receive him.

Thank you very good.

Okay, so he was Jesus. Just from that phrase, he was the true light which gives light to every man. So, what is one thing that Jesus has done? He gives light to every man. He's the one from Him. We have our life and our being. Which gives life to every man coming into the world, so what else is Jesus done?

He came into the world. He was in the world in the world. So as Jesus done? He made the world he made everything. He's the creator and he came into the creation his mind the creatures and says on the world did not know him he came to his own.

So to whom to become. His own and this is in two different ways one primarily in the context so far, how are they his own because he did what to them? He made them. He came to he came to his and he he made them. But what is the second way that we know that this means and we'll see developed in the Gospel of John as a certain group of people in particular reject him repeatedly and increasingly who are his own as far as his human nature and his human lineage is concerned.

The Jews says, he came to his own and his own did not receive him. So, what did they do? They didn't receive him. They rejected him. He came to his own in his own did not receive him but as many as received him. So, what did this other group do in verse 12?

They received him this is not that difficult kids right every question I ask and then hear somebody answer maybe you're answering your thinking it can't be that simple can it can God has been pleased to give us a word that is very clear in most places and especially about the most important things.

To as many as receive as many as received that him to then he gave the right to become children of God to those who believe in his name the ones you received him at the beginning of verse 12 as their described as the ones that received him as many as received him.

How are they called? Okay, they received the right he gives in the right to be called the children of God, but then they're described a new way a different way at the end of the verse to those who believe in his name. So just believe in his name and this receiving him in verse 12 are the same thing.

And one of the ways that he tells us here because we want to know this, right? To him Jesus has given the right to be called children of God the ones who believe in his name and that's the question that brings up the question that we've been answering these several weeks what does it mean to believe in the name of Jesus, you know, I grew up in church I grew up being told to believe in Jesus and I would be saved and you know get a card and you know collect all the the cards with all the days on which I got saved.

Growing up in church and and you know don't ever let anyone tell you that you're not a Christian well what if the Holy Spirit tells me neither here nor there but no one have a really explained what believing in his name was well, it's right here believing in his name is receiving him and receiving him is the opposite of the not receiving him and verse 11.

So as you go through the rest of the gospel of John and Jesus has repeatedly presenting himself as God the son the creator who has entered the creation to redeem because we have no redemption in ourselves no good in ourselves, no power in ourselves no life, no no righteousness no goodness in ourselves.

He says believing in his name is teaching us a believing in his name is to receive a the opposite of what the Jews so when Jesus presents himself as God to you in the scripture, what are the Jews do they argue against it in their hearts and you will find in your own heart and your own mind the same kind of skeptical pushback from your flesh, yeah can you is Jesus really God is he is he not maybe one of the creatures maybe the greatest creature like he made Jesus first and then he used Jesus as a creature to create everyone else.

Where everything else these heresies that come from the flesh that come from the devil are alive and well and many of the churches. And so when you when you hear and, That kind of idea in your own mind or your own heart one part of saving faith is to reject it and say, I'm gonna receive Jesus the way Jesus has presented himself to me in the gospel.

Okay, so if you join the church you're taking those and or if you're professing your faith, you're already a member but you're coming to the table you're taking valves one of the things you're gonna be asked is if you receive and rest upon Christ alone for salvation as he is offered to you in the gospel and there is a submission to who Jesus is as he describes himself.

That is a part of that but it's not just an agreement either. Does it does it say he came to his own and his own did not receive ideas about him. Jesus is offering himself to us in the gospel, he's not just offering us a collection of theological ideas about himself.

Believing in his name is not just believing certain ideas about his name it is receiving him as your God and your creator first of all and also as your Redeemer, it is embracing him it is following him it is. It has disciples when when they wanted him to be what they wanted him to be, you know the buffet master and and he started talking to them about this exact thing that he has come down from heaven and that he's the bread of life that he's actually done more than provide us carbohydrates the very fact that we are living beings is from him and that we now need to eat his flesh and drink his blood we need to look to him turn to him look to him.

Uses that kind of language in chapter 6 and that's offensive to them, not just because in their resistance to what he's saying about himself being God they talk as if he's talking about cannibalism, right? I will this man give us his flesh to eat and he says, oh, do you one worse than that unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood?

