

# Who Can Be Saved?

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by C. Benjamin Dill

In **John 3:3** Jesus told a Pharisee lawyer named Nicodemus these words: ...**Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**

In response to this statement Nicodemus answered Jesus in **John 3:9** ...**How can these things be?**

Jesus answered him in **John 3:12** by saying: **If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?**

What the Lord does in the spirit of a man when He saves him from his sins is unlike anything that we humans can see happen here on Earth.

There is an old fable about six blind men trying to describe an elephant. Each one of course came up with an entirely different description of the magnificent beast based on the part he was able to touch and feel.

Because what God does in this transaction called salvation is on such a level beyond normal human experience, God uses many different terms in the Bible to define what He describes in Hebrews as “so great salvation.”

He uses terms like ‘saved, born again, redeemed, justified, new creation, declared righteous, possessing eternal life, made righteous’, and a host of other terms and phrases that describe various aspects of this amazing and miraculous event.

There are certain things in life that we all must deal with; death and taxes are famous in this category; more important than any of these is where you will spend eternity.

Oh, I know; among the unsaved everyone seems to have some issue or another with this subject:

With some, because you can’t see it you just don’t want to believe that it is real.

With others you have your religious ideas you are clinging to like your “guns and your Bibles” and you think it is all about how you live or what you do that matters.

Some, they think they are so good they don’t need anything else; others think they are so bad they have no hope anyway.

There is even a category of those who think that it is all so confusing that no one could really know what it takes, so what’s the point of even listening or trying to learn.

Where ever you are in all of this, you had better understand these facts:

**Romans 14:11-12**

11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

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

**Romans 2:2** But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.

**Acts 4:12** Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

**Hebrews 2:3** How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*;

**John 3:7** Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

Let me point out that I could stand here for a solid hour quoting verses like these and never come close to exhausting the subject.

Let me also point out that that none of this is about you being religious or being good or for that matter what you may or may not do at all.

### **Ephesians 2:8-9**

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: [please catch that part] *it is* the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

If I may, [and since I am the preacher, I may] let me also point out that there are no exceptions made for any of the previous excuses listed or any other excuses at all.

The only exceptions made for those who “must be saved” are for young children who are not accountable for their sins or for the simple who likewise are not accountable for their sins.

On a special day like this we are so blessed in having an extra large number of very special guests:

Some of you have been intending to come visit for a long time and today you finally made it!

Some of you have literally been dragged here by friends or family members and you really wish you were somewhere else; it was like that for most of us at one time, but now we love being here among other believers.

Others are somewhere in between those extremes; but whatever group you are in, we

are glad you are here and we want you to experience the love and presence of the Lord Jesus who both knows you; and, still loves you.

When I asked the Lord what to bring you today, He took me to Hebrews, Chapter 11. Hebrews, Chapter 11 is about faith; real saving faith.

Most of the issues that keep people out of heaven are dealt with in some way in this chapter. God is so smart; He knows exactly what to say to get straight to the heart of what we need to hear.

As we begin, first let me point out that:

### **I. Jesus provides real salvation.**

#### **Hebrews 10:38-39**

38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if *any man* draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

*A. Religion has a lot of empty promises; Jesus has real salvation!*

1. Real salvation is eternal salvation:

**Hebrews 5:9** And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

2. Real salvation eliminates condemnation:

**John 5:24** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

**Romans 8:1** *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus,...*

3. Real salvation cannot be taken away nor can it be lost. Those who believe are “the saved; the Lord’s sheep.” They who believe not are “the lost.”

**John 10:26-29**

26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand.

29 My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand.

*B. This real salvation comes three ways:*

**2Corinthians 1:9-10**

9 But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead:

10 Who delivered us from so great a death,  
and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will  
yet deliver *us*;

1. In these verses, our deliverance, which is another word for salvation, is considered in past, present and future tense:
2. For the believer, when we trusted in Jesus to save us from our sins, we were delivered permanently, once and for all from the great death; this death as described in:

### **Revelation 20:14-15**

14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

We have [past tense] been saved/delivered eternally from the penalty of our sins!

3. But that's not all! We are [present tense] being saved/delivered on an ongoing and continual basis from the power of sin over our lives.
4. And we will be saved/delivered from the very presence of sin when either by physical death or by the coming of the Lord we are removed from these bodies and translated into our new ones that are waiting for us in heaven.

