

Mid-Atlantic Gospel Camp

General Subject: Where Are You?

Mid-Week Gathering 4 – Introductory Reading

The Joy of Salvation

Restore to me the gladness of Your salvation, and sustain me with a willing spirit. (Psa. 51:12)

The testimony of a person who has been saved is joy. Salvation causes sinners to be forgiven, to be released from the burden of sin, to be reconciled to God, to obtain the life of God, and even to obtain God Himself. Moreover, it causes people to obtain a heavenly inheritance and an eternal hope. Salvation makes people rejoice. How could a person who has received so many great, high, extraordinary, and wonderful blessings not rejoice? Joy, in those who are saved, is a testimony of God's salvation. (*Crucial Truths in the Holy Scriptures*, Vol. 1, Ch. 14)

The Significance of Salvation

Salvation refers to a person's being saved before God, which includes being forgiven of his sins, being spared from perdition, being regenerated, having the eternal life of God, and becoming a child of God.

The Proofs of Salvation in the Bible

- 1) *He who believes and is baptized shall be saved. (Mark 16:16)*
- 2) *For whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. (Rom. 10:13)*

The two verses above prove that once a person believes and is baptized, calling upon the name of the Lord, he is immediately saved. This fact should be recognized and acknowledged **immediately, without dependence on human feelings.**

- 3) *He who hears My word and believes Him [the heavenly Father] who sent Me has eternal life, and will not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. (John 5:24)*
- 4) *He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. I write these things to you that you may know that you have eternal life, to you who believe in the name of the Son of God. (1 John 5:12-13)*

The two portions of Scripture above prove that once a person believes in the heavenly Father and believes into the name of the Son of God (the Lord Jesus Christ), he has eternal life (that is, the life of God). He will not come into judgment and perish, but has passed out of death into life. A person is saved in this way to have the life of God **based on what the Bible says**, and not on his own feelings.

- 5) *But as many as received Him [the Lord Jesus Christ], to them He gave authority to become children of God, to those who believe in His name. (John 1:12)*

This is a word testified by the Apostle John, indicating that the Lord Jesus gives to those who receive Him by faith (to those who believe into His name) the authority to become children of God. This authority is the life of God, enabling those who believe into the Lord Jesus to be born of God, to be regenerated to become children of God. This is also **proven by the words of the Bible** and is not determined by human feelings.

The words in the Bible are trustworthy and can never be changed or annulled. Human feelings will fluctuate according to mood and environment and are undependable. Since the Bible clearly states that a person is saved upon believing in the Lord Jesus, this fact is established regardless of human feeling. We should **stand on the trustworthy words of the Bible and disregard our feelings, believing strongly and knowing with assurance that we have been saved.** (*Life Lessons*, Vol. 1, Ch. 1)

Feeding on God's Word

God has given us a powerful and wonderful gift in His Word. When we read the Bible, we're fed by God's Word and supplied for our Christian life.

- 1) *Man shall not live on bread alone, but on **every word** that proceeds out through the mouth of God. (Matt. 4:4)*
- 2) *As newborn babes, long for the guileless **milk of the word** in order that by it you may grow unto salvation. (1 Peter 2:2)*
- 3) *Your words were found **and I ate them**, and Your word became to me the gladness and joy of my heart. (Jer. 15:16)*

When we eat spiritual food, we're supplied to live our Christian life. But when we're away from God's Word for a while, we can become spiritually weak, tired, and "grumpy," unable to handle difficulties well. We become more susceptible to temptation, doubts, and other kinds of spiritual sickness. We simply don't have the means to cope with the many challenges that come into our lives as believers.

It's very important, therefore, that we're supplied by reading and feeding on God's Word every day. To maintain a healthy and even joyful Christian life, we need daily Bible reading to receive the spiritual nourishment in God's Word for us. (*3 Benefits of Reading the Bible Every Day*, blog.biblesforamerica.org)

Discussion:

- 1) Why does salvation bring us joy?
- 2) Are we saved even if we don't feel different? Are we still saved when we feel unhappy or have a bad day?
- 3) How is reading the Bible similar to eating?
- 4) Set up a daily Bible reading schedule (ex. mybiblereading.bfa.org).