

# ESSENTIAL TRUTHS OF THE GOSPEL

## The Foundations of Our Faith

Discussion Guide  
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Sermon Title **Grace, Saving Faith, and Good Works** by Herb Burnap

Ephesians 2: 8-10

**Introduction:** Exactly two years ago this month our pastor concluded a series of sermons on the essential truths of our Christian faith. Why then do we need to revisit this topic—important as it may be? The Apostle Peter provides the answer: “Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; <sup>11</sup> for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you. <sup>12</sup> Therefore, I will always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you already know them, and have been established in the truth which is present with you.” (II Peter 1: 10-12) Let us explore this thing called faith, and explain what we mean by the term “saving faith?”

### Sermon Outline

- I. **Understanding the significance of the clause “... that not of yourselves”**
  - A. Opinions differ as to the antecedent of this adjective (subordinate) clause.
  - B. In this case, it most certainly does not refer to “grace.”
  - C. Does it modify “salvation” (i.e., “saved by”) or does it modify “faith?”
  - D. Paraphrasing verse 8: *Salvation is by grace through faith and even that faith does not come from yourself—it is God’s gift to you.*
- II. **The Meaning of Saving Faith**
  - A. Faith Described: Hebrews 11: 1
  - B. Faith Acquired: Romans 10: 14-17
  - C. Faith Required:
    1. In order to be justified before God—Romans 5: 1-2; Galatians 2: 16
    2. In order to please God—Hebrews 11: 6
  - D. Faith Differentiated:
    1. As fruit of the Spirit—Galatians 5: 22-23
    2. As a spiritual gift—I Corinthians 12: 7-8
    3. As intellectual assent—Matthew 13: 20-23; Acts 26: 27
    4. As acknowledgement of the Divine—James 2: 19
    5. As a form of godliness—II Timothy 3: 5
- III. **The Elements of Saving Faith**
  - A. Belief is the essential foundation of faith. (John 1: 12; 3: 16; 6: 29; 8: 31; Acts 3:37; Romans 10: 9; Ephesians 1: 13)
  - B. Repentance and faith are inexorably linked. (II Corinthians 7: 10; Mark 1: 15)
  - C. Trust and Faith are utterly synonymous.
  - D. Hope and faith are inseparable. (Romans 5: 2)
  - E. Commitment naturally follows faith. (Romans 6: 17; John 8: 31-32)
- IV. **The Evidence of Saving Faith**
  - A. Love of Jesus Christ—I Peter 1: 7-8
  - B. Love of the Brethren—I Peter 1: 22
  - C. Obedience to His commandments—I John 2: 3-6
  - D. Victory over the World—I John 5: 4
  - E. Producing Good Works—Matthew 5: 16; Ephesians 2: 10

*For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; <sup>9</sup> not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.*

Ephesians 2: 8-10 (NASB)

*Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.*

*And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.*

Hebrews 11: 1, 6 (NASB)

*Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>2</sup> through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.*

Romans 5: 1-2 (NASB)