

IT'S NOT BELIEVE IN JESUS AND.....

John 3:16; Acts 16:31

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: The simple Gospel message, *"...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved..."* has been added to from the very beginning. There were those who wanted to add circumcision in order for one to be saved causing a controversy to break out concerning the exact requirements for being saved. The Gospel is God-centered, grace-centered message which offers salvation as a free gift without cost, through faith in God's work through His Son, Jesus Christ, rather than by man's works of any kind. It is human nature, however, to think that he needs to add something to his salvation for it to be authentic. As a result "faith alone in Jesus Christ" is often called "cheap grace" or "easy believism." Salvation in Jesus Christ is free, but it's not cheap. It cost God the death of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. There are several "add-ons" to believing in Jesus Christ that are being advocated/promoted in today's time.

I. BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST AND REPENT OF YOUR SINS

1. Repentance is considered as a separate act and must be added to believing in Jesus for salvation.
 - What does "repent" mean? What is one to repent of and for? Feeling sorry for something?
 - For sin? Determination to turn away from sin?
 - Does it mean one must feel sorry for his/her sins and turn from them and trust Jesus Christ for salvation?
 - Does it mean that if one is not willing to keep turning from sin, that he/she will not be saved?
2. "Repent" means basically to "change the mind."
 - To be thinking one thing or way and then to decide to change the way one sees things.
 - It is a change of mind that leads to a different way.
 - Being sorry and repenting are not the same thing.
 - What does one "repent" change his/her mind about?
3. John, in his Gospel, NEVER once used the word "repent."
 - When Jesus was talking to Nicodemus about how to have eternal life, NOT ONCE did Jesus ever mention "repent."
 - When Jesus talked with the woman at the well, NOT ONCE did He mention "repent."
 - Nor did Jesus mention "repent" when the woman brought the village to see Jesus.
 - Jesus NEVER told anyone to "repent" in order to see the Kingdom of God.
 - John wrote: *"...These have been written that you may believe...and that believing you may have life in His name.."*
4. Is repentance a condition for receiving eternal life?
 - If it means to be sorry for sin or to resolve to turn from sin - NO.
 - Repentance may prepare the way for faith, but it is faith that saves.

II. BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST AND MAKE HIM LORD

1. It is not Christ and good works, nor Christ and the church, nor Christ and baptism or Christ and the confessional that brings forgiveness of sins. It is not Christ and doing one's best or Christ and the Lord's Supper that will give eternal life. It is Christ alone.

2. Some say that one cannot be saved or has ever been saved or had a real work of grace in one's life unless one surrenders every area of his/her life to Christ's absolute control.
 - So, how much commitment or surrender is enough to be saved?
 - Is it alright to be a little bit committed but not a lot?
 - Doesn't ALL sin fall short of the glory of God? Isn't that why Jesus died for our sins in the first place?
 - Being willing to submit to the Lordship of Christ raises the question: How willing?
 - The Bible teaches that salvation comes by faith alone through Jesus Christ alone.
3. Making Jesus Lord in order to have salvation:
 - Making the condition of having eternal life more than trusting in Jesus Christ.
 - Makes the condition of having eternal life dependent upon whether one perseveres or not and salvation can be lost if one has it but does not persevere.
 - It is saying that the promises of God's Word are not sufficient for being assured of eternal life.
 - **1 John 5:11-13**
 - It leaves people trusting in their own record or performance and merit and not that of Jesus Christ.
 - It is people being saved by their works.
4. The only condition for eternal life is personal faith in Jesus Christ alone, as one's Savior.
 - CHRIST IS ENOUGH!
 - It is faith in the person and finished work of Jesus Christ who died for man's sins is the sole basis of one's salvation.
 - No faith plus any add-ons are conditions for eternal life.

III. BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST AND BE BAPTIZED

1. Unless one is baptized with the view that it is a part of being saved and is only trusting in Jesus Christ that person is not saved. Belief in Jesus Christ is not enough. Just being immersed/baptized is not enough, it's got to include being necessary for salvation.
2. The truth is that water baptism is a ritual, an act that symbolizes a spiritual truth and reality.
 - It is publicly confessing Jesus Christ as one's Savior.
 - The ritual of baptism cannot save but the truth it represents brings deliverance from sin's penalty through one's faith in Jesus Christ, then deliverance from the power of sin.
 - Many believed John the Baptist's message and were baptized, but later believed in Jesus Christ which proved that baptism didn't save them.
3. Baptism cannot wash away one's sins, that happens when one believes in Jesus Christ, that's what the cross is all about.

IV. BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST AND CONFESS HIM PUBLICLY

1. Jesus challenged His followers, not unbelievers, to go out into the world and confess Him, also warning them that to do so would bring them difficulties and hardships, even death to some.
 - The challenge to confess Jesus publicly was given to those who were already believers, followers of Jesus, not to unbelievers.
2. To refuse to speak about Jesus publicly, before others, would indicate that a person is not saved in the first place or that one is a believer but is out of fellowship and living in fear rather than faith.
3. Confessing Jesus publicly is NOT a condition for being saved, but obedience to Jesus' command to go out into the world and tell others about Him.

V. BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST AND DO GOOD WORKS

1. There are those who preach, teach, promote the idea that faith in Jesus Christ alone is not enough but one must "believe and do good works." One must do both believe and do good works in order to be saved/
 - If good works are not present, then one has never been saved or one has lost his/her salvation/
 - One has only "intellectual" faith, not a heart faith, if works are not being done.
 - Assurance of one being saved is based on one's works rather than on the work of Jesus Christ and all the sure promises of the Word of God. (*1 John 5:11-13; John 5:24*)
 - Salvation by works and Assurance by works.
2. Jesus knew that His followers would not constantly remain in fellowship with Him. (*John 15:1-6*)
 - Every Christian will bear some fruit, somewhere, sometime, somehow, but not ALL will be always fruitful (good works).
 - Remember Peter's denial of knowing Jesus.
 - How much fruit or good works do believers need to do to prove they are saved?
 - How are good works measured?
 - Does a disobedient Christian become unsaved when he/she does not bear fruit (works)?
 - How imperfect can one obey or be without works and yet be sure he/she is saved if works are to be proof of one having saving faith and eternal life?
3. If Salvation is by faith alone in Jesus Christ and one's works are proof of one's fellowship and Christian growth,, then works become the means by which one will be rewarded in eternity.
 - Unbelievers produce good works, demonstrating kindness and a concern for others, but they are not Christians and don't have salvation. They don't know God.
 - Anybody can give a cup of cold water to a thirsty person.
4. Works do not prove that a person is saved.
 - Good works do glorify God but do not save.
 - Good works witness to others of God's love and about Jesus Christ but do not save.
 - Good works carry God's love to others but do not save.
 - Good works promote peace and order but do not save.

CONCLUSION:

1. Salvation is by belief in God's Son, Jesus Christ ONLY.
2. *John 3:16; Acts 16:31*
3. Those who want to add to believing in Jesus Christ ALONE as the means of salvation, don't trust God's Word but trust themselves more.
4. There is only one way to be saved and that is God's Way and that is belief in Jesus Christ.
5. Do you have eternal life? How did you get it? How do you know that you still have it? If you do?
6. Jesus said, *"...I am the way, the truth and the life, and NO ONE comes to the Father except by/through ME..."*