Yeah, he's making reference to something that they were familiar with in sacrifices eating meat and drinking wine at the at the sacrifices and Jesus saying I not only am God I am the God by whose sacrifice alone you can have any life in you everybody else leaves what to do, what is he says turns to disciples, are you going to leave to?

And they say where would we go? You have the words of eternal life. So to receive Jesus not only as God your Creator, but the God who came to give himself for you that you would be his and he would be yours and through him you would be the fathers to them, he gave the right to become what?

Children of God and if we were to go on right to verse 14 you read and the word became flesh into all among us and we beheld his glory the glory is of the only bigot of the father and so Jesus has come to give you by a transfer of right by an adoption by a decision what is his in his person is naturally his by his divine nature.

And so believing in his name the principle acts of saving faith is to receive and rest upon Christ to receive Christ himself to accept Christ himself to rest upon Christ himself. To continue to.

Oh sorry I flipped when I was talking to you earlier at 15 and act 16 X 15 is going to be at the Jerusalem Council. Here we're going to have the virtue of the Covenant of Grace especially. So at 16 versus 29 through 34 what's happened is Paul and Silas are in jail in Philippi, they have kept to themselves the secret of their citizenship so that they could end up being where there are.

And they have been praising God in the midst of the jail and a whole bunch of other prisoners have been have been hearing this occur and then bad has opened up the entire prison and none of the prisoners have left similar reason to why Peter on behalf of the disciples said we're not going to leave you Jesus these prisoners are all around because they have been hearing words of eternal life.

It's pretty amazing thing, isn't it? You know, the the junior would be surprised if just Paul and Silas were there, but they answer that they are all there. All the prisoners in this jail stayed. That's extraordinary. That's as extraordinary as the jail being opened. And so the the generator who's life is on the line if the prisoners escape is about to kill kill himself and they say no.

I'm yourself. We're all here. And that's where we pick up in chapter 16 verse 29, so if we have someone read verse 29 Emily and then just move on from there as you have it.

So they said leave Christ and you'll be safe.

Lord and to all that we're in this house. And he took them that same hour of the night and watched their stripes and immediately he and all of his family were baptized.

I was. In.

Joint fire has told that he had believed in God. Thank you, very good. And I appreciate it's probably ESV, right? So they changed the word order a little bit to show that the rejoicing was with the whole family over the singular he believing in God. So, that's very good.

And that translation. Okay, so he calls for right here runs down, of course, he sees by the light that what? What Paul had said was true for we are all here and the verse 28 and he falls down trembling before Paul and Silas he brings them out. What is this question?

What must I do to be saved? It is.

A testimony to the apostles testimony that this is his question. We need a lot of questions. What happened to the jail? How did you guys get out? How'd you convince the other guys to stay? There are a lot of different things but what has been hard thus far from Poland Silas?

Has made the first thing on his mind when the Lord does this as a witness to the reality of salvation in Jesus Christ, okay this thing that they have been talking about that they've been singing about that they've been praising about you know, maybe even similar to in the acts two sermon or the acts for prayer that that the salvation that God had planned he has executed by the ends of these wicked men who all gathered against his Christ and crucified him according to God's plan and for knowledge, you know, we kind of know what both the preaching and the praise.

Of the apostolic preaching in the apostolic praising had at its core. There's something in what he's heard so far that makes his number one question this moment what must I do to be saved. Now, he has to singular answer he asked a singular question but he gets a covenant answer.

So he does what most I do to be saved and they say what? Believer Jesus Christ and you will be saved. You and your household. Now in the rest of the passage you get these benefits these covenantal benefits that come from being part of a household where the head has been saved.

First one is verse 31, what is verse 32 say it happened to him and to all who were in his house.

They spoke the word of the Lord to him. So there are many of you children that the first times that you were hearing the word of the Lord. It was because your parents were believers. You know, sometimes I you know around here. I'm usually not evangelizing completely untouched people but sometimes when I'm evangelizing completely untouched people they say well that's all good and well for you but a lot of that depends on what house you were born into.

And I say well, yeah and the God who's saved me is the one who decided what house I would be born into. Hearing the word of the Lord spoken to me was a benefit that I received because my parents were believers. And that's something that he's promised to believers now the same Lord has put me in front of you and I am telling you the gospel of Jesus Christ is the benefit that belongs by promise to the children of believers, but here you are you're not even the child of a believer and you're getting that benefit, do you see how merciful God is being to you right now?

