

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

John: Believing On The Christ, The Son Of God, For Eternal Life

Part XII: Believing On Christ Due To His Witness To A Ruler Of The Jews, John 3:1-21

B. Believing On Christ Due To His Requirement Of Faith ALONE In Him ALONE For Salvation (John 3:14-21)

I. Introduction

- A. Jesus ministered to a nation led by "aristocratic, well-intentioned but unenlightened" Jews typical of many who think they will enter heaven by works or by faith plus works, Ryrie St. Bib., KJV, 1978, fn. to John 3:1.
- B. Christ's interaction with Nicodemus, "a ruler of the Jews" as a "member of the Sanhedrin" (Ibid.), the ruling religious body in Israel, represents a classic testimony to those who think heaven is attained by works or by faith plus works, and John 3:14-21 shows Jesus taught salvation was through **faith ALONE** in **Him ALONE**:

II. Believing On Christ Due To His Requirement Of Faith ALONE In Him ALONE For Salvation.

- A. Having clarified in John 3:1-13 to Nicodemus his need for God's gracious provision of the spiritual new birth, Jesus proceeded to explain that the **way** of that "new birth" salvation was through **faith** in **Him**, John 3:14-15a:
 - 1. Jesus explained to Nicodemus that just as those in ancient Israel in the wilderness stood to die upon being bitten by poisonous "fiery" serpents unless they looked in faith at the single bronze serpent Moses lifted up on a pole, so all men today ("whosoever") must trust in Jesus to escape condemnation, John 3:14-15.
 - 2. The theological implications are immense: "Moses raised a bronze snake on a pole as a cure for a punishment due to disobedience (cf. Num. 21:4-9). So Jesus would be lifted up on a cross for people's sin, so that a look of faith gives eternal life to those doomed to die," Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 281-282. Jesus here clearly taught that faith in Him and His substitutionary atonement for sin was the way of salvation just like the Apostle Paul taught it in 2 Corinthians 5:19-21 and also in Romans 3:23-26.
- B. Then, in John 3:15b-16, Jesus added that **apart** from **faith** in **Him**, **every man** would **perish**, so God in great love sent His "**Unique; One-Of-A-Kind**" (*monogenes*, see our lesson on John 1:14; U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 330) Son into the world to save men if they trusted in Him. One's faith had to be in **Jesus ALONE**.
- C. In John 3:17-18, Jesus clarified that the desperately lost condition of the entire world of mankind had moved God to reach out to save it through His Son, that **faith ALONE** in **Him alone** was the **only WAY** of salvation:
 - 1. Jesus explained that mankind is so desperately unable to help himself out of his lost state that God in love sent His Son into the world not to condemn it, as He could have done since all men have sinned by implication, but rather in love, God sent His Son to save it, John 3:17.
 - 2. Accordingly, there are only two classes of man when it comes to the issue of salvation status, John 3:18:
 - a. If one believes on Christ, he is not eternally condemned to hell, but he is saved, John 3:18a with 5:24.
 - b. However, if one does not trust in Christ, regardless of his works or heritage [Note how Jesus spoke here to a Hebrew member of Israel's ruling religious body!], he is "now, already" (*ede*, Ibid.; Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 344) condemned simply because he has not believed in the name of the Unique, One-Of-A-Kind (*monogenes*, Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.) Son of God, John 3:18b.
 - c. Thus, the **way** of salvation is **only** through **faith alone** in **Christ alone** for **all men**, **even the religious!**
- D. Jesus then clarified the proof of these truths is seen in the reaction of the rejecting lost to Christ, John 3:19-20:
 - 1. The "light" of God's truth had entered the world in Christ, but lost men loved the darkness more than the light, for their deeds were evil, so they preferred to remain in them, John 3:19. The fact that Nicodemus visited Jesus by night for fear of persecution from the Jews (John 3:1) was thus evidence of their lost state!
 - 2. All who practice evil hate God's illuminating truth, neither do they come to Christ, that Light, lest their deeds should be reproved as being evil, John 3:20. This fact is well illustrated in the Sanhedrin.
- E. However, those who believe in Christ in obedience to God show by their actions that their works are now wrought in God as true believers and justified men, John 3:21: Jesus added that those who do the truth, and in the context, this means those who have trusted in Christ for salvation and thus who exhibit righteous works as evidence of the new birth, are attracted to Him, for He manifests the fact that their works are wrought in God.

Lesson: Jesus taught that all men must believe alone in Him alone for salvation to escape eternal condemnation, that due to lost man's desperate state, God in love has graciously sent His Only Son into the world to save man.

Application: (1) May we each trust alone in Christ alone to escape condemnation and be saved. (2) May we hold to this true gospel without compromise (Galatians 1:8-9), and (3) faithfully proclaim it to a lost, needy world!