**II. Jesus provides real salvation through real faith.** Jesus does the saving but it is faith that connects us to His saving power!

### **Ephesians 2:8-9**

8 For by grace are ye saved **through faith**; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:  
9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

*A. Faith is the only means there is by which you can stay out of hell, yet, as I speak, it stands as one of the most misunderstood terms in our language.*

1. You can ask ten different people to define faith and literally get ten different wrong answers.
  2. You would do well to listen very closely to this part as I address some of the most common misconceptions:
  3. Faith, as it is given in connection with being saved is always the same term; It is the Greek word: [πίστις](#) pistis *pis'-tis*
- From [G3982](#); **persuasion**, that is, *credence*; moral *conviction* (of *religious* truth, or the truthfulness of God or a religious teacher), **especially reliance upon Christ for salvation**; abstractly *constancy* in such profession; by extension the system of religious (Gospel) *truth* itself: - assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity.



4. When the scriptures tell you what to do to be saved [nearly 100 places], one term is always used.

**Acts 16:30-31**

30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

31 And they said, **Believe** on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

5. *Believe* is the Greek word: πιστεῦω pisteuō  
*pist-yoo'-o*

From [G4102](#); **to have faith** (in, upon, or with respect to, a person or thing), that is, *credit*, by implication to *entrust* (especially one's spiritual well being to Christ): - believe (-r), commit (to trust), **put in trust with**.

6. The word for faith is the root word for the term for *believe*. Basically, faith is the noun form and believe is the verb form.

7. Saving faith is persuasion to the point of genuine reliance upon Christ to save us from our sins.

8. What am I trying to do? I am trying to persuade you to quit trusting in your religious dead works or fate or whatever else you are depending on and to put your trust in the work that Jesus did for you on the cross when He died in your place!

*C. Real faith is real trust.*

1. Real faith is not blind; real faith/trust comes only through facts and evidence that can be intellectually understood and believed.

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

2. This creates a dilemma; you cannot trust in what you are not sure of. You can pretend to believe; you can try to believe; you can want to believe; but you cannot fake the real thing; even if you fool others or even yourself, how are you going to fool the Lord?

3. This is why we work so hard to show you the evidence; we can prove with facts and evidence that this Bible, the Word of God is true, accurate and absolutely trustworthy!

4. Once you see and understand this, then you can exercise that real faith that leads to Jesus' real salvation!

5. Here is what real faith looks like:

**Hebrews 11:3-11**

3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. [I don't understand how God did it; I would have to be God to do that; but through

faith I surely understand that He did indeed create the worlds out of nothing!]

4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

5 By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

6 But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as *in* a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God.

11 Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered

of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

6. Somebody is probably thinking, “Come on, do you really believe all that?” Yes, I absolutely do and I will stake my life on it; you will too if you take an honest look at the evidence.

### **III. Jesus provides real salvation through real faith for real sinners.**

*A. There is always somebody in the crowd who thinks he/she is just too bad to be saved.*

1. Let me say first to you that you are far closer to the kingdom of God than those who are so good they don't think they need saving.

2. **1Timothy 1:15** This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;...

3. The only eligibility requirement for being saved is that you be a human being sinner. [I guess our choices in life have made some of us very highly qualified].

*B. Take a look at some of the sinners who are with the Lord in heaven right now:*

#### **1. Hebrews 11:17-19**

17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:

19 Accounting that God *was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

2. This great hero of faith was also the guy who obeyed his wife instead of God, slept with his wife's handmaid and fathered the Ishmaelites from which came Islam, who are now trying to kill every Christian and Jew alive.

### 3. **Hebrews 11:23-26**

23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw *he* was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.

24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

4. This giant of faith left Egypt in a hurry because he was wanted for murder.

5. **Hebrews 11:31** By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace. Need I comment here?

## 6. Hebrews 11:32-35

32 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

7 Samson committed suicide, David committed adultery and murder; the Apostle Paul who wrote this very epistle was murdering, torturing and imprisoning Christians for a living when Jesus saved him.

### **In Conclusion:**

**Someone would ask, “What kind of God would send people to hell?”**

**The answer is “a just God.” Look around you and then look in the mirror; there is no question about what we or this world deserves.**

**A better question would be to ask, “What kind of God would love unworthy unlovable sinners so much that He would give His**

**only begotten Son to take upon himself the penalty of our sins?”**

**Romans 5:8** But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.