

REVISITING THE BELIEVER'S POSITIONAL RICHES IN CHRIST
Part XV: Applying The Truth That Believers Are On The Rock, Christ Jesus

I. Introduction

- A. Paul taught that salvation was by faith and not by works lest any man should boast, Ephesians 2:8-9.
- B. However, some argue that this was not Jesus' view, that the New Testament was not divinely inspired, and others of Jesus' followers or people of secular philosophical groups formed such a doctrine of salvation.
- C. One of the 33 positional truths that the believer possesses when he trusts in Christ is that he is placed on the Rock, Christ Jesus, that he is unconditionally eternally secure in that salvation status not by works that he has done, but by the work of God (cf. Lewis Sperry Chafer, Systematic Theology, vol. III, "Soteriology," p. 248-249). This view is stated by Jesus in Matthew 7:24-27, and it supplies His view of salvation for our benefit:

II. Applying The Truth That Believers Are On The Rock, Christ Jesus.

- A. The positional truth that the believer is placed "on the Rock, Christ Jesus" is taken from Jesus' Matthew 7:24-27 illustration of the house that is founded on the rock versus the one that is built on the sand, Ibid.
- B. That building construction illustration concludes Christ's important "Sermon on the Mount" in which He conveyed to His hearers that, contrary to what the Pharisees held, unless one's righteousness exceeded the righteousness upon which the Pharisees depended for eternal salvation, they would **in no way** enter into God's kingdom, Matthew 5:20. Indeed, Jesus Himself expansively explained this truth in Matthew 5:21-7:6; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 30-33, 34-35.
- C. If we view Jesus' illustration of these contrasting house constructions in light of the illustration of the same subject taught in rabbinical writings of His era, His view of how one is saved become very clear (as follows):
 - 1. The parallel rabbinical illustrations placed an emphasis on **man's works** for obtaining God's blessing:
 - a. One rabbinical illustration held that a man whose wisdom eclipsed his works was like a tree with many branches but few roots that can be uprooted by the wind. However, one whose **works outdid** his **wisdom** was like a tree whose branches were few but its roots many, enabling the tree to **withstand great winds**, Alfred Edersheim, The Life and Times Of Jesus The Messiah, 1972, vol. i, p. 540.
 - b. Another rabbinical illustration noted a man who did **good works** while **learning** from the **Law** was like one who built his house starting with stones at the base before placing bricks upon them. When the flood came, his house would be able to stand since the flooding water could not dislodge or dissolve the stones. However, the man who failed to do good works while still learning much from the Law was like a man who laid a foundation of bricks first with stones upon the bricks, that when the flood came, the water dissolved the bricks that were below the stones, causing the house to fall, Ibid.
 - c. A third rabbinical illustration likened the man who highlighted works to putting mortar between his bricks while the other had the mortar put only on the outside of the wall so that the rain destroyed it, Ibid.
 - 2. However, in **stark contrast** to **each** of these rabbinical illustrations of His era, **JESUS** claimed that what mattered was **NOT HOW** one **built** his house, but the **FOUNDATION** he used: if one heeded Jesus' words, he would build his house on Himself, the Rock, and neither flood nor rain nor even strong winds that beat upon that house would destroy it, Matthew 7:24-25! However, if one did not heed Jesus' words, regardless how he built his house, it would be destroyed by flood, rain or wind since it was founded upon sand, Matthew 7:26-27. In other words, **it was not man's works that resulted in his salvation, but whether he was heeding Christ's words, what involved believing in Him for salvation, John 6:47; Matthew 19:25-26; Romans 3:20-28.**
- D. [Acts 26:18 further clarifies Jesus' claim that justification was by faith in Him: in the context of that verse, Paul was recounting his conversation with Christ on the road to Damascus, and in Acts 26:18 ESV, he quoted Jesus as saying, "that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in **me**." Paul was **not** speaking of justification by faith in *himself* in view of what he wrote in Romans 3:23-26, so Acts 26:18 records Jesus' **own** words about people being **sanctified** by **trusting** in *Himself*!]

Lesson: *Jesus Himself taught that when a person believes in Him for salvation apart from human meritorious works, he is put on the Rock Christ Jesus, enjoying unconditional eternal security of that salvation status. Thus, in concert with the testimony of Acts 26:18, Jesus taught justification by faith in Himself as did the Apostles.*

Application: *(1) May we believe that faith in Christ results in unconditional salvation security in Christ. (2) May we also believe that not only the Apostles, but our Lord Jesus Christ clearly taught salvation by faith in Himself.*