And all of you children. Who heard the word of the word spoken and you now have come to believe as your parents believed this promise about the saving benefits that come through faith, not just to your parents but for you there they're covenantal benefits and when you believe you've discovered that there have been saving benefits for you so first benefit that comes to the whole house.

As they spoke the word of the Lord to them, what's the second benefit verse thirty three?

It's a benefit that actually Paul and Silas receive in kind of a physical way and then he they turn around and they apply a much greater spiritual analog. Right so the jailer takes him that same hour of the night he washes their stripes and immediately he and oh our is our baptized and yet the New King James supplies family here but it's actually all who are his everyone who belongs to him so his households probably included servants or whoever is under him whoever was attached in providentially was baptized so here is a second covenant benefit that comes to the whole house just because he has believed.

And then I'm so glad that we had ESV for verse 34 because it was a little paraphras but it backs up what I was about to tell you the having believed in God there in verse 34 is in the singular. There's only one who has believed in God. Thus far in the Philippian jailer's household according to the testimony of the text.

And yet they all had the word of God spoken and they all were baptized and they all rejoice. Reducing over the benefits that come to a house when the head of the household is saved is another covenant benefit that comes to an entire household for the sake of the one.

Now this would you know, make us who our dads really desire sanctification as God brings more joy to our house as a result of our being converted but also the salvation of those who are who are under us. So what further future benefits are implied the last question down there in the benefits that there have received thus far well in that baptism, it would be implied that he was going to receive teaching from Paul's and hopefully elders after the churches getting established in in fellow by and also give teaching to his household right because in your baptized into the name of Jesus Christ, you do what else teaching them to keep all that.

I have commanded you what is one of the things that they are taught to keep believe in the name of the Lord. Jesus Christ and you will be saved. So his believing does not save them, but his believing does get them the word through which Jesus saves them the baptism through which Jesus saves them the rejoicing.

Through which Jesus saves them, so there is a real sense. In which it is in response to his faith. That the Lord gives those who are in his household faith. Your responsible for your own believing. But when you believe your children. It is the fulfillment of a promise that was made to your Christian parents.

And when you come to the Lord. Your household now. Lord willing you become Christian parents or if you were already apparent when you came to faith or the your household also receives this promise and they're all upon Christ alone. You're not hoping that it's your faith, you're not hoping that it's your efforts.

Right Christ alone believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved you and your household so Jesus Christ is the one who is the substance of all of these covenantal benefits that come to the rest of the family very important for us to see all of these things in their connection to be able to see them like right out of the text.

Because these are things that even encircles where we use the word covenant, sometimes we don't understand very well and we'll come to a passage and say see it's a household and that's right, it's a household and they'll say well, we don't know if there were babies in it, well yeah but it's a household.

If our babies in it the babies in the household you receive the covenant benefits as members of the household and you know, what a whole bunch of adults in the household received covenant benefits as part of the household do even though they weren't babies there were kind of there were covenant benefits for the household.

Okay, so just want you to see all those things together and especially for us so that we don't fall off the other side of the horse recognize these are benefits that come only in Jesus Christ. Okay and then the rejection of our works and of the law will. Will take that next week and in Galatians and Acts 15 which does give us a couple minutes if there are questions about either these passages.

All right, let's pray. Our father how we thank you that you who gave us your son created us by your son made him the light who has given life to every single one of us when we had sinned against you and despised your glory and worthy of a hell that is equal to the greatness of your glory, you gave him.

For us and we pray Lord that you would make us to receive him to know him as very God of very God to receive him as the one who came not only to give himself for us, but to give himself to us holy spirit we ask that you would give us this life that comes from the new birth that you alone can give.

That we would not only recognize that these things are true about Jesus, but that you would enable us and make us to grow in truly receiving him. We pray that if there are any who have not faith here that you would give it to them we thank you that it is your word through which and your sacraments.

Your word through it, you give faith and your word and sacraments through which you build it up. So as we come into that worship that you have filled with these means of your grace we pray that you would build up all who are believers and attend and that you would give faith to any who come if they have not yet believed do it for us we pray and for your glory in Jesus name amen.