

Systematic Theology

The Doctrine of Salvation: Faith and Repentance

I. Prevailing Opinions about the Nature of Faith

- A. Roman Catholicism: "Faith is the supernatural virtue through which, aided by divine grace, one is enabled to believe firmly in the truth of the authority of God as He has revealed it. . . It is further one's duty to make repeated acts of faith during one's life by practicing religion, such as attending mass" The Catholic Encyclopedia, 576.
- B. Charles G. Finney, "Since the Bible uniformly represents saving or evangelical faith as a virtue, we know that it must be a phenomenon of the will" Finney's Systematic Theology, 353.
- C. Charles C. Ryrie, "To believe in Christ for salvation means to have confidence that He can remove the guilt of sin and give eternal life. It means to believe that he can solve the problem of sin which is what keeps a person out of heaven. You can also believe Christ about a multitude of other things, *but these are not involved in salvation*. . . The issue is whether or not you believe that His death paid for all your sin" So Great a Salvation, 119.

II. The Nature of Saving Faith

- A. David Brainerd's objection to a prevailing notion
- B. Saving faith is a gift of grace (Rom. 12:3; Eph. 2:8-9; Phil. 1:29; 1 Tim. 1:13-14)
- C. Saving faith is in a Person, not a proposition
- D. Saving faith is an act of the mind, the will and the affections
It includes knowledge, assent, trust, joy
 - 1. The mind apprehends the truth of Christ (revealed in the Gospel and the Word of God) with agreement
1 Cor. 2:10-16; 2 Cor. 4:6
 - 2. The will embraces Christ, with a self-commitment to Him ("whole-souled commitment")
Rom. 6:16; Mk. 8:34 et al.
Bavinck, "Biblically speaking, faith is trust-filled surrender to God and His Word of promise" (96).
 - 3. The affections delight in Christ and all that He is and has done.
Jn. 6:35; Mt. 13:44; 1 Pet. 1:8

Bavinck, “God saves by causing Himself to be known and enjoyed in Christ” (96).

4. Saving faith is an obedient faith
Jn. 3:36; Heb. 5:8; Rom. 1:5; 1 Jn. 2:3
5. Saving faith is an enduring faith
Heb. 3:6, 14
Jonathan Edwards “A temporary faith does not justify... Tis not a vanishing faith but a durable faith that justifies.”

II. The Nature of Repentance unto Life

- A. Repentance is necessary to true conversion
Isa. 55:7; Lk. 13:1-5; Acts 2:38; 3:19-20; 17:30; 2 Cor. 7:10
- B. Repentance is a divine gift
Jer. 31:18; Acts 5:31; 11:18; 2 Tim. 2:25
- C. Repentance is the other side of faith
Mk. 1:15; Acts 20:21; 26:18-20
- D. All true faith is repentant faith and all true repentance is believing repentance (1 Thess. 1:9)
- E. All true repentance bears fruit and is a lifelong disposition
Lk. 3:7-8; Prov. 28:13