

Fellow redeemed sinners, redeemed by the blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,

There are many so-called “religions” in the world; but, with the exception of true Christianity, they are all religions of works. In other words, all religions outside of true Christianity teach that human beings can earn the favor of God – whom some simply call a higher-power – by their own works, their own deeds, and thereby be saved and enter a better place when they depart this life.

On the other hand, true Christianity is the only religion that teaches God’s favor and salvation are gracious gifts from Him, which are personally received by God-given faith in Jesus Christ – God’s only begotten Son – as one’s personal Savior and Lord, for the Holy Bible plainly states in John 3:16 followed by Ephesians 2:8-10, “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” So, it’s obvious that there are NOT many paths to the true God and eternal life in heaven.

My friends, our sermon text for today can be helpful to all who take its words to heart, for it clearly teaches:

“WHY FAITH IN JESUS IS VITAL”

With that as our theme, may we, in view of our text and with the help of the Holy Ghost, see—

- 1) Faith in Jesus is vital because of what He has done, does, and will yet do
- 2) Faith in Jesus is vital because of who He is

Prior to our Scripture selection we learn that it was the night in which Jesus was betrayed that He spoke the words of our sermon text to His disciples.

Jesus had just informed His disciples that one of them would betray Him. Subsequently, when it was night, Judas Iscariot left the room where they were gathered. John 13:31-38 then reports, “Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him. Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards. Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.” Accordingly, the disciples were a bit confused and shaken, to be sure.

Now we enter upon our sermon text.

Verses 1-4, ----- (John 14:1-4)

Jesus was about to go through terrible trials, abuse, torture, and death by crucifixion. However, our text reveals that Jesus was lovingly concerned about His disciples much more than Himself and what He was then about to endure, for Jesus said unto them: *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again,*

*and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.*

Realize that the disciples were Jewish men who held the idea in their minds that the Messiah would establish an earthly kingdom in which He would rule, and the Jewish people would dominate in this world. Why, even after Jesus' bitter sufferings, death, and bodily resurrection, Acts 1:6 reports that it happened, "When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Hence, prior to Jesus' bitter sufferings and death, when Jesus told them what He was then about to go through, those men were quite confused and shaken, which is why He said to them: *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.*

Thus, faith in Jesus is vital because He says to all of His followers: *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.*

My friends, when we think about spiritual death, temporal death, and eternal death, we all begin to be troubled in heart because we are all sinners, "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not," declares Ecclesiastes 7:20. And, Holy Scripture plainly states, in Romans 6:23, "the wages of sin is death"; "but" – and thank the Lord Jesus for that "but" – "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Yes, Jesus Christ provides relief to us for what troubles our heart most: relief from sin and its consequences, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (1 Timothy 2:5-6)

Furthermore, 1 John 2:1-2 assures us, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." Indeed, Jesus Christ is the atoning sacrifice for our sins;

and, Jesus Christ now serves as our advocate, our intercessor, at the throne of God the Father.

Therefore, Jesus rightly says in the opening verses of our sermon text: *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.*

Thus, it is evident that faith in Jesus is vital because of what He has done, does, and will yet do. Take it to heart that Jesus not only kept God's Law perfectly for us and paid for our lack of keeping God's Law, by shedding His holy blood in payment for the sins of the whole world; Jesus also has gone to heaven to intercede for us and prepare a place for us – ALL of His believing followers, His Christians – in His heavenly Father's house which is paradise. Furthermore, Jesus will visibly return to earth on the Last Day, at which time He will take us – ALL of His believers – unto Himself to that place of glory.

Looking again at the first verse of our sermon text, note well that simply believing in "God" is NOT enough to save a person, for the true God is NOT some generic "higher power" but is rather the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. God the Father must be believed in; God the Son, Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word of God, must be believed in; and, God the Holy Ghost, the Spirit who proceeds from the Father and the Son, must be believed in; for 1 John 5:7 states, "there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."

Take it to heart that Jesus says in John 5:23, "all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him." Additionally, 1 John 2:22-23 says, "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is

antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: but he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also." 2 John verse 9 adds, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." And, John 3:36 declares in no uncertain terms, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

Therefore, faith in Jesus is vital because of what He has done, does, and will yet do, for we read in Matthew 25:32-34, 41 & 46, "before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

My friends, Jesus Christ has provided us the Way to heaven since He has saved us from our sins and the punishment our sins have earned. Let us never forget that faith in Jesus is vital because of what He has done, does, and will yet do.

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As we continue to ponder our sermon text, to its conclusion, let us see that faith in Jesus is vital because of who He is.

Verses 1-6, ----- (John 14:1-6)

Jesus' disciple, Thomas, was speaking for himself and the others when he said to Jesus: *Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?* Now observe Jesus' answer, for it is

*rich: Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

Accordingly, Jesus was going to God, His heavenly Father; and, JESUS IS THE ONLY WAY TO GOD AND HEAVEN! JESUS IS TRUTH PERSONIFIED! JESUS IS LIFE PERSONIFIED! Hence, faith in Jesus is vital because of who He is.

My friends, there are NOT many ways to God and heaven. JESUS is the ONLY WAY to God and heaven, for John 3:17-18 relates, "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Note it well: unbelief, rejection of Jesus Christ as one's personal Savior and Lord, leaves one condemned, sentenced to never-ending death in hell. Indeed, it's as Mark 16:16 plainly states, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Thus, it is a fact that Jesus is the only WAY to God and heaven.

Jesus is the truth and the life, for John 1:17 reports, "the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Furthermore, 1 John 5:20 declares, "we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." Thus, faith in Jesus is vital because of who He is, for He is the true God, He is the LIFE outside of whom eternal life cannot be had.

Jesus is the TRUTH, for we read in John 1:1-3 & 14, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of

grace and truth.” Thus, Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, IS TRUE God from eternity and IS TRUE man born of the Virgin Mary in time. Hence, Jesus Christ is TRUTH personified— the one, true Savior of the world.

Take it to heart that Jesus had to be true man in order to take our place under God’s Law, and in order that He might suffer and die in our place; Jesus had to be true God in order that His perfect keeping of God’s Law might be sufficient for all people, and in order that His bitter sufferings and death might be sufficient ransom for the redemption of the whole world, and in order that He might be able to overcome death and the devil for us. Accordingly, Jesus is the LIFE because without Him there would be no spiritual and eternal life for sinful human beings, for 1 John 5:12 clearly states, “He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” So, it’s a fact that faith in Jesus is vital because of who He is.

Verse 7, -----. (John 14:7)

Jesus also said to Thomas and the other disciples: *If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.* Indeed, if Jesus’ disciples truly knew Him they would have realized Jesus is in perfect and complete unity with His heavenly Father.

Verses 8-11, -----. (John 14:8-11)

Jesus’ disciples had not taken Jesus’ words to heart concerning His unity with the Father, for *Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.*

Jesus never did anything on His own, that is, contrary to the will of God the Father. Rather, everything Jesus Christ – God’s only begotten Son – did, was in complete harmony and agreement with God the Father, and with God the Holy Ghost too, for that matter, since the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son.

In John 12:45 Jesus declares, “he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.” Colossians 1:15 adds, concerning God’s dear Son, Jesus Christ, that it is He, “Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.” Thus, the Holy Bible emphasizes Jesus’ perfect and complete unity with God the Father. Hence, faith in Jesus is vital because of who He is.

My friends, take it to heart that Jesus’ powerful works prove that He is divine and not only human, which is why He said to His disciples: *Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.* Yes, no mere man could do the mighty deeds which Jesus Christ did throughout His visible sojourn on earth.

Think about it. Jesus healed people of all sorts of sicknesses and diseases which affected them, such as leprosy and the dropsy. Jesus cast out devils from many who were possessed of them. Jesus gave sight to the blind and restored mobility to the lame. Jesus raised dead folks back to physical life, such as Jairus’ daughter and Lazarus the brother of Mary and Martha. Jesus even raised Himself back to life, for before His death and burial He plainly stated, as John 10:17-18 reports, “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.” Accordingly, there is no excuse for unbelief since Jesus Christ is indeed the one true Savior of the world, true God and true man. So, it’s a fact that faith in Jesus is vital because of who He is.

Therefore, let us daily and sincerely repent of our sins; let us keep our full trust and confidence in

Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and Lord, for Acts 4:12 clearly states, “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Yes, the Lord Jesus Christ is the ONLY WAY to God and heaven— that’s why faith in Jesus is vital. God grant that we hold fast to Jesus Christ in heart-deep faith, now and always. Amen